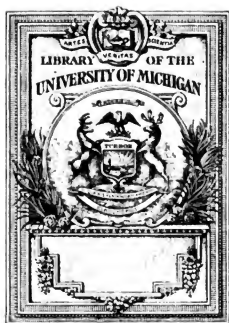


*image
not
available*







BX
8915
.F58
1701
V.1

2

4



W. Vander Gucht Sculp.

The Effigies of John Flavell
Ætatis suæ 61. Anno Dom 1691.

THE WHOLE WORKS

Of the Reverend

Mr. JOHN FLAVEL,

Late Minister at *DARTMOUTH* in *DEVON*,

In Two VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

CONTAINING,

The Life of Mr. Flavel.	} A Treatise of the Soul of Man. Two Treatises, { 1. Of Fear. And, 2. Of Evil Days. A Discourse of Mental Errors.
The Fountain of Life opened; or, A Display of Christ in his Essential and Mediatorial Glory.	
The Method of Grace in bringing home the Eternal Redemption.	

VOLUME II.

CONTAINING,

England's Duty, and Mount Pisgab.	} A Token for Mourners. An Offer of Help to Suffering Saints. The Balm of the Covenant. An Exposition of the Assemblies Catechism. A Treatise of Baptism. Sacramental Meditations. The Reasonableness of Personal Reformation. His Remains. A Table or Scheme of the Sins and Duties of Believers.
The Mystery of Providence; with some New Additions.	
<i>Antiphararmacum Saluberrimum.</i>	
Tidings from Rome; or, England's Alarm.	
Husbandry Spiritualized.	
Navigation Spiritualized.	
The Seaman's Compass.	
A Saint Indeed.	
The Touchstone of Sincerity.	

To which are added,
Alphabetical TABLES and INDEXES of the
Texts of Scripture Explained in the Whole.

Now First Collected together.

L O N D O N :

Printed by R. J. for *Tho. Parkhurst*, at the Bible and Three Crowns in Cheap-side; *Hugh Newman*, at the Grasshopper in the Poultry; *Andrew Bell*, at the Bible and Cross-Keys in Cornhill; and *Tho. Cockerill*, at the Bible and Three Legs in the Poultry. M. DCC. I.

111

THE L I F E OF Mr. JOHN FLAVEL, Minister of DARTMOUTH.

THose of the Name of *Flavel*, derive their Pedigree from one who was the Third Great Officer that came over with *William the Conqueror*; but this Worthy Divine was far from that Weakness and Vanity to boast of any thing of that Nature, being of the Poet's Mind, who said,

*Et genus, & proavos, & quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra Voco*——

His Father was Mr. *Richard Flavel*, a Painful and Eminent Minister: He was first Minister at *Bromsgrove* in *Worcestershire*, then at *Hasler*, and removed from thence to *Wallersey* in *Gloucestershire*, where he continued till 1660, that he was Outed upon the Restoration of King *Charles II.* because it was a Sequestred Living, and the Incumbent then alive: This did not so much affect Mr. *Flavel*, as that he wanted a fixed Place for the Exercise of his Pastoral Function. He was a Person of such Extraordinary Piety, that those who convers'd with him, said, they never heard one Vain Word drop from his Mouth. A little before the Turning out of the Nonconformist Ministers, being near *Torrest* in *Devon*, He preach'd from *Hosea*. 7. 9. *The Days of Visitation are come, the Days of Repompence are come, Israel shall know it.* His Application was so close that it offended some People, and occasioned his being carried before some Justices of the Peace, but they could not reach him, so that he was Discharged. He afterwards quitted that Country, and his Son's House, which was his Retiring Place, and came to *London*, where he continued in a Faithful and Acceptable discharge of his Office, till the time of the dreadful Plague in 1665, that he was Taken and Imprisoned in the manner following. He was at Mr. *Blake's* House in *Covent-Garden*, where some People had met privately for Worship: Whilst he was at Prayer, a Party of Soldiers brake in upon them with their Swords drawn, and demanded their Preacher, threatening some, and flattering others, to discover him, but in Vain. Some of the Company threw a Coloured Cloak over him, and in this disguise he was, together with his Hearers, carried to *Whitehall*; the Women were dismissed, but the Men detain'd, and forc'd to lye all that night upon the bare Floor; and because they would not pay Five Pound

each, were sent to *Newgate*, where the Pestilence raged most Violently, as in other places of the City. Here Mr. *Flavel* and his Wife were shut up, and seized with the Sickness; they were Bailed out, but Died of the Contagion; of which their Son *John* had a Divine Monition given him by a Dream, as we shall observe in its proper place. Mr. *Richard Flavel* left two Sons behind him, both Ministers of the Gospel, viz. *John* and *Phineas*.

John the Eldest was Born in *Worcestershire*. It was observable, that whilst his Mother Lay in with him, a Nighthingale made her Nest in the outside of the Chamber Window, where the us'd to sing most sweetly. He was Religiously Educated by his Father, and having profited well at the Grammar Schools, was sent early to *Oxford*, and settled a Commoner in *University-Colledge*. He plied his Studies hard, and exceeded many of his Contemporaries in University Learning.

Soon after his Commencing Bachelor of Arts, Mr. *Walplate*, the Minister of *Dipsford* in the County of *Devon*, was rendred incapable of performing his Office by reason of his Age and Infirmary, and sent to *Oxford* for an Assistant; Mr. *Flavel*, tho' but young, was recommended to him as a Person duly qualified, and was accordingly settled there by the Standing Committee of *Devon*, April 27. 1650. to Preach as a Probationer and Assistant to Mr. *Walplate*.

Mr. *Flavel* considering the Weight of his Charge, applied himself to the Work of his Calling with great Diligence; and being assiduous in Reading, Meditation and Prayer, he increas'd in Ministerial Knowledge daily, (for he found himself that he came raw enough in that respect from the University) so that he attain'd to an high Degree of Eminency and Reputation for his useful Labours in the Church.

About Six Months after his settling at *Dipsford*, he heard of an Ordination to be at *Salisbury*, and therefore went thither with his Testimonials, and offer'd himself to be Examined and Ordain'd by the Presbytery there: They appointed him a Text, upon which he Preach'd to their General Satisfaction; and having afterwards examin'd him as to his Learning, &c. they set him apart to the Work of the Ministry with Prayer and Imposition of Hands, on the 17th day of *October*, 1650.

Mr.

The Life of Mr. John Flavel,

Mr. Flavel being thus Ordain'd, return'd to *Dipsford*, and after Mr. Walplate's Death succeeded in the Rectory. To avoid all Incumbrances from the World, and Avocations from his Studies and Ministerial Work, he chose a Person of Worth and Reputation in the Parish (of whom he had a good Assurance that he would be Faithful to himself and Kind to his Parishioners) and Let him the whole Tythes much below the Real Value, which was very well pleasing to his People. By this Means he was the better able to deal with them in private, since the Hire of his Labours was no way a hindrance to the success of them.

Whilst he was at *Dipsford* he Married one Mrs. Joan Randall, a pious Gentlewoman, of a Good Family, who died in Travail of her first Child without being delivered. His Year of Mourning being expired, his Acquaintance and Intimate Friends advis'd him to Marry a second time, wherein he was again very happy. Some time after this second Marriage, the People of *Dartmouth* (a Great and Noted Sea-port in the County of Devon, formerly under the Charge of the Reverend Mr. Anthony Hartford decas'd, unanimously chose Mr. Flavel to succeed him. They urg'd him to accept their Call, (1.) Because there were Exceptions made against all the other Candidates, but none against him. (2.) Because being acceptable to the whole Town, he was the more like to be an Instrument of healing the Breaches amongst the good People there. (3.) Because *Dartmouth* being a Considerable and Populous Town, requir'd an Able and Eminent Minister, which was not so necessary for a Country Parish, that might besides be more easily supplied with another Pastor than *Dartmouth*.

That which made them more Pressing and Earnest with Mr. Flavel, was this; at a Provincial Synod in that County, Mr. Flavel, tho' but a young Man, was Voted into the Chair as Moderator, where he opened the Assembly with a most Devout and Pertinent Prayer, he examin'd the Candidates who offer'd themselves to their Trials for the Ministry with great Learning, stated the Cases and Questions propos'd to them with much Acuteness and Judgment, and in the whole, demean'd himself with that Gravity, Piety, and Serioufness, during his Presidency, that all the Ministers of the Assembly Admir'd and Lov'd him. The Reverend Mr. Hartford, his Predecessor at *Dartmouth*, took particular Notice of him, from that time forward Contracted a strict Friendship with him, and spoke of him among the Magistrates and People of *Dartmouth*, as an Extraordinary Person, who was like to be a great Light in the Church: This, with their having several times heard him Preach, occasioned their Importunity with Mr. Flavel to come and be their Minister; upon which having spread his Case before the Lord, and submitted to the Decision of his Neighbouring Ministers, he was prevail'd upon to remove to *Dartmouth*, to his Great Loss in Temporals, the Rectory of *Dipsford* being a much Greater Benefice.

Mr. Flavel being settled at *Dartmouth* by the Election of the People, and an Order from *Whitehall* by the Commissioners for Approba-

tion of Publick Preachers of the 19th of December, 1656. he was associated with Mr. Allen Geere, a very Worthy, but Sickly, Man. The Ministerial Work was thus divided betwixt them, Mr. Flavel was to preach on the Lord's Day at *Townhall*, the Mother-Church, standing upon a Hill without the Town; and every Fortnight in his Turn at the *Wednesday's* Lecture in *Dartmouth*. Here God Crowned his Labours with many Conversions. One of his Judicious Hearers express'd himself thus concerning him, 'I could say much, tho' not enough, of the Excellency of his Preaching, of his Seasonable, Suitable and Spiritual Matter, of his Plain Expositions of Scripture, his Taking Method, his Genuine and Natural Deductions, his Convincing Arguments, his Clear and Powerful Demonstrations, his Heart-searching Applications, and his Comfortable Supports to those that were Afflicted in Conscience. In short, that Person must have a very soft Head, or a very hard Heart, or both, that could fit under his Ministry unaffected.'

By his unwearied application to Study he had acquir'd a Great Stock both of Divine and Humane Learning. He was Master of the Controversies betwixt the *Jews* and *Christians*, *Papists* and *Protestants*, *Lutherans* and *Calvinists*, and betwixt the *Orthodox*, and the *Arminians*, and *Socinians*. He was likewise well read in the Controversies about Church Discipline, Infant-Baptism, and Antinomianism. He was well acquainted with the *School Divinity*, and drew up a judicious and Ingenious Scheme of the whole Body of that Theology in good Latin, which he presented to a Person of Quality, but 'twas never printed. He was singularly well Vers'd and Exact in the Oriental Languages. He had one way of improving his Knowledge, which is very proper for Young Divines; Whatever remarkable Passage he heard in private Conference, if he was familiar with the Relator, he would desire him to repeat it again, and insert it into his *Aversaria*: By these Methods, he acquir'd a Vast Stock of proper Materials for his popular Sermons in the Pulpit, and his more elaborate Works for the Press.

He had an Excellent Gift of Prayer, and was never at a Loss in all his Various Occasions for suitable Matter and Words; and which was the most remarkable of all, he always brought with him a Broken Heart and Moving Affections; His Tongue and Spirit were touch'd with a Live Coal from the Altar, and he was evidently affixed by the Holy Spirit of Grace and Supplication in that Divine Ordinance. Those who liv'd in his family say, that he was always full and copious in Prayer, seem'd constantly to exceed himself, and rarely made use twice of the same Expressions.

When the Act of Uniformity turn'd him out with the Rest of his Nonconforming Brethren, he did not thereupon quit his Relation to his Church, he thought the Souls of his Flock to be more precious than to be tamely neglected: He took all Opportunities of ministering the Word and Sacraments to them in private Meetings, and join'd with other Ministers in Solemn Days of Fasting and Humiliation, to Pray that God would

Minister of Dartmouth.

would once more restore the Ark of his Covenant unto his afflicted *Israel*. About four Months after that fatal *Bartholomew-day*, his Reverend Colleague, *Mr. Allein Geere*, died, so that the whole Care of the Flock devolv'd upon *Mr. Flavel*, which tho' a heavy and pressing Burden he undertook very cheerfully.

Upon the Execution of the *Oxford Act*, which Banish'd all Nonconformist Ministers Five Miles from any Towns which sent Members to Parliament, he was forced to leave *Dartmouth*, to the Great Sorrow of his People, who follow'd him out of Town, and at *Townshall Churchyard* they took such a Mournful Farewel of one another, as the Place might very well have been call'd *Bochim*. He remov'd to *Slapton*, a Parish Five Miles from *Dartmouth*, or any other Corporation, which put him out of the Legal Reach of his Adversaries. Here he met with Signal Instances of God's Fatherly Care and Protection, and Preach'd twice every Lord's Day to such as durst adventure to hear him, which many of his own People and others did, notwithstanding the Rigor and Severity of the Act against Conventicles. He many times Slipp'd privately into *Dartmouth*, where by Preaching and Conversation he edified his Flock to the Great Refreshment of his own Soul and theirs, tho' with very much Danger, because of his Watchful Adversaries, who constantly laid Wait for him, so that he could not make any long stay in the Town.

In those Times *Mr. Flavel* being at *Exeter*, was invited to Preach by many good People of that City, who for safety chose a Wood about Three Miles from the City, to be the Place of their Assembly, where they were broke up by their Enemies by that time the Sermon was but begun. *Mr. Flavel*, by the Care of the People, made his escape thro' the middle of his enraged Enemies; and tho' many of his Hearers were taken, carried before Justice *Tuckfield*, and Fined; yet the rest being nothing discourag'd, reassembled, and carrying *Mr. Flavel* to another Wood, he Preach'd to them without any Disturbance, and after he had concluded, Rode to a Gentleman's House near the Wood, who tho' an absolute Stranger to *Mr. Flavel*, Entertain'd him with great Civility that Night, and next Day he returned to *Exeter* in Safety. Amongst those taken at this time, there was a Tanner who had a Numerous Family, and but a Small Stock: He was Fined notwithstanding Forty Pound; at which he was nothing discourag'd, but told a Friend who ask'd him how he bore up under his Loss, *That he took the Spoiling of his Goods Joyfully for the sake of his Lord Jesus, for whom his Life, and all that he had, was too little.*

As soon as the Nonconformists had any respite from their Trouble, *Mr. Flavel* laid hold on the Opportunity, and return'd to *Dartmouth*, where during the first Indulgence granted by King *Charles II.* he kept open Doors, and Preach'd freely to all that would come and hear him; and when that Liberty was revok'd, he made it his Business notwithstanding to Preach in Season and out of Season, and seldom miss'd of an Opportunity of Preaching on the Lord's Day. During

this time, God was pleas'd to deprive him of his second Wife, which was a Great Affliction, the having been a Help meet for him; and such an one he stood much in need of, as being a Man of an Infirm and Weak Constitution, who labour'd under many Infirmities. In convenient time he Married a third Wife, *Mrs. Ann Downe*, Daughter of *Mr. Thomas Downe*, Minister of *Exeter*, who lived very happily with him Eleven Years, and left him Two Sons, who are Youths of great Hopes.

The Persecution against the Nonconformists being renew'd, *Mr. Flavel* found it unsafe to stay at *Dartmouth*, and therefore resolv'd to go to *London*, where he hop'd to be in less Danger, and to have more Liberty to exercise his Function. The Night before he Embark'd for that End, he had the following Premonition by a Dream. He thought he was on Board the Ship, and that a Storm arose, which exceedingly terrified the Passengers; during their Consternation, there sat writing at the Table a Person of Admirable Sagacity and Gravity, who had a Child in a Cradle by him that was very froward; he thought he saw the Father take up a little Whip, and give the Child a Lash, saying, *Child, be quiet, I will discipline, but not hurt thee.* Upon this *Mr. Flavel* awak'd, and musing on his Dream, he concluded that he should meet with some Trouble in his Passage: His Friends being at Dinner with him, assur'd him of a pleasant Passage, because the Wind and Weather were very fair; *Mr. Flavel* replied, *That he was not of their Mind, but expected much Trouble because of his Dream;* adding, *That when he had such Representations made to him in his Sleep, they seldom or never fail'd.*

Accordingly when they were advanc'd within Five Leagues of *Portland* in their Voyage, they were overtaken by a dreadful Tempest, in such manner that betwixt One and Two in the Morning the Master and Seamen concluded, That unless God chang'd the Wind, there was no hope of Life; it was impossible for 'em to Weather *Portland*, so that they must of necessity be Wrack'd on the Rocks or on the Shoar. Upon this *Mr. Flavel* call'd all the Hands that could be spared into the Cabin to Prayer; but the Violence of the Tempest was such, that they could not prevent themselves from being thrown from the one side unto the other as the Ship was toss'd; and not only so, but mighty Seas broke in upon them, as if they would have drown'd them in the very Cabin. *Mr. Flavel* in this Danger took hold of the two Pillars of the Cabin-Bed, and calling upon God, begg'd Mercy for himself and the rest in the Ship. Amongst other Arguments in Prayer, he made use of this, *That if he and his Company perish'd in that Storm, the Name of God would be blasphem'd, the Enemies of Religion would say, That tho' he escap'd their Hands on Shoar, yet Divine Vengeance had overtaken him at Sea.* In the midst of Prayer his Faith and Hope were rais'd, in such manner that he expected a gracious Answer; so that committing himself and his Company to the Mercy of God, he concluded the Duty. No sooner was Prayer ended, but one came down from the Deck, crying, *Deliverance!*

The Life of Mr. John Flavel,

liverance! Deliverance! God is a God bearing Prayer! In a Moment the Wind is come fair West! And so Sailing before it, they were brought safely to London. Mr. Flavel found many of his Old Friends there; and God rais'd him New Ones, with Abundance of Work, and Extraordinary Encouragement in it. During his stay in London, he Married his fourth Wife, a Widow Gentlewoman (Daughter to Mr. George Jefferies formerly Minister of King's Bridge) but now his sorrowful Relict.

Mr. Flavel, while he was in London, narrowly escaped being taken with the Reverend Mr. Jenkins, at Mr. Foxe's in Moorfields, where they were keeping a Day of Fasting and Prayer. He was so near, that he heard the Insolence of the Officers and Soldiers to Mr. Jenkins when they had taken him; and observ'd it in his Diary, that Mr. Jenkins might have escap'd as well as himself, had it not been for a piece of Vanity in a Lady whose long Train hinder'd his going down Stairs, Mr. Jenkins out of his too great Civility having let her pass before him.

Mr. Flavel after this return'd to Dartmouth, where with his Family and Dear People he blest'd God for his Mercies towards him. He was in a little time after Confin'd Close Prisoner to his House, where many of his Dear Flock stole in over Night; or betimes on the Lord's Day in the Morning, to enjoy the benefit of his Labours, and spend the Sabbath in Hearing, Praying, Singing of Psalms, and holy Discourses.

Mr. Jenkins above-mentioned dying in Prison, his People gave Mr. Flavel a Call to the Pastoral Office among them, and Mr. Reeves his People did the like. Mr. Flavel Communicated those Calls unto his Flock, and kept a Day of Prayer with them to beg Direction from God in this Important Affair: he was graciously pleas'd to answer them by fixing Mr. Flavel's Resolution to stay with his Flock at Dartmouth. Many Arguments were made use of to persuade him to come to London, as that since he was turn'd out by the *Act of Uniformity*, he had had but very little Maintenance from his Church; that those at London were Rich and Numerous Congregations; that he had a Family and Children to provide for; and that the City was a Theatre of Honour and Reputation; but none of those things could prevail with him to leave his Poor People at Dartmouth.

In 1687. when it pleas'd God so to over-rule Affairs, that King James II. thought it his Interest to dispence with the Penal Laws against them, Mr. Flavel, who had formerly been confin'd to a Corner, shone Brightly, as a flaming Beacon upon the Top of an Hill. His Affectionate People prepar'd a large Place for him, where God blest'd his Labours to the Conversion of many People by his Sermons on *Revelations 3. 20. Behold I stand at the Door and knock.* This encourag'd him to Print those Sermons under the Title of *England's Duty*, &c. hoping that it might do good abroad as well as in his own Congregation. He had made a Vow to the Lord under his Confinement, that if he should be once more entrusted with publick Liberty, he would improve it to the Advantage of the Gospel; this he perform'd in a most Conscientious

Manner, Preaching twice every Lord's Day, and Lectur'd every Wednesday, in which he went over most of the Third Chapter of St. John, shewing the Indispensible Necessity of Regeneration. He Preach'd likewise every Thursday before the Sacrament, and then after Examination admitted Communicants. He had no Assistance on Sacrament-days, so that he was many times almost Spent before he distributed the Elements. When the Duty of the Day were over, he would often complain of a sore Breast, an aking Head, and a pained Back; yet he would be early at Study again next Monday. He allow'd himself very little Recreation, accounting Time a Precious Jewel that ought to be improv'd at any rate.

He was not only a Zealous Preacher in the Pulpit, but a Sincere Christian in his Closet, frequent in Self Examination, as well as in pressing it upon others; being afraid, lest while he Preach'd to others, he himself should be a Castaway. To prove this, I shall transcribe what follows from his own Diary.

'To make sure of Eternal Life, said he, is the great Business which the Sons of Death have to do in this World. Whether a Man consider the Immortality of his own Soul, the ineffable Joys and Glory of Heaven, the extrem and endless Torments of Hell, the unconceivable Sweetness of Peace of Conscience, or the Misery of being subject to the Terrors thereof. All these put a Necessity, a Solemnity, a Glory upon this Work. But, Oh! the Difficulties and Dangers attending it! How many? And how great are these? What Judgment, Faithfulness, Resolution, and Watchfulness, doth it require? Such is the Deceitfulness, Darkness and Inconstancy of our Hearts, and such the Malice, Policy and Diligence of Satan to manage and improve it, that he who attempts this Work had need both to watch his Seasons for it, and frequently look up to God for his Guidance and Illumination, and to spend many sad and serious Thoughts, before he adventure upon a Determination and Conclusion of the State of his Soul.

'To the end therefore that this most important Work may not miscarry in my Hands, I have Collected, with all the Care I can, the Best and Soundest Characters I can find in the Writings of our Modern Divines, taken out of the Scripture, and by their Labours illustrated and prepared for use, that I might make a right Application of them.

'1. I have earnestly besought the Lord for the Assistance of his Spirit, which can only manifest my own Heart unto me, and show me the true State thereof, which is that thing my Soul doth most earnestly desire to know; and I hope the Lord will answer my desire therein according to his Promises, *Luke 11. 13. John 14. 26.*

'2. I have endeavour'd to cast out and lay aside Self-love, lest my Heart being prepossessed therewith, my Judgment should be perverted, and become partial in passing Sentence on my Estate. I have in some Measure brought my Heart to be willing to Judge and Condemn my self for an Hypocrite, if such I shall be found on Trial, as to approve my self for Sincere and Upright.

'Upright. Yea. I would have it so far from being grievous to me so to do, that if I have been all this while mistaken and deceived, I shall rejoice and bless the Lord with my Soul, that now at last it may be discovered to me, and I may be set right, tho' I lay the Foundation new again. This I have laboured to bring my Heart to, knowing that Thousands have dashed and split to pieces upon this Rock. And indeed he that will own the Person of a Judge, must put off the Person of a Friend.

'3. It hath been my Endeavour to keep upon my Heart a deep Sense of that great Judgment-Day throughout this Work; as knowing by experience what a potent Influence this hath on the Conscience, to make it Deliberate, Serious, and Faithful in its Work. And therefore I have demanded of my own Conscience before the Resolution of each Question, O! My Conscience, deal faithfully with me in this particular, and say no more to me than thou wilt own and stand to in the Great Day, when the Counsels of all Hearts shall be made manifest.

'4. Having seriously weighed each Mark, and considered wherein the Weight and Substance of it lyeth. I have gone to the Lord in Prayer for his Assistance, e'er I have drawn up the answer of my Conscience; and as my Heart hath been perswaded therein, so have I determined and resolved; what hath been clear to my Experience, I have so set down; and what hath been dubious, I have here left it so.

'5. I have made choice of the fittest Seasons I had for this Work, and set to it when I have found my Heart in the most quiet and serious Frame. For as he that will see his Face in a Glass, must be fixt, nor in Motion, or in the Water, must make no Commotion in it; so it is in this Case.

'6. Lastly, To the end I may be successful in this Work, I have laboured all along carefully to distinguish betwixt such Sins as are Grounds of Doubting; and such as are only Grounds of Humiliation. Knowing that not every Evil is a Ground of Doubting, tho' all, even the smallest Infirmities, administer Matter of Humiliation. And thus I have desired to Enterprize this great Business. O Lord, assist thy Servant, that he may not mistake herein! But if his Conscience do now condemn him, he may lay a better Foundation whilst he hath time. And if it shall now acquit him, he may also have Boldness in the Day of Judgment.

These things being previously dispatch'd, he tried himself by the Scripture Marks of Sincerity and Regeneration; by this means he attained to a well-grounded Assurance; the ravishing Comforts of which were many times shed abroad in his Soul; this made him a powerful and successful Preacher, as one who spoke from his own Heart to those of others. He preached what he felt, what he had handled, what he had seen and tasted of the Word of Life, and they felt it also.

We may guess what a sweet and blessed intercourse he had with Heaven from that History we meet with in his *Flavel's comp. Argues* P. 547. which I re-

fer to, and likewise from that Revelation he had of his Father and Mothers Death, Page 572. He was a mighty Wrestler with God in secret Prayer, and particularly begg'd of him to Crown his Sermons, printed Books, and private Discourses, with the Conversion of poor Sinners; a Work which his Heart was much set upon. It pleas'd God to answer him by many Instances, of which the two that follow deserve peculiar Notice.

In 1673. there came into Dartmouth Port a Ship of *Pool*, in her return from *Virginia*; the Chirurgeon of this Ship, a lusty young Man of 23 Years of Age, fell into a deep Melancholy; which the Devil improved to make him Murder himself. This he attempted on the Lord's Day early in the Morning; when he was in Bed with his Brother, he first cut his own Throat with a Knife he had prepar'd on purpose, and leaping out of the Bed, thrust it likewise into his Stomach, and so lay wallowing in his own Blood, till his Brother awak'd and cry'd for help; a Physician and Chirurgeon were brought, who concluded the Wound in his Throat mortal. They stitch'd it up however, and applied a Plaister, but without hopes of cure, because he already breathed thro' the Wound, and his Voice was become inarticulate. Mr. *Flavel* came to visit him in this Condition, and apprehending him to be within a few Minutes of Eternity, labour'd to prepare him for it; he ask'd him his own Apprehensions of his Condition, and the young Man answered, that he hop'd in God for Eternal Life. Mr. *Flavel* replied, that he feared his Hopes were ill-grounded; the Scripture tells us, that no Murderer hath Eternal Life abiding in him; Self-Murder was the Grosest of all Murder, &c. Mr. *Flavel* insisted so much upon the Aggravations of the Crime, that the young Man's Conscience began to fail, his Heart began to tremble, and then he broke out into Tears, bewailing his Sin and Misery, and ask'd Mr. *Flavel*, if there might yet be any Hope for him? He told him there might; and finding him altogether unacquainted with the Nature of Faith and Repentance, he opened them to him. The poor Man suck'd in this Doctrine greedily, prayed with great Vehemence to God that he would work them on his Soul; and intreated Mr. *Flavel* to pray with him, and for him, that he might be, tho' late, a sincere Gospel Penitent, and Sound Believer. Mr. *Flavel* prayed with him accordingly, and it pleas'd God exceedingly to melt the young Man's Heart during the Performance of that Duty. He was very loth to part with Mr. *Flavel*, but the Duty of the Day obliging him to be gone, in a few Words he summ'd up those Counsels that he thought most Necessary, and so took his Farewel of him, never expecting to see him any more in this World. But it pleas'd God to order it otherwise; the young Man continued alive contrary to all Expectation, panted earnestly after the Lord Jesus, and no Discourse was pleasing to him, but that of Christ and Faith. In this Frame Mr. *Flavel* found him in the Evening; he rejoiced greatly when he saw him come again, intreated him to continue his Discourse upon those Subjects, and told him, Sir, the Lord hath given me Repentance for this and for all my other Sins; I see the Evil of them now, so as I never

The Life of Mr. John Flavel,

never saw them before, O I loath my self! I do also believe, Lord, help my Unbelief. I am heartily willing to take Christ upon his own Terms, but one thing troubles me. I doubt this Bloody Sin will not be pardoned. Will Jesus Christ, said he, apply his Blood to me, that have shed my own Blood? Mr. Flavel told him, that the Lord Jesus shed his Blood for them that with wicked Hands had shed his own Blood, which was a greater Sin than the shedding of his; to which the Wounded Man replied, I will cast my self upon Christ, let him do what he will. In this Condition Mr. Flavel left him that Night.

Next Morning his Wounds were to be opened, and the Chirurgion's Opinion was, that he would immediately expire; Mr. Flavel was again requested to give him a Visit, which he did, found him in a very serious Frame, and pray'd with him. The Wound in his Stomach was afterwards opened, when the Ventricle was so much Swollen, that it came out at the Orifice of the Wound, and lay like a lived discoloured Tripe upon his Body, and was also cut through; every one thought it impossible for him to live; however the Chirurgion enlarg'd the Orifice of the Wound, fomented it, and wrought the Ventricle again into his Body; and stitching up the Wound, left his Patient to the disposal of Providence.

It pleased God that he was cured of those dangerous Wounds in his Body; and upon solid Grounds of a Rational Charity, there was ground to believe that he was also cured of that more dangerous Wound which Sin had made in his Soul. Mr. Flavel spent many Hours with him, during his Sickness; and when the Chirurgion Return'd to Pool, after his Recovery, Mr. Samuel Hardy, that worthy Minister there, thank'd Mr. Flavel in a Letter for the great Pains he had taken with that young Man, and congratulated his success, assuring him, that if ever a great and thorough Work was wrought, it was upon that Man.

The second Instance is this, Mr. Flavel being in London in 1673. his old Bookseller, Mr. Boulter, gave him this following Relation, viz. That some time before, there came into his Shop a Sparkish Gentleman to enquire for some Play-Books. Mr. Boulter told him he had none, but shew'd him Mr. Flavel's little Treatise of *Keeping the Heart*, intreated him to read it, and assur'd him it would do him more good than Play-Books. The Gentleman read the Title, and glancing upon several Pages here and there, broke out into these and such other Expressions, What a damnable Phanatick was he, who made this Book? Mr. Boulter begg'd of him to buy and read it, and told him he had no cause to censure it so bitterly; at last he bought it, but told him he would not read it; what will you do with it then, said Mr. Boulter? I will tear and burn it, said he, and send it to the Devil; Mr. Boulter told him then he should not have it; upon this the Gentleman promis'd to read it; and Mr. Boulter told him, if he dislike'd it upon reading, he would return him his Money. About a Month after, the Gentleman came to the Shop again in a very modest Habit, and with a serious Countenance bespeaks Mr. Boulter thus; Sir, I

most heartily thank you for putting this Book into my Hands; I bless God that mov'd you to do it, it hath sav'd my Soul; blessed be God that ever I came into your Shop; and then he bought a Hundred more of those Books of him, told him he would give them to the Poor who could not buy them, and so left him, praising and admiring the Goodness of God. Thus it pleased God to bless the Sermons, Discourses and Writings of Mr. Flavel.

He never delighted in Controversies, but was oblig'd, contrary to his Inclinations, to write against Mr. Cary, the principal Anabaptist in Dartmouth, with whom however he maintain'd a Friendly and Christian Correspondence; when he wrote his *Planetologia: Or, Blow at the Root*, he declar'd to his Friends, that tho' those Studies were very Necessary, he took no Pleasure in them, but had rather be employed in practical Divinity. When he compos'd his *Reasonableness of Personal Reformation*, he told an intimate Acquaintance of his, that he seldom had a vain Thought to interrupt him, which made him hope it would do the more good in the World. He purpos'd to have enlarg'd his Book of *Sacramental Meditations*, and had most judiciously stated and handled several Cases of Conscience on that Occasion, which he design'd to have insert'd in the next Edition, but liv'd not to finish them for the Press.

Many times when he preach'd abroad, he has had Letters sent him from unknown Persons, informing him how God had blessed his Ministry to their Souls, and converted them from being bitter Enemies to Religion. This encouraged him when he rode abroad, not only to accept of Invitations to preach, but many times to offer his Labours unto those that would be pleas'd to hear him; tho' for this he had no Occasion where he was known, the People being generally Importunate with him. One Day after a long and hard Journey, an Intimate Friend of his, out of a tender Regard to him, press'd him with Cogent Arguments to forbear preaching at that Season, but could not prevail with him; his Bowels of Compassion to needy and perishing Souls made him over-look all Considerations of himself; he preach'd an excellent Sermon, by which there was one converted, as he declar'd himself afterwards upon his admission to the Lord's Table.

The last Sermon that he preach'd to his People at Dartmouth, was on a publick Day of Fasting and Humiliation; in the Close of which he was enlarg'd in such an extraordinary Manner, when offering up Praises to God for Mercies received, that he seem'd to be in an Extasy; this happened about a Week before his Death, and may justly be accounted a Foretaste of those heavenly Raptures that he now enjoys amongst the blessed Spirits above.

The last Sermon he preach'd was on the 21st of June 1691. at Ashburton, from 1 Cor. 12. 12. *Wherefore let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall.* It was a very Pathetical and Excellent Discourse, tending to awaken careless Professors, and to stir them up to be Solicitous about their Souls. After having preach'd this Sermon, he went to Exeter, and at Topham, within three Miles

Minister of Dartmouth.

Miles of that City, he presided as Moderator in an Assembly of the Nonconformist Ministers of Devonshire, who unanimously Voted him into the Chair; the Occasion of their meeting was about an Union betwixt the Presbyterians and Independants, which Mr. Flavel was very Zealous to promote, and brought to so good an Issue in those parts, that the Ministers declar'd their Satisfaction with the Heads of Agreement concluded on by the London Ministers of those Denominations. Mr. Flavel closed the Work of the Day with Prayer and Praises, in which his Spirit was carried out with wonderful Enlargement and Affection.

He wrote a Letter to an Eminent Minister in London, with an Account of their Proceedings that same Day that he died; Providence ordering it so, that he should finish that good Work his Heart was so intent upon, before he finished his Course.

The Manner of his Death was suddain and surprizing; his Friends thought him as well that Day in the Evening of which he died, as he had been for many Years. Towards the End of Supper, he complain'd of a Deadness in one of his Hands, that he could not lift it to his Head. This struck his Wife, and his Friends about him, into an Astonishment; they us'd some means to recover it to its former Strength, but instead thereof, to their great Grief, the Distemper seiz'd upon all one side of his Body. They put him to Bed with all Speed, and sent for Physicians, but to no purpose; his Distemper prevail'd upon him so fast, that in a short time it made him Speechless. He was sensible of his approaching Death; and when they carried him up Stairs, express'd his Opinion that it would be the last time; but added, I know that it will be well with me, which were some of his last Words. Thus died this Holy Man of God Suddenly, and without Pain, not giving so much as one Groan. He exchanged this Life for a better, on the 26th Day of June 1691. in the 64th Year of his Age.

His Corps was carried from Exeter to Dartmouth, attended by several Ministers, and a great many other Persons of good Quality; abundance of People rode out from Dartmouth, Tonnes, Newton, Ashburton, and other places, to meet the Corps; when it was taken out of the Hearse at the Water-side, his People and other Friends could not forbear expressing the Sense of their great Loss by Floods of Tears, and a bitter Lamentation. It was Interr'd that same Night in Dartmouth Church, and next Day Mr. George Trosse, a Minister of Exeter, preach'd his Funeral Sermon from *Elisba's* Lamentation upon the

Translation of *Elisba*, 2 Kin. 2. 12. *My Father, my Father, the Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof.*

We shall conclude with a Character of Mr. Flavel. He was a Man of a Middle Stature, and full of Life and Activity. He was very thoughtful, and when not discoursing or reading, much taken up in Meditation, which made him digest his Notions well. He was ready to learn from every Body, and as free to communicate what he knew. He was bountiful to his own Relations, and very charitable to the Poor, but especially to the Household of Faith, and the necessitous Members of his own Church, to whom, during their Sickness, he always sent suitable Supplies. He freely taught Academical Learning to four young Men whom he bred to the Ministry, and one of them he maintain'd all the while at his own Charge. He was exceedingly Affectionate to all the People of Dartmouth, of which we shall give one remarkable Instance. When our Fleet was first engaged with the French, he called his People together to a Solemn Fast, and like a Man in an Agony, wrestled with God in Prayer for the Church and Nation, and particularly for the poor Seamen of Dartmouth, that they might obtain Mercy; the Lord heard and answer'd him, for not one of that Town was killed in the Fight, tho' many of 'em were in the Engagement. As he was a faithful Ambassador to his Master, he made his Example the Rule of his own practice; and was so far from reviling again those that revil'd him, that he pray'd for those that despitefully us'd him; one remarkable Instance of which is as follows. In 1685. some of the People of Dartmouth, accompanied too by some of the Magistrates, made up his Effigies, carried it through the Streets in derision, with the Covenant and Bill of Exclusion pin'd to it, and set it upon a Bonfire, and burnt it; some of the Spectators were so much affected with the reproach and ignominy done to this Reverend and Pious Minister, that they Wept, and others Scoff'd and Jeer'd; it was observable, that at the very same time, tho' he knew nothing of the Matter, he was heaping Coals of Fire of another Nature upon the Heads of those Wicked Men; for he was then praying for the Town of Dartmouth, its Magistrates and Inhabitants; and when News was brought him, upon the Conclusion of his Prayer, what they had been doing, he lift up this Prayer unto God for them in our Saviour's Words, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

THE Fountain of Life

OPENED:

Or, *A Display of Christ in His Essential and Mediatorial Glory.*
Containing Forty-two Sermons on Various Texts.

To his much Honoured and Beloved Kinsman, Mr. *John Flavel* of *London*, Merchant, and his Vertuous Confort, the Author wisheth Grace, Mercy, and Peace.

My Dear and Honoured Friends,
IF my Pen were both able and at leisure to get Glory in Paper, it would be but a Paper-glory when I had gotten it: but if by displaying (which is the design of these Papers) the transcendent Excellency of Jesus Christ, I may win Glory to him from you, to whom I humbly offer them, or from any other into whose Hands Providence shall cast them, that will be Glory indeed, and an occasion of glorifying God to all Eternity.

It is not the design of this Epistle to compliment, but to benefit you; not to blazon your Excellencies, but Christ's; not to acquaint the World how much you have endeared me to your self, but to increase and strengthen the Endearments betwixt Christ and you, upon your part. I might indeed (this being a proper Place for it) pay you my Acknowledgments for your great Kindnesses to me and mine; of which I assure you I have; and ever shall have, deep Resentments: but you and I are Theatre enough to one another, and can falsify our selves with the inclosed Comforts and Delights of our mutual Love and Friendship: But let me tell you, the whole World is not a Theatre large enough to shew the Glory of Christ upon, or unfold the one half of the unsearchable Riches that lie hid in him. These things will be far better understood, and spoken of in Heaven, by the noon-day Divinity, in which the immediately illuminated Assembly do there Preach his Praises, than by such a stammering Tongue, and scribbling Pen as mine, which doth but marr them.

Alas! I write his Praises but by Moon-

light; I cannot Praise him so much as by halves. Indeed, no Tongue but his own (as Nazianzen said of Basil) is sufficient to undertake that Task. What shall I say of Christ? The excellency of that Object dazzles all Apprehension, swallows up all Expression. When we have borrowed Metaphors from every Creature that hath any Excellency or lovely Property in it; till we have stript the whole Creation bare of all its Ornaments, and clothed Christ with all that Glory; when we have worn our Tongues to the stumps, in ascribing Praises to him; alas! we have done nothing, when all is done.

Yet so is me! how do I every Day behold reasonable Souls most unreasonably disaffected to my lovely Lord Jesus! denying Love to one who is able to compel Love from the stoniest Hearts! yea, though they can never make so much of their Love (would they set it to sale) as Christ bids for it.

It's horrid and amazing to see how the Minds of many are captivated and insnared by every silly trifle; and how others can indifferently turn them with a kind of spontaneity to this Object, or to that (as their fancy strikes) among the whole Universe of Beings, and scarce ever relicate, recoil, or nauseate, till they be persuaded to Christ; and then 'tis as easie to melt the obdurate Rocks into Sweet Syrup, as their Hearts into Divine Love.

How do the great Men of the World ambitionly court the Honours and Pleasures of it? the Merchants of the Earth trade and strive for the dear-bought Treasures of it; whilst
the

The Epistle Dedicatory.

the Price of Christ (alas ! ever too low) falls every day lower and lower upon the Exchange of this World ! I speak it as a sad Truth, if there were no quicker a Trade (as dead as they say it is) for the perishing Treasures of the Earth than there is for Christ this Day in England, the Exchange would quickly be shut up, and all the Trading Companies dissolv'd.

Dear Sir, Christ is the peerless Pearl hid in the field, Mat. 13. 46. Will you be that wise Merchant that resolves to win and compass that Treasure, whatever it shall cost you ? Ah Sir, Christ is a Commodity that can never be bought too dear.

My dear Kinsman, my Flesh and my Blood ; my Soul thirsteth for your Salvation, and the Salvation of your Family. Shall you and I resolve, with good Joshua, that whatever others do, we and our Families will serve the Lord ; That we will walk as the Redeemed of his Blood, shewing forth his Vertues and Praises in the World ? that as God hath made us one in Name, and one in Affection ; so we may be one in Christ : That it may be said of us, as it was of Austin and Alippius long ago, that they were sanguine Christi conglutinati, glued together by the Blood of Christ.

For my own part, I have given in my Name to him long since ; wo to me, if I have not given in my Heart also : For should I deceive myself in so deep a Point as that, how would my Profession as a Christian, my Calling as a Minister, yea, these very Sermons now in your hands, rise in Judgment to condemn me ? Which God forbid.

And doubtless, Sir, your Eyes have seen both the Vanity of all Creatures, and the necessity and infinite worth of Christ. You cannot forget what a Vanity the World appeared to you, when in the Year 1668. you were summoned by the Messengers of Death (as you and all that were about you then apprehended) to shoot the Gulf of vast Eternity ; when a malignant Fever and Pleurisie (whereof your * Physician hath given an account to the World) did shake the whole frame of the Tabernacle wherein your Soul through Mercy yet dwells ; and long may it dwell there, for the service and praise of your great Deliverer. I hope you have not, nor ever will forget how the vain world appeared to your Eye ; when you looked back (as it were over your shoulder) and saw how it shrunk away from you. Nor will you

ever forget the awful apprehensions of Eternity, that then seized your Spirit, or the Value you then had for Christ ; which things I hope still do, and ever will remain with you.

And for you, Dear Cousin, as it becomes a Daughter of Sarah, let your Soul be adorned with the Excellencies of Christ, and Beauties of Holiness. A King from Heaven makes suit for your Love. If he espouse your Soul now, he will fetch it home to himself at Death in his Chariot of Salvation ; and great shall be your Joy, when the Marriage of the Lamb is came. Look often upon Christ in this Glass ; he is fairer than the Children of Men. View him believingly, and you cannot but like and love him. For (as one well saith) Love when it seeth, cannot but cast out its Spirit and Strength upon amiable Objects, and things love-worthy. And what fairer things than Christ ! O fair Sun, and fair Moon, and fair Stars, and fair Flowers, and fair Roses, and fair Lilies, and fair Creatures ! but O ten thousand, thousand times fairer Lord Jesus ! Alas, I wronged him in making the comparison this way. O black Sun and Moon ; but O fair Lord Jesus ! O black Flowers, and black Lilies, and Roses ; but O fair, fair, ever fair Lord Jesus ! O all fair things, black, deformed and without Beauty, when ye are set beside the fairest Lord Jesus. O black Heavens, but O fair Christ ! O black Angels, but O surpassingly fair Lord Jesus !

I hope you both are agreed with Christ, according to the Articles of Peace propounded to you in the Gospel ; and that you are every day driving on Salvation-work, betwixt him and you in your Family, and in your Closets.

And now my dear Friends, if these Discoveries of Christ, which I humbly offer to your hands, may be any way useful to your Souls, to assist them either in obtaining, or in clearing their Interest in him, my Heart shall rejoice, even mine : for none under Heaven can be more willing (though many are more able) to help you thither, than is

From my Study in
Dartmouth, March
14. 1671.

Your most affectionate
and obliged Kinsman
and Servant,

JOHN FLAVEL.

* Dr. Thomas's Account
of the Plague, p. 91

To the Christian Readers, especially those in the Town and Corporation of *Dartmouth*, and Parts adjacent ; who have either befriended, or attended these Lectures.

Honoured and Worthy Friends,

Knowledge is Man's Excellency above the Beasts that perish, *Psal.* 32. 9. the Knowledge of Christ is the Christian's Excellency above the Heathen, *1 Cor.* 1. 23, 24. Practical and saving Knowledge of Christ is the sincere Christian's Excellency above the self-contradicting Hypocrite, *Heb.* 6. 4, 6. but methodical and well digested Knowledge of Christ is the strong Christian's Excellency above the weak, *Heb.* 5. 12, 13, 14. A saving, tho' an immethodical knowledge of Christ, will bring us to Heaven, *John* 17. 2. but a regular, and methodical, as well as saving knowledge of him, will bring Heaven into us, *Col.* 2. 2, 3.

For such is the Excellency thereof, even above all other knowledge of Christ, that it renders the Understanding judicious, the Memory tenacious, and the Heart highly and fixedly joyous. How it serves to confirm and perfect the Understanding, is excellently discovered by a worthy Divine of our own, in these words.

Mr. Baxter's Directions to the Converted for their Establishment, p. 96.

A young ungrounded Christian, when he seeth all the fundamental Truths, and seeth good Evidence and Reasons of them, perhaps may be yet ignorant of the right order and place of every Truth : It's a rare thing to have young Professors to understand the necessary Truths methodically ; and this is a very great Defect. For a great part of the usefulness and excellency of particular Truths, consisteth in the respect they have to one another. This therefore will be a very considerable part of your Confirmation, and growth in your Understandings, to see the Body of the Christian Doctrine as it were at one view, as the several parts of it are united in one perfect Frame ; and to know what aspect one Point hath upon another, and which is their due places. There is a great difference betwixt the sight of the several parts of a Clock or Watch, as they are disjointed and scattered abroad, and the seeing of them conjoined, and in use and motion. To see here a Pin, and there a Wheel, and not know how to set them all together, nor ever see them in their due places, will give but little satisfaction : It is the frame and design of holy Doctrine that must be known, and every part should be discerned as it hath its particular use to that Design, and as it is connected with the other parts.

By this means only can the true nature of Theology, together with the harmony and perfection of Truth, be clearly understood. And every single Truth also will be much better perceived by him that seeth its place and order, than by any other : For one Truth exceedingly illustrates, and leads in another into the Understanding.— Study therefore to grow in the more methodical knowledge of the same Truths, which you have received, and tho' you are not ripe enough to discern

the whole Body of Theology in due method, yet see so much as you have attained to know, in the right order, and placing of every part. As in Anatomy, it's hard for the wisest Physician to discern the course of every branch of the Veins and Arteries ; but yet they may easily discern the place and order of the principal parts, and greater Vessels, (and surely in the Body of Religion there runs not a branch of greater or more necessary Truth than these) so it is in Divinity, where no Man hath a perfect view of the whole, till he come to the state of perfection with God ; but every true Christian hath the knowledge of all the Essentials, and may know the orders and places of them all.

And as it serves to render the Mind more judicious, so it causes the Memory to be more tenacious, and retentive of Truths. The Chain of Truth is easily held in the Memory, when one Truth links in another ; but the loosing of a Link in dangers the scattering of the whole Chain. We use to say, Order is the Mother of Memory ; I am sure it's a singular Friend to it : Hence it's observed, those that write of the Art of Memory, lay so great a stress upon Place and Number. The Memory would not so soon be overcharged with a multitude of Truths, if that multitude were but orderly disposed. It's the incoherence, and confusion of Truths, rather than their number, that distracts. Let but the Understanding receive them regularly, and the Memory will retain them with much more facility. A bad Memory is a common complaint among Christians. All the benefit that many of you have in hearing, is from the present influence of Truths upon your Hearts. There is but little that sticks by you, to make a second and third Impression upon them. I know it may be said of some of you, that if your Affections were not better than your Memories, you would need a very large Charity to pass for Christians. I confess it's better to have a well-ordered Heart, than a methodical Head ; but surely both are better than either. And for you that have constantly attended these Exercises, and followed us through the whole series and deduction of these Truths, from Text to Text, and from Point to Point ; who have begun one Sabbath, where you left another ; it will be your inexcusable fault, if these things be not fixed in your Understanding and Memories, as Nails fastened in a sure place ; especially Providence hath now brought to your Eyes, what hath been so often sounded in your Ears, which is no small help to fix these Truths upon you, and prevent that great hazard of them, which commonly attends bare hearing : for now you may have recourse as often as you will to them, view, and review them, till they become your own.

But tho' this be a great and singular advantage,

The Epistle to the Reader.

age, yet it is not all you may have by a methodical understanding of the Doctrine of Christ: Its more than a judicious understanding them, or faithful remembering them that you and I must design, even the warm, vital, animating Influences of these Truths upon our Hearts, without which we shall be never the better; yea, much the worse for knowing and remembering them.

Truth is the sanctifying Instrument, Joh. 17. 17. the Mould into which our Souls are cast, Rom. 6. 17. according therefore to the Stamps and Impressions it makes upon our Understandings, and the order in which Truths lie there, will be the depth and lastingness of their Impressions and Influences upon the Heart; as the more Weight is laid upon the Seal, the more fair and lasting Impress is made upon the Wax. He that sees the grounds and reasons of his Peace and Comfort most clearly, is like to maintain it the more constantly.

Great therefore is the advantage Christians have by such methodical Systems. Surely they may set down among the desiderata Christianorum, the most desired things of Christians.

Doctors worthy modern Pens have indeed undertaken this noble Subject before me, some more succinctly, others more copiously: These have done worthily, and their praises are in the Churches of Christ? Yet such a Breadth there is in the Knowledge of Christ, that not only those who have written on this Subject before me, but a thousand Authors more may employ their Pens after us, and not one interfere with, or straiten another.

And such is the Deliciousness of this Subject, that were there ten thousand Volumes written upon it, they would never cloy, or become nauseous to a gracious Heart. We use to say one thing tires, and its true that it doth so, except that one thing be virtually, and eminently all things, as Christ is; and then one thing can never tire: For such is the variety of Sweetness in Christ, who is the *deliciz humani generis*, the Delights of the Children of men, that every time he is opened to Believers, from Pulpit or Press, it is as if Heaven had furnished them with a new Christ; and yet he is the same Christ still.

The Synopsis prefixed to this Treatise will shew you, that the Method is wholly new; and the Treatise it self will satisfy you, that I have not boasted in another Man's Line, of things made ready to my Hand: which I speak not in the least to win any Praise to my self from the Undertaking, but to remove Prejudice from it, for I see more defects in it, than most of my Readers will see, and can forthink more Faults to be found in it, than I shall now stand to tell thee of, or make Answer for. It was written in a time of great Distractions; and didst thou but know how oft this Work hath died, and revived under my Hand, thou wouldest wonder that ever it came to thee.

I am sensible it may fall under some censorious (it may be envious) Eyes, and that far different Judgments will pass upon it; for *pro captu leetoris habent sua fata libelli*: And no wonder if a Treatise of Christ be, when Christ himself was to some a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. I expect not to please every Reader, especially the envious; magna debet esse eloquentia, quæ invitis placet. It is as hard for some to look

upon other Mens Gifts without Envy, as it is to look upon their own without Pride: nor will I be any farther concerned with such Readers, than to pity them; well knowing that every proud Contempt and envious Censure is a Grenado that breaks in the Hand of him that casts it.

But to the ingenious and candid Reader, I owe Satisfaction for the Obscurity of some part of this Discourse occasioned by the Conciseness of the Style; to which I have this only to say, that I was willing to crowd as much matter as I could into this number of Sheets into thy Hand, that I might therein ease thee, both in thy Pains and Pains. I confess the Sermons were preached in a more relaxed Style, and most of these things were enlarged in the Pulpit, which are designedly contracted in the Press, that the Volume might not swell above the Ability of common Readers. And it was my purpose at first to have comprised the second Part, viz. the Application of the Redemption that is with Christ unto Sinners, in one Volume, which occasioned the contraction of this; but that making a just Volume it self, must await another Season to see the light. If the Reader will be but a little the more intent, and considerate in reading, this Conciseness will turn to his advantage.

This may suffice to shew the usefulness of such Compositures, and to prevent offence; but something yet remains with me, to say to the Readers in general, to those of this Town in special, and to the Flock committed by Christ to my Charge more especially.

1. To Readers in general, according as their different States and Conditions may be, there are six things earnestly to be requested of them.

(1.) If you be yet Strangers to Christ, let these things begin, and beget your first acquaintance with him. I assure thee, Reader, it was a principal part of the Design thereof; and here thou wilt find many Directions, Helps, and sweet encouragements, to assist a poor Stranger, as thou art, in that great Work. Say not, I am an Enemy to Christ, and there is no hope of Reconciliation, for here thou wilt see, how God was in Christ, reconciling the World to himself. Say not, all this is nothing, except God had told thee so, and appointed some to treat with thee about it; for he hath committed unto us the Word of this Reconciliation. Say not, Yea, that may be from your own Pity and Compassion for us, and not from any Commission you have for it; for we are Ambassadors for Christ, 1 Cor. 5. 19.

Say not, O but my Sins are greater than can be forgiven; the difficulties of my Salvation too great to be overcome, especially by a poor Creature as I am, that am able to do nothing, no not to raise one penny towards the discharge of that great Debt I owe to God: for here thou wilt find upon thy Union with Christ, that there is Merit enough in his Blood, and Mercy enough in his Bowels to justify, and save such an one as thou art. Yea, and I will add for thine encouragement, that it is a righteous thing with God to justify and save thee, that canst not pay him one penny of all the vast Sums thou owest him, when by the same Rule of Justice he condemns the most strict, self-righteous Pharisee that thinks thereby to quit scores with him. It is righteous for a Judge to cast him that hath paid ninety nine Pounds of the hundred which

*Mr. Wall's taken this noble Subject before me, some more succinctly, others more copiously: These have done worthily, and their praises are in the Churches of Christ? Yet such a Breadth there is in the Knowledge of Christ, that not only those who have written on this Subject before me, but a thousand Authors more may employ their Pens after us, and not one interfere with, or straiten another.

The Epistle to the Readers.

which he owed, because the Payment was not full; and to acquit him, whose Surety hath paid all, tho' himself did not, and freely confess that he cannot pay one farthing of the whole Debt.

(2.) If thou be a self-deceiving Soul, that easily takest up thy satisfaction about thine Interest in Christ, look to it as thou valuest thy Soul, Reader, that a fond and groundless conceit of thine Interest in Christ do not effectually and finally obstruct a true and saving Interest in him. This is the common and fatal Error in which Multitudes of Souls are injured and ruined: for look as a conceit of great Wisdom binders many from the attaining of it; so a groundless Conceit that Christ is already thine, may prove the greatest Obstacle betwixt Christ and thee. But here thou wilt meet with many Rules that will not deceive thee, Trials that will open thy true Condition to thee.

Thou sometimes reflectest upon the State of thy Soul. and enquirest, is Christ mine? May I depend upon it, that my Condition is safe? Thy Heart returns thee an Answer of Peace, it speaks as thou wouldest have it; but remember (Friend) and mark this Line, Thy final Sentence is not yet come from the Mouth of thy Judge; and what if after all thy self-flattering Hopes and groundless Confidences a Sentence should come from him quite cross to that of thine own Heart? where art thou then? what a confounded Person wilt thou be? Christless, speechless, and hopeless all at once!

O therefore build sure for Eternity; take heed lest the loss of thine eternal Happiness be at last imputed by thee to the deceitfulness, and laziness of thine own Heart; lest thy Heart say to thee in Hell, as the Heart of Apollodorus seemed in his sufferings to say to him, I am the cause of all this Misery to thee.

(3.) If thou be one whose Heart is eagerly set upon this vain World, I beseech thee to take heed, lest it interpose its self betwixt Christ and thy Soul, and so cut thee off from him for ever. Obeware lest the Dust of the Earth getting into thine Eyes, so blind thee, that thou never see the Beauty or Necessity of Christ: the God of this World so blinds the Eyes of them that believe not. And what are the sparkling Pleasures that dazzle the Eyes of some, and the distracting Cares that wholly divert the Minds of others, but as a Napkin drawn by Satan over the Eyes of them that are to be turned off into Hell? 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

Some general Aims, and joint Wishes after Christ you may have; but alas! the World has centered thy Heart, intangled thy Affections, and will daily find new diversions for thee from the great business of Life: so that if

the Lord break not this Snare, thou wilt never be able to deliver my Soul.

(4.) If thou be a loose and careless Professor of Christ, I beseech thee, let the things thou shalt read in this Treatise of Christ, convince, shame, and reclaim thee from thy vain Conversation. Here thou wilt find how contrary thy Conversation is to the grand Designs of the Death and Resurrection of Christ. Consider, as thou art reading the deep Humiliation, and unspeakable Sorrows Christ underwent for the expiating of Sin, thou shouldst thenceforth look upon Sin as a tender Child would upon that Knife that stab'd his Father to the Heart! Thou shouldst never wet, and sharpen it again, to wound the Son of God afresh. To such loose, and careless Professors, I particularly recommend the last general Use of this Discourse, containing many great motives to Reformation, and strict Godliness, in all that call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus.

(5.) If thou hast been a profane and vain Person, but now art pardoned, and dost experience the super-abounding riches of Grace my request to thee is, that thou love Jesus Christ with a more fervent Love than ever thou hadst for him. Here thou wilt find many great Incentives, many mighty Arguments to such a love of Christ. Poor Soul! consider what thou hast been, what the Morning of thy Life was; what Treasures of Guilt thou laidst up in these Days; and then think, Can such a one as I receive Mercy, and that Mercy not break my Heart? Can I read my Pardon, and mine Eyes not drop? What! Mercy for such a Wretch as I! a Pardon for such a Rebel! O what an ingenious Thaw should this cause upon thy Heart! if it do not, what a strange Heart is thine!

Did the Love of Christ break through so many Impediments, to come to thee? Did it make its way through the Law, through the Wrath of God, through the Grace, through thine own Unbelief and great Unworthiness, to come to thee? Or what a Love was the Love of Christ to thy Soul! And is not thy Love strong enough to break through the Vanities and Trifles of this World which intangle it, to go to Christ? How poor, how low and weak is thy Love to Christ then?

(6.) *Lately.* Art thou one that hast through Mercy at last attain'd Assurance, or good Hope, through Grace, of thy Interest in Christ? Rejoice then in thy present Mercy, and long earnestly to be with thine own Christ in his Glory. There be many things dispersed through this Treatise of Christ, to animate such Joy, and excite such Longings. It was truly observed by a worthy Author, (whose Words I have mentioned more freely than his Name in this Discourse) that it is in a manner as na-

Mr. S. R.

tural

Quam mul-
ti sapuiſ-
ſent niſi ſe
prius ſape-
re putaſ-
ſent? Sen.

Ἐπεὶ οὖν
τὸν αὐτὸν
τις.

The Epistle to the Readers.

tural for us to leap when we see the New Jerusalem, as it is to laugh when we are tickled. Joy is not under the Soul's command, when Christ kisseth it. *And for your desires to be with Christ, what Considerations can you find in this World strong enough to rein them in! O when you shall consider what he hath done, suffered, and purchased for you, where he is now, and how much he longs for your coming, your very Hearts should groan out those Words, Phil. 1. 23. I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. The Lord direct your Hearts into the Love of God, and into the patient waiting for of Christ.*

2. Having delivered my Message to the Reader in general, I have somewhat more particularly to say to you of this Place.

You are a People that were born under, and bred up with the Gospel. It hath been your singular Privilege, above many Towns and Parishes in England, to enjoy more than sixty Tears together an able and fruitful Ministry among you. The Dews of Heaven lay upon you, as it did upon Gideon's Fleece, when the Ground was dry in other Places about you. You have been richly watered with Gospel-Showers: You, with Capernaum, have been exalted to Heaven in the Means of Grace. And it must be owned to your Praise, that you testified more Respect to the Gospel, than many other Places have done, and treated Christ's Ambassadors with more Civility, whilst they prophesied in Sackcloth, than some other Places did. These things are praise-worthy in you. But all this, and much more than this, amounts not to that which Jesus Christ expects from you, and which in his Name I would now persuade you to. And O that I (the least and unworthiest of all the Messengers of Christ to you) might indeed prevail with all that are Christless among you, (1.) To answer the long-continued Calls of God to you, by a thorough and sound Conversion, that the long-suffering of God may be your Salvation, and you may not receive all this Grace of God in vain. O that the Damned might never be set a wondering, to see a People of your Advantages for Heaven, sinking as much below many of themselves in Misery, as you now are above them in Means and Mercy.

Dear Friends, my Heart's Desire and Prayer to God for you is, that you may be saved. O that I knew how to engage this whole Town to Jesus Christ, and make fast the Marriage-knot betwixt him and you, albeit after that I should presently go to the place of Silence, and see Man no more, with the Inhabitants of the World. Ah Sirs, me-

thinks I see the Lord Jesus laying the merciful Hand of a Holy Violence upon you; methinks he calls to you, as the Angel to Lot, saying, Arise, lest ye be consumed: and while he lingred, the men laid hold upon his hand, the Lord being merciful unto him. And they brought him without the City, and said, Escape for thy Life, stay not in all the Plain; escape to the Mountain, lest thou be consumed, Gen. 19. 15. How often (to allude to this) hath Jesus Christ in like manner laid hold upon you in the Preaching of the Gospel, and will you not fly for Refuge to him? Will you rather be consumed than endeavour an escape? A Beast will not be driven into the Fire, and will not you be kept out? The merciful Lord Jesus, by his admirable Patience and Bounty hath convinced you, how loth he is to leave or lose you. To this Day his Arms are stretched forth to gather you, and will you not be gathered? Alas for my poor Neighbours! Must so many of them perish at last? What shall I do for the Daughter of my People?

Lord, by what Arguments shall they be persuaded to be happy? What will win them effectually to thy Christ? They have many of them escaped the Pollutions of the World through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour. They are a People that love thine Ordinances, they take delight in approaching to God; thou hast beautified many of them with lovely and obliging Tempers and Dispositions. Thus far they are come, there they stick; and beyond this no Power but thine can move them. O thou to whose Hand this Work is and must be left, put forth thy saving Power, and reveal thine Arm for their Salvation: Thou hast glorified thy Name in many among them; Lord, glorifie it again.

(2.) My next Request is, that you will all be persuaded, whether Converted or Unconverted, to set up all the Duties of Religion in your Families, and govern your Children and Servants as Men that must give an Account to God for them in the great Day. O that there were not a Prayerless Family in this Town! How little will your Tables differ from a Manger, where Beasts feed together, if God be not owned and acknowledged there, in your Eating and Drinking? And how can you expect Blessings should dwell in your Tabernacles, if God be not called on there? Say not, you want Time for it, or that your Necessities will not allow it; for had you been more careful of those Duties, it's like you had not been exposed to such Necessities: Besides, you can find time to be idle, you can waste a part of every Day vainly: Why could not that Time be redeemed for God? More-

d over,

The Epistle to the Readers.

over, you will not deny, but the Success of all your Affairs at home and abroad depends upon the Blessing of God; and if so, think you it is not the right way, even to temporal Prosperity, to engage his Presence and Blessing with you, in whose Hand your All is? Say not, your Children and Servants are ignorant of God, and therefore you cannot comfortably join with them in those Duties; for the neglect of these Duties is the cause of their Ignorance; and it is not like they will be better, till you use God's means to make them so.

Besides, Prayer is a part of natural Worship, and the vilest among Men are bound to pray, else the neglect of it were none of their Sin. O let not a Duty, upon which so many and great Blessings hang, fall to the Ground, upon such silly (not to say wicked) pretences to shift it off. Remember, Death will shortly break up all your Families, and disband them; and who then, think you, will have most Comfort in beholding their Dead? The Day of Account also hastens, and then who will have the most comfortable appearing before the Just and Holy God? Set up, I beseech you, the ancient and comfortable Duties of reading the Scriptures, singing of Psalms, and Prayer in all your dwelling-places; and do all these conscientiously, as Men that have to do with God; and try the Lord herewith, if he will not return in a way of Mercy to you, and restore even your outward Prosperity to you again. However, to be sure, far greater Encouragements than that lye before you, to oblige you to your Duties.

3. More especially I have a few things to say to you, that have attended on the Ministry, or are under my oversight in a more particular manner, and then I have done. And,

1st, I cannot but with deep resentments observe to you the Goodness of our God, yea, the Riches of his Goodness:

Who freely gave Jesus Christ out of his own Bosom for us, and hath not withheld his Spirit, Ordinances and Ministers, to reveal and apply him to us. Here's Love that wants an Epithet to match it!

Who engaged my Heart upon this transcendent Subject in the course of my Ministry among you: A Subject which Angels study and admire as well as we.

Who so graciously protected and overshadowed our Assembly in those Days of trouble, wherein these Truths were delivered to you. You then sat down under his Shadow with great delight, and his Fruit was sweet to your Taste. His Banner over you was Love; your Bread was then sure, and your Waters failed not. Yea, such was his peculiar Indulgence, and special Tenderness to you, that he suffered

no Man to do you harm; and it can hardly be imagined any could attempt it, that had but known this, and no worse than this, to be your only design and business.

Who made these Meditations of Christ a strong Support, and sweet Relief to mine, now with Christ and no less to me, under the greatest Exercises and Trials that ever befel me in this World: Preserving me yet (though a broken Vessel) for some farther use and service to your Souls.

Who in the Years that are past left not himself without witness among us, blessing my Labours to the Conversion and Edification of many; some of which yet remain with us, but some are fallen asleep.

Who hath made many of you that yet remain, a willing and obedient People, who have in some measure supported the Reputation of Religion by your Stability and Integrity in Days of abounding Iniquity; my Joy, and my Crown; so stand ye fast in the Lord.

Who after all the Days of Fears and Troubles, through which we have past, hath at last given us and his Churches rest; that we being delivered out of the hands of our Enemies, might serve him without Fear in Righteousness and Holiness (which doing, this Mercy may be extended to us) all the Days of our Life.

In Testimony of a thankful Heart for these invaluable Mercies, I humbly and cheerfully rear up this Pillar of remembrance, inscribing it with EBENEZER, and JEHOVAH JIREH.

2^{ly}, As I could not but observe these things to you, so I have a few things to request of you, in neither of which I can bear a denial; so deeply doth Christ's, your own, and my Interest lye in them.

(1.) Look to it (my dear Friends) that none of you be found Christless at your appearance before him. Those that continue Christless now, will be left speechless then. God forbid that you that have heard so much of Christ, and you that have professed so much of Christ, should at last fall into a worse Condition than those that never heard the Name of Christ.

(2.) See that you daily grow more Christ-like by conversing with him, as you do, in his precious Ordinances. Let it be with your Souls, as it is with a piece of Cloth, which receives a deeper dye every time it is dip't into a Fat. If not, you may not expect the continuance of your Mercies much longer to you.

(3.) Get these great Truths well digested both in your Heads and Hearts, and let the Power of them be displayed in your Lives; else the Pen of the Scribe, and Tongue of the Preacher, are both in vain. These things, that

Dabit posteritas gratias animarum peccatorum nostrorum scilicet.

The Epistle to the Readers.

that so often warr'd your Hearts from the Pulpit, return now to make a second Impression upon them from the Pews. Hereby you will recover and fix those Truths, which it's like are in great part already vanish from you. This is the Fruit I promise my self from you; and whatever Entertainment it meet with from others, in this Christ-despising Age, yet two things relieve me; one is, that future

Times may produce more humble and hungry Christians than this gluttied Age enjoys, to whom it will be welcome: The other is, that Duty is discharged, and Endeavours used to bring Men to Christ, and build them up in him; wherein he doth and will rejoice, who is a well-wisher to the Souls of Men.

John Flavel.

ΤΑΥΤΟΤΟΙΟΝ

ΤΟΤΙΟΥΣ TOTIUS OPERIS.

Redemption hath Two Parts, viz. Meritorious IMPETRATION, Part I. and Efficacious APPLICATION, Part II. In the Impetration of it, after a Preliminary Commendation of the Subject, *Serm. 1.* We therein consider,

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>I. The Redeemer, who is considered Two ways, viz.</p> | <p>1. As eternally delighting in his Father's Bosom.
 2. As prepared for this work by Five Eminent Qualifications, viz.</p> | <p><i>Serm. 2.</i>
 <i>Serm. 3.</i>
 <i>Serm. 4.</i>
 <i>Serm. 5.</i>
 <i>Serm. 6.</i>
 <i>Serm. 7.</i></p> |
| <p>II. The Work of Mediation he came about opened in general.</p> | | <p><i>Serm. 8.</i></p> |
| <p>III. The Offices fitting him for that Work, viz.</p> | <p>1. <i>Prophet</i>, as such, { 1. Faithfully revealing God's Mind to Men.
 2. Opening their Understandings to receive it.
 2. <i>Priest</i>, in which Office are considerable, { 1. Its general Nature and Necessity.
 2. Its Parts, viz. { 1. Oblation.
 3. Its Fruits, viz. { 2. Intercession.
 3. <i>King</i>, whose Kingdom is either, { 1. Satisfaction.
 2. Acquisition.
 3. Internal and Spiritual.
 2. External and Providential.</p> | <p><i>Serm. 9.</i>
 <i>Serm. 10.</i>
 <i>Serm. 11.</i>
 <i>Serm. 12.</i>
 <i>Serm. 13.</i>
 <i>Serm. 14.</i>
 <i>Serm. 15.</i>
 <i>Serm. 16.</i>
 <i>Serm. 17.</i></p> |
| <p>IV. The Execution of them in his double state, viz. of,</p> | <p>1. Humiliation, viz. in his, {
 Death, wherein we consider, {
 1. Conception and Birth.
 2. Life and Conversation.
 1. The Preparatives to it, by, { 1. Blessing his Family.
 2. Instituting his Supper.
 3. Prayer in the Garden.
 4. Judas his Treason.
 5. Trial and Sentence.
 6. Going to <i>Golgotha</i>.
 2. Execution of it on the Cross.
 1. Innocently.
 2. Solitarily.
 3. Patiently.
 3. The manner of his Suffering it, viz. { 1. Word.
 2. Word.
 3. Word.
 4. Instructively in his seven last Words, viz. { 4. Word.
 5. Word.
 6. Word.
 7. Word.
 4. Burial.
 In all which, among many others, four great and principal Ends were accomplished.</p> | <p><i>Serm. 18.</i>
 <i>Serm. 19.</i>
 <i>Serm. 20.</i>
 <i>Serm. 21.</i>
 <i>Serm. 22.</i>
 <i>Serm. 23.</i>
 <i>Serm. 24.</i>
 <i>Serm. 25.</i>
 <i>Serm. 26.</i>
 <i>Serm. 27.</i>
 <i>Serm. 28.</i>
 <i>Serm. 29.</i>
 <i>Serm. 30.</i>
 <i>Serm. 31.</i>
 <i>Serm. 32.</i>
 <i>Serm. 33.</i>
 <i>Serm. 34.</i>
 <i>Serm. 35.</i>
 <i>Serm. 36.</i>
 <i>Serm. 37.</i>
 <i>Serm. 38.</i></p> |
| <p>2. Exaltation in the Four famous Steps or Degrees thereof, viz.</p> | <p>1. His Wonderful Resurrection.
 2. His Triumphant Ascension.
 3. His Session at God's Right Hand.
 4. His Coming to Judgment.</p> | <p><i>Serm. 39.</i>
 <i>Serm. 40.</i>
 <i>Serm. 41.</i>
 <i>Serm. 42.</i></p> |

The

The Names of the Subscribers, Encouragers of this Work.

A.

Mr. John Anderson.
Mr. John Atkinson.
Mr. Brab. Aylmer, Bookfeller, Seven Books.
Mr. Aldred, Merchant.
Mr. William Adams, Bookfeller, 21 Books.
Mr. Thomas Ask.
Mr. Appleby.
Mr. Armstrong.
Mr. James Answorth.

B.

Capt. John Backliver, Merchant.
Mr. James Bristow.
Mr. Thomas Batchelor.
Mrs. Elizabeth Ball, Seven Books.
Mr. Edward Burton, Seven Books.
Mr. James Bodicost.
Mr. Henry Bonwick, Bookfeller, Seven Books.
Mr. Benjamin Benister.
Mr. Benjamin Bennet.
Mr. El. Bilton.
Mr. George Burrough.
Mr. Joseph Button, Bookfeller.
Mr. Samuel Bury, Seven Books.
Mr. William Brown, Merchant.
Mr. Charles Bell, Three Books.
Mr. Robert Blackwood, Merchant.
Mrs. Sarah Burgess.
Mr. William Brookman.
Mr. William Brice.
Mr. Brown.
Mr. Boreton.
Mr. Robert Bleau.
Mr. Thomas Braddyll, Seven Books.
Mr. Brooks.
Mr. Benford.

C.

Mr. John Clark.
The Reverend Mr. Edmund Calamy, Seven Books.
Mr. Thomas Cooper.
Mr. Timothy Chatten.
Mr. Daniel Cockerill.
Mr. Thomas and Jos. Carpenter, Seven Books.
Mr. James Cbissy, Merchant.
Mr. John Cay.
Mr. Josiah Clark.
The Reverend Mr. William Caisaires.
Mr. James Chambers.
Mr. Thomas Craige.
Mr. John Craige, Sen.
Mr. John Craige, Jun.
Mr. Patrick Cambell, of Dublin, Seven Books.
Mr. Cadwell, Merchant.
Mr. Duncan Cambell, Seven Books.
Mr. Thomas Carniberts, Seven Books.
Mr. Patrick Cumming.
Mr. Thomas Cowen.
Mr. Christopher Carilt, Three Books.
Mr. George Coning.
The Reverend Mr. Matthew Clark.
Mr. Collier.
Mr. Cope.
Mr. Isaac Clark.
Mr. John Clark.
Mr. Candwell.
Mr. Richard Clear.

D.

Mr. Daniel Diks.
Mr. Denton.
Mr. John Darby, Seven Books.
Mr. William Dicky, Bookfeller in Glasgow, 14 Books.
Mr. Giles Drix.
Mr. John Drury.

E.

Sir Gilbert Elliot.
Mr. Thomas Elton.
Mr. William Elliot.
Mr. John Elliot, Two Books.
Mr. William Elliot, Draper.
The Reverend Mr. Andrew Exart, Minister, 2 Books.

F.

Mr. Daniel Foe.
The Reverend Mr. Robert Flemming.
Mr. Thomas Fife.
Mr. John Fair, Apothecary.
Mr. Thomas Flavcl.

G.

Thomas Gay, Esq; Bookfeller, 21 Books.
The Reverend Mr. Gardiner.
Mr. Grave.
Mr. John Gunter.
Mr. John Gordon, Two Books.
The Reverend Mr. Gallaway.
Mr. Robert Gaylard.

H.

Sir John Hume.
Mr. Hatfield.
Mr. Nath. Hillier, Bookfeller, Seven Books.
Enoch Hudson, Gent.
Mr. Jonathan Hudson.
Mr. James Hargrave.
Mr. Henry Hammond, Bookfeller, Three Books.
Mrs. Mary Haynes.
Mrs. Mary White.
Mr. James Hunter.
Mr. Robert Hunter.
Mr. Harris.
Mr. George Headlam.
Mr. Hobbs.

J.

Mr. Andrew Jefferys, Seven Books.
Mr. Jolly, Seven Books.
Mr. John Jave.
Mr. John Jacob, Merchant.
The Reverend Mr. Jolly.

K.

Mr. Thomas King, Two Books.
The Reverend Mr. John Keeling.
Mr. Henry Knox, Bookfeller, 7 Books.
Mr. Keeling, of Blyton, Bookfeller, 7 Books.
Mr. King, Merchant.

L.

Right Honourable the Lord Levin.
The Reverend Mr. John Langton, Seven Books.

Mr.

Mr. John Laurence, Bookfeller, 14 Books.
 Mr. Thomas Leigh and Co. Bookfeller, Seven Books.
 Mr. Lewis Lammach.
 Mr. Roger Lillington, Seven Books.
 Mr. John London.
 Mr. — Lepre.

M.

The Right Honourable the Earl of Meltrin.
 Mr. Ephraim Mountagne.
 Major — Maxwell.
 Mr. — Mason.
 Mr. — Marshall.
 Mr. Thomas Newcastle.
 Mr. George Mofman, Bookfeller, 21 Books.
 Mr. — Maxwell.
 Mr. John Mackey, Bookfeller, 21 Books.
 Mr. Riche Mount, Bookfeller, Three Books.
 Mr. Stephen Mitchell.
 Mr. — Matthews, Seven Books.
 Mr. John Martin.
 Mr. Alexander Merreal and Co. Seven Books.
 Mr. Robert Mettellean.
 Mr. Robert Mc. Morrau.

N.

Mr. John Nicholson, Bookfeller, Seven Books.
 Mr. H. Nubet, Bookfeller, 7 Books.
 Mr. — Nubet, Merchant.

O.

Ralph Ogle, Esq;
 Mr. John Ogle.
 Mrs. Martha Oughton, Seven Books.
 Mr. — Orton.

P.

Mr. Peter Parker, Bookfeller, Three Books.
 Mr. Benjamin Price, Bookfeller, Seven Books.
 The Reverend Mr. Samuel Pomfret, Seven Books.
 The Reverend Mr. — Powell.
 Mr. Robert Percival.
 Mr. Philip Philipson.
 Mr. Matthew Paris.
 Mr. Matthew Pinkerton.
 Mr. William Park.
 The Reverend Mr. Samuel Palmer.
 The Reverend Mr. R. Pason, 7 Books.
 Mr. James Pagan.
 Mr. Edward Pickard.

R.

The Right Honourable the Earl of Roxburgh.
 The Right Honourable William Lord Ross.

Mr. Jonathan Robinson, Bookfeller, 24 Books.
 Mr. John Richards, Bookfeller, Seven Books.
 The Reverend Mr. Rynalde.
 Mr. George Ridpath.
 Mr. William Richards.

S.

The Right Honourable the Earl of Southerland.
 Mr. William Staples.
 Mr. Ralph Smith, Bookfeller, Seven Books.
 Mr. Nevill Symonds, Bookfeller, Seven Books.
 Mr. William Squires, Seven Books.
 Mr. Thomas Spurn.
 Mr. Jonathan story.
 Mr. William Steele.
 Mr. David Sheriff.
 Capt. James Stewart.
 Mr. Walter Stewart.
 Mr. George Sawbridge, Bookfeller, 14 Books.
 The Reverend Mr. Joseph Swaner, Seven Books.
 Mr. David Smith.
 Mr. George Scot.
 Mr. R. Stoughton.
 Mr. Skinner.
 Mr. Sam. Smith, of Belfast.

T.

The most Honourable — Marquis of Tweedal.
 The Right Honourable — Earl of Tullibardine.
 Mr. Samuel Tuffley.
 Mr. — Trulbock.
 Mr. John Taylor, Bookfeller, 7 Books.
 Mr. William Tatnal, Merchant.
 Mr. Stephen Terry.

V.

Mr. John Vallang, Bookfeller, 21 Books.
 The Reverend Mr. William Vetch, Seven Books.
 Mr. — Vyne.

W.

The Reverend Mr. Daniel Williams.
 The Reverend Mr. John Walker.
 The Rev. Mr. James Wallace, V.D.P.
 Mr. — Webster.
 Mr. Roger Wilson.
 Mr. Robert White.
 Mr. Robert Watson.
 Mr. Robert Wright.
 Mr. Jacob Widdon.
 Mr. John Wilkinson.
 Mr. John Wright.

Y.

Mr. Charles Yee, Bookfeller.

Note, There are many more Subscribers, whose Names are not inserted, because they forbid the same.

The Fountain of Life.

S E R M O N I.

Serm. I.
Opens
the Ex-
cellency
of the
Subject.

I COR. II. 2.

For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

THE former Verse contains an Apology for the plain and familiar manner of the Apostle's Preaching, which was not (as he there tells them) with excellency of Speech, or of Wisdom; i. e. he studied not to gratify their curiosity with Rhetorical strains, or Philosophical niceties. In this he gives the Reason, *for I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, &c.*

Non reli-
quimus
sed pro-
myit.

"Ergo
significat
zelum,
aut eximi-
um dura-
re; in hoc
sacra non
tenet, nec
damnat
omnem a-
lium scien-
tiam, nisi
ut opposi-
tur scien-
tia Christi,
&c. Wall.

I determined not to know. The meaning is not, that he simply despised, or contemned all other studies and knowledge; but so far only as they stand in competition with, or opposition to the study and knowledge of Jesus Christ. And it is as if he should say, It is my stated, settled Judgment, not a hasty, inconsiderate Sentence; but the product, and issue of my most serious and exquisite enquiries. After I have well weighed the case, turned it round, and viewed it exactly on every side, ballanced all advantages and disadvantages, pondered all things that are fit to come into consideration about it, this is the result and final determination, that all other Knowledge, how profitable, how pleasant soever, is not worthy to be named in the same day with the knowledge of Jesus Christ. This therefore I resolve to make the scope and end of my Ministry, and the end regulates the means. Such pedantick Toys and airy Notions as injudicious ears affect, would rather obstruct than promote my grand design among you: Therefore wholly waving that way, I applied my self to a plain, popular, unaffected Dialect, fitted rather to pierce the Heart, and convince the Conscience, than to tickle the Fancy. This is the scope of the Words. In which three things fall under consideration.

First, The subject-matter of his Doctrine, to wit, *Jesus Christ.* *I determined to know nothing,* i. e. to study nothing my self, to teach nothing to you but *Jesus Christ.* Christ shall be the Center to which all the lines of my Ministry shall be drawn. I have spoken and

Vol. I.

written of many other Subjects in my Sermons and Epistles, but it is all *reducatively* the Preaching and Discovery of Jesus Christ: Of all Subjects in the World, this is the sweetest: If there be any thing on this side Heaven worthy our time and studies, this is it. Thus he magnifies his Doctrine, from the excellency of its subject-matter, accounting all other Doctrines but airy things, compared with this.

Secondly, We have here that *special respect or consideration of Christ*, which he singled out from all the rest of the excellent Truths of Christ, to spend the main strength of his Ministry upon; and that is, *Christ as crucified:* And the rather, because hereby he would obviate the vulgar prejudice raised against him upon the account of his Cross: For *Christ crucified was to the Jews a Stumbling-block, and to the Greeks Foolishness*, chap. 1. 23. This also best suited his end, to draw them on to Christ: As Christ above all other Subjects, so Christ Crucified above all things in Christ: There is therefore a great Emphasis in this Word, *And him Crucified.*

vehemen-
tem habet
ipsam
quod ad-
jecit, &
hunc cru-
cifixum.
Pet. Mar-
tyr in loc.

Thirdly, The manner in which he discoursed this transcendent Subject to them is also remarkable: He not only preached Christ Crucified, but he preached him assiduously and plainly: He preach'd Christ frequently; and whenever he preach'd of Christ crucified, he preach'd him in a crucified Style. This is the sum of the Words, to let them know that his Spirit was so intent upon this Subject, as if he neither knew, or cared to speak of any other: All his Sermons were so full of Christ, that his Hearers might have thought he was acquainted with no other Doctrine. Hence observe, Doct. *That there is no Doctrine more excellent in it self, or more necessary to be preached and studied, than the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and him Crucified.*

Christum
crucifixum
styleo cru-
cifixo pra-
dicabat.

All other Knowledge, how much soever it be magnified in the World, is and ought to be esteemed but Dross, in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ,

B

Phil.

Παλῦτοι
μιᾶς θεῶ.
eīa θεῶ.
multiformis sapi-
entia Dei.
Caryl in
Job 11. 6.

Inference 4.

Fourthly, This may inform us by what Rule to judge both Ministers and Doctrines; certainly that is the highest Commendation of a Minister, to be an able Minister of the New-Testament; not of the Letter, but of the Spirit, 2 Cor. 2. 6. He is the best Artist, that can most lively and powerfully display Jesus Christ before the People, evidently setting him forth as crucified among them; and that is the best Sermon that is most full of Christ, not of Art and Language. I know that a holy Dialect well becometh Christ's Ministers, they should not be rude and careless in language or method: But surely the Excellency of a Sermon lies not in that, but in the plainest Discoveries and liveliest Applications of Jesus Christ.

Inference 5.

Let all that mind the honour of Religion, or the peace and comfort of their own Souls, wholly sequester and apply themselves to the study of Jesus Christ and him crucified. Wherefore spend we our selves upon other Studies, when all Excellency, Sweetness and Desirableness is concentr'd in this one? Jesus Christ is fairer than the Children of Men, the chiefest among ten thousands, as the *Apple-tree among the trees of the Wood*, *Quæ faciunt divisa Christ: He beatum, in hoc mixta fluant*; these things which singly ravish and delight the Souls of Men, are all found conjunctly in Christ. O what a blessed Christ is this! whom to know is Eternal Life. From the Knowledge of Jesus Christ do bud forth all the Fruits of Comfort, and that for all Seasons and Conditions. Hence Rev. 22. 2. he is called the *Tree of Life* which bears twelve manner of Fruits, and yields its Fruit every Month, and the very *Leaves of this Tree are for healing*. In Christ Souls have, (1.) All Necessaries for Food and Physick. (2.) All Varieties of Fruits, twelve manner of Fruits, a distinct Sweetness in this, in that, and in the other Attribute, Promise, Ordinance, (3.) In him are these Fruits at all times, he bears Fruit every Month; there is precious Fruit in Jesus Christ, even in the black Month; Winter Fruits, as well as Summer Fruits. O then study Christ, study to know him more extensively. There be many excellent things in Christ, that the most Eagle-eyed Believer hath not yet seen: Ah 'tis pity that any thing of Christ should lie hid from his People! Study to know Christ more intensively, to get the experimental Taste, and lively Power of his Knowledge upon your Hearts and Affections: This is the Knowledge that carries all the sweetness and comfort in it. Christian, I dare appeal to thy Experience, whether the Experimental Taste of Jesus Christ in Ordinances and Duties have not a higher and sweeter relish than any created Enjoyment thou ever tasted in this World? O then separate, devote, and wholly give thy Self, thy Time, thy Strength, to this most sweet transcendent Study.

Inference 6.

Lastly, Let me close the whole with a double Caution, one to our selves, who by our Callings and Professions are the Ministers of Christ; another to those that sit under the Doctrine of Christ daily.

First, If this Doctrine be the most excellent, necessary, fundamental, profound, noble, and comfortable Doctrine, let us then take heed lest while we study to be exact in other things, we be found ignorant in this. Ye know it's ignominious by the common Suffrage of the civiliz'd World, for any Man to be unacquainted with his own Calling, or not to intend the proper Business of it. It's our Calling (as the Bridegroom's Friends) to woo and win Souls to Christ, to set him forth to the People as crucified among them, Gal. 3. S. Ford. 1. to present him in all his attractive Excellencies, that all Hearts may be ravished with his Beauty, and charmed into his Arms by Love: We must also be able to defend the Truths of Christ against undermining Hereticks, to infill his Knowledge into the Ignorant, to answer the Cafes and Scruples of poor doubting Christians. How many intricate Knots have we to untie? What pains, what skill is requisite for such as are employed about our work? And shall we spend our precious time in frivolous Controversies, philosophical Niceties, dry and barren scholastick Notions: Shall we study every thing but Christ? We involve all Volumes but the sacred ones! What is observed even of *Bellarmin*, that he turn'd with loathing from School Divinity, because it wanted the sweet Juice of Piety, may be convictive to many among us, who are often too much in love with worse Employment, than what he is said to loath. O let the Knowledge of Christ dwell richly in us!

Secondly, Let us see that our knowledge of Christ be not a powerless, barren, impracticable Knowledge: O that in its passage from our Understandings to our Lips it might powerfully melt, sweeten, and ravish our Hearts! Remember, Brethren, a holy Calling never saved any Man, without a holy Heart; if our Tongues only be sanctified, our whole Man must be damned. "We and our People must be judged by the same Gospel, and stand at the same Bar, and be sentenc'd on the same Terms, and dealt with as severely as any other Men: We cannot think to be saved by our Clergy, or to come off with a *Legis ut clericus*, when there is wanting the *Credidit, & vixit ut Christianus*; as an *eminent* Divine speaks. O let the Keepers of the Vineyards look to, and keep their own Vineyard: We have a Heaven to win or lose as well as others.

Thirdly, Let us take heed that we withhold not our Knowledge of Christ in ungratefulness from the People. O that our Lips may disperse Knowledge, and feed many! Let us take heed of the Napkin, remembering the day of account is at hand. Remember, beseech you, the *Relations* wherein you stand, and the Obligations resulting thence: Remember the great Shepherd gave himself for us, and gave you to the Flock; your Time, your Gifts are not yours but God's. Remember the pinching wants of Souls who are Perishing for want of Christ; and if their Tongues should not, yet their Necessities do bespeak us, as they did *Joseph*, Gen. 47. 15. *Wherefore should we die in thy presence? give us Food*.
that

I am sure
(saith a ho-
ly one) the
Saints at
their best,
are but
Strangers
to the
weight and
worth of the in-
com-
parable
sweetness of
Christ: He beatum,
in hoc mixta fluant;
these things
which singly ravish
and delight the Souls
of Men, are all found
conjunctly in Christ.
O what a blessed
Christ is this! whom
to know is Eternal
Life. From the Know-
ledge of Jesus Christ
do bud forth all the
Fruits of Comfort,
and that for all Sea-
sons and Conditions.
Hence Rev. 22. 2. he
is called the Tree of
Life which bears
twelve manner of
Fruits, and yields
its Fruit every Month,
and the very
Leaves of this Tree
are for healing. In
Christ Souls have,
(1.) All Necessaries
for Food and Physick.
(2.) All Varieties
of Fruits, twelve
manner of Fruits,
a distinct Sweetness
in this, in that,
and in the other
Attribute, Promise,
Ordinance, (3.) In
him are these Fruits
at all times, he
bears Fruit every
Month; there is
precious Fruit in
Jesus Christ, even
in the black Month;
Winter Fruits, as
well as Summer
Fruits. O then
study Christ, study
to know him more
extensively. There
be many excellent
things in Christ,
that the most
Eagle-eyed Believer
hath not yet seen:
Ah 'tis pity that
any thing of Christ
should lie hid from
his People! Study
to know Christ
more intensively,
to get the experi-
mental Taste, and
lively Power of his
Knowledge upon
your Hearts and
Affections: This
is the Knowledge
that carries all
the sweetness and
comfort in it. Chri-
stian, I dare ap-
pel to thy Experi-
ence, whether the
Experimental Taste
of Jesus Christ in
Ordinances and
Duties have not a
higher and sweeter
relish than any
created Enjoyment
thou ever tasted
in this World? O
then separate, de-
vot, and wholly
give thy Self, thy
Time, thy Strength,
to this most sweet
transcendent Study.

that we may live and not die. Even the Sea-monsters draw forth their Breasts to their young ones, and shall we be cruel! cruel to Souls! Did not Christ think it too much to sweat Blood, yea to die for them? and shall we think it much to watch, study, preach, pray, and do what we can for their Salvation? O let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ!

Secondly, To the People that sit under the Doctrine of Christ daily, and have the light of his Knowledge shining round about them.

First, Take heed ye do not reject and despise this Light. This may be done two ways: First, When you despise the means of Knowledge by slight and low esteems of it. Surely if you thus reject Knowledge, God will reject you for it, *Ilesea* 4. 6. it is a despising of the richest Gift that ever Christ gave to the Church: and however it be a Contempt and Slight that begins low, and seems only to vent it self upon the weak Parts, inartificial Discourses, and untaking Tones and Gestures of the Speakers; yet (believe it) it's a daring Sin, that flies higher than you are aware, *Luke* 10. 6. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* *Secondly*, You despise the Knowledge of Christ, when you despise the Directions, and loving Constraints of that Knowledge; when you refuse to be guided

by your Knowledge, your Light and your Lusts contest and struggle within you: O 'tis sad when your Lusts master your Light; you sin not as the Heathens sin, who know not God; but when you sin, you must slight and put by the notices of your own Consciences, and offer violence to your own Convictions: And what sad work will this make in your Souls? How soon will it lay your Consciences waste?

Secondly, Take heed that you rest not satisfied with that Knowledge of Christ you have attained, but grow on towards Perfection. It's the Pride and Ignorance of many Professors when they have got a few raw and indigested Notions, to swell with self-conceits of their excellent Attainments; and it's the Sin even of the best of Saints, when they see (*veritas in profundo*) how deep the Knowledge of Christ lies, and what pains they must take to dig for it, to throw by the Shovel of Duty, and cry *Dig we cannot*. To your work, Christians, to your work; let not your Candle go out, sequester your selves to this study, look what Intercourses and Correspondences are betwixt the two Worlds; what Communion forever God and Souls maintain, it is in this way: count all therefore but Dross in comparison of that excellency which is in the Knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Serm. 2.
Sets
forth
Christ in
his Es-
sential
and
Prime-
val Glo-
ry.

S E R M O N II.

PROV. VIII. 30.

Then was I by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.

These words are a part of that excellent commendation of Wisdom, by which in this Book Solomon intends two things, *First*, Grace, or Holiness, *Prov.* 4. 7. *Wisdom is the principal thing*; *Secondly*, Jesus Christ, the fountain of that Grace: And look as the former is renowned for its excellency, *Job* 28. 14, 15. so the latter in this context, wherein the Spirit of God describes the most blessed state of Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, from those eternal delights he had with his Father, before his assumption of our nature: *Then was I by him, &c.* that long *avum* was wholly swallowed up and spent in unspeakable delights and pleasures. Which delights were twofold, (1.) The Father and Son delighted one in another, (from which delights the Spirit is not here excluded) without communicating that their joy to any other, for no creature did then exist save in the mind of God, *ver.* 30. (2.) They delighted in the salvation of men, in the prospect of that work, tho' not yet extant, *ver.* 31. My present business lies in the former, *viz.* the mutual delights of the Father and Son, one with and in another:

The account whereof we have in the Text: Wherein consider,

1. The glorious condition of the non-incarnated Son of God, described by the person with whom his fellowship was, *then was I by him*, or with him; so with him as never was any, in his very bosom, *John* 1. 18. the only begotten Son was in the bosom of the Father; an expression of the greatest dearness and intimacy in the World: as if he should say, wrap up in the very Soul of his Father, embosomed in God.

2. This fellowship is illustrated by a Metaphor, wherein the Lord will stoop to our capacities [as *one brought up with him*] the Hebrew word יָצָא is sometimes rendered a cunning workman, or curious Artificer, as in *Can.* 7. 1. which is the same word. And indeed Christ shewed himself such an Artist in the Creation of the World; for all things were made by him, and

ION fidelem artificem significat; placuit hoc nomen sibi assumere, ut declararet tandem conversionem cordis non à seipso perficisset, sed ab hoc fidele artifice. *Lightman* in *Can.* 126. Ridere, בָּרַח ludere, laxari, deridere, &c. Similes se facit nutricio, stans apud patrem. *Lusat.* in *loc.*

without

without him there was nothing made, that was made, Joh. 1. 3. but *Montanus*, and others render it *nutricius*, and so Christ is here compared to a delightful child, sporting before its Father: The Hebrew root *נשׂא* which our translation renders *rejoicing before him*, signifies to laugh, play, or rejoice; so that look as Parents delight to see their Children sporting before them, so did the Father delight in beholding this Darling of his bosom.

3. This delight is further amplified by the perpetuity and uninterruptedness thereof; *I was day by day his delights, rejoicing always before him*: These delights of the Father and the Son one in another, knew not a moment's interruption or diminution: Thus did these great and glorious Persons mutually let forth their fullest pleasure and delight each into the heart of other: They lay as it were imbosomed one in another, entertaining themselves with delights and pleasures ineffable, and unconceivable. Hence we observe,

Doct. That the condition and state of Jesus Christ before his Incarnation, was a state of highest and most unspeakable delight and pleasure, in the enjoyment of his Father.

John tells us, he was in the bosom of his Father: to lye in the bosom is the posture of dearest love, *Joh. 12. 23. Now there was leaning on Jesus bosom one of his Disciples whom Jesus loved*: but Christ did not lean upon the Father's bosom, as that Disciple did on his, but lay in it: And therefore in *Jsa. 42. 1. The Father calls him mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth*, which is * variously rendered, the Septuagint *quem suscepit*, whom my Soul takes, or wraps up: Others *complevit*, one that highly pleases and delights my very Soul: And *2 Cor. 8. 9.* he is said in this estate, wherein I am now describing him, to be rich: And *Phil. 2. 7. To be equal with God, and to be in the image of God*, (i. e.) to have all the glory and ensigns of the Majesty of God; and the riches which he speaks of, was no less than all that God the Father hath, *Joh. 16. 15. All that the Father hath is mine*: And what he now hath in this his exalted state, is the same he had before his humiliation, *Jch. 17. 5. Now to glimpse out (as we are able) the unspeakable felicity of that state of Christ, whilst he lay in that blessed*

John 1. 18.
Metaphorick intimatio-
nis commu-
nionis fi-
lii Dei
cum patre
innu-
ent, quæ
con-
sistit in
ternæ ge-
nerationis
rum in ar-
dissima u-
nitate na-
turæ, cum
in arden-
tissima di-
lectio-
ne, deniq; in
secretissi-
ma commu-
nitione.
Gloss.

* Hieron.
Quem ap-
probat.
Pag. 82
Mont. com-
plevit a-
nimæ.
mez. Sep-
cepit ani-
ma mea.

bosom, I shall consider it three ways, *negatively, positively, and comparatively.*

1. Let us consider that state *negatively*, by removing from it all those degrees of Abasement, and Sorrow, which his Incarnation brought him under: As,

First, He was not then abased to the condition of a Creature, which was a low stoop indeed, and that which upon the matter undid him, in point of Reputation; for by this (saith the Apostle) *he made himself of no Reputation*. *Phil. 2. 7.* it emptied him of his glory: For God to be made Man, is such an Abasement as none can express: but then not only to appear in true Flesh, but also in the likeness of sinful Flesh, as *Rom. 8. 3. O what is this!*

Secondly, Christ was not under the Law in this Estate. I confess it was no disparagement, to Adam in the Estate of Innocency, to Angels in their state of Glory, to be under Law to God;

but it was an unconceivable Abasement to the absolute independent Being to come under Law; yea, not only under the obedience, but also under the malediction and curse of the Law, *Gal. 4. 4. But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law.*

Thirdly, In this State he was not liable to any of those sorrowful consequents and attendants of that frail and feeble state of Humanity, which he afterwards assumed, with the nature: as, (1.) He was unacquainted with Griefs, There was no sorrowing nor fighting in that Bosom where he lay; tho' afterwards he became a *Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*, *Isa. 53. 3. A Man of Sorrows*, as if had been constituted and made up of pure and unmixed Sorrows: Every day conversing with Griefs, as with his intimate Companions and Acquaintance. (2.) He was never pinched with Poverty and Wants, while he continued in that Bosom, as he was afterwards when he said, *the Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head*. Ah blessed Jesus! thou needst not to have wanted a place bosom of to have lain thine Head, hadst thou not left that Bosom for my sake. (3.) He never underwent reproach and shame in that Bosom, there was nothing but Glory and Honour reflected upon him by his Father, tho' afterwards he was de- spised and rejected of Men, *Jsa. 53. 3. his Father never looked upon him without Smiles and Love, Delight and Joy*, tho' afterwards he be- came a reproach of Men, and despised of the People, *Psal. 22. 6.* (4.) His holy Heart was never offended with an impure suggestion or Temptation of the Devil; all the while he lay in that Bosom of Peace and Love, he never knew what it was to be assaulted with Temptations, to be besieged and battered upon by unclean Spirits, as he did afterwards, *Matth. 4. 1. Then self as it was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the Wilder- nesses to be tempted of the Devil*. It was for our sakes that he submitted to those exercises of Spirit, to be in all points tempted like as we poor men are, that he might be unto us a merciful and faithful High-Priest, *Heb. 4. 14.* (5.) He was never sensible of pains and tortures in Soul or Body, there were no such things in that blessed Bosom where he lay; tho' afterwards he groaned and sweated under them, *Jsa. 53. 5. The Lord embraced him from Eternity, but never wounded him till he stood in our place and room.* (6.) There were no hidings or withdrawals of his Father from him, there was not a Cloud from Eternity upon the face of God, till Jesus Christ had left that bosom: It was a new thing to Christ to see frown in the face of his Father: a new thing for him to cry, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* *Matth. 27. 46.* but still there were never any impressions of his Father's wrath upon him, as there were afterwards: God never delivered such a bitter cup of wrath into his hands before, as that was, *Matth. 26. 39. Lastly, There was no Death*, to which he was subject in that bosom. All these things were new things to Christ, he was above them all, till for our sakes he voluntarily subjected himself unto them. Thus you see what that state was not.

Mat. 8. 20.

He thus was in the Father: An Expression showing the intimacy, and secret delight and love he had the Father. Now unspeakable is it that he lay should de- prive him- self of the sense of it? to put him- self out of Heaven into Hell, this is de- ceive our love than ever we can i- magine or conceive: No wonder the Apostle calls it measureless and unspeakable riches of Grace: we are never able to go to the bottom of it, there is more Grace and Love behind. Mr. Anth. Burges, lect. in Joh. 17. p. 503.

2. Let us consider it *positively*, what it was, and guess by some particular Considerations (for indeed we can but guess) at the glory of it: As, (1.) We cannot but conceive it to be a State of matchless Happiness, if we consider the Persons enjoying and delighting each in other: He was with God, *John 1. 1.* God you know is the Fountain, Ocean, and Center of all Delights and Joys, *Psal. 16. 11. In thy presence is fulness of Joy.* To be wrapt up in the Soul and Bosom of all Delights, as Christ was, must needs be a State transcending Apprehension; to have the Fountain of Love and Delight letting out it self so immediately, and fully, and everlastingly upon this only begotten darling of his Soul, so as it never did communicate it self to any; judge what a state of transcendent felicity this must be. Great Persons have great delights.

(2.) Or if we consider the intimacy, dearness, yea, oneness of those great Persons one with another: The nearest union, the sweeter the communion: Now Jesus Christ was not only near and dear to God, but one with him, *I and my Father are one, Joh. 10. 30.* one in nature, will, love and delight; there is indeed a Moral union of Souls among Men by Love, but this was a natural oneness; no Child is so one with his Father, no Husband so one with the Wife of his Bosom, no Friend so one with his Friend, no Soul so one with its Body, as Jesus Christ and his Father were one. O what matchless delights must necessarily flow from such a blessed Union!

(3.) Consider again the purity of that delight with which the blessed Father and Son embraced each other; the best Creature delights one in another, at mixed, debased, and allayed: If there be something ravishing and engaging, there is also something cloying and distasteful: The purer any delight is, the more excellent. Now there are no Christical streams flowing so purely from the Fountain, no beams of light so unmixed from the Sun, as the Loves and Delights of these holy and glorious Persons were: The holy, holy, holy Father embraced the thrice holy Son with a most holy Delight and Love.

(4.) Consider the constancy of this delight: It was from everlasting, as in *ver. 23.* and from Eternity, it never suffered one moment's interruption: The ever-flowing Fountain of God's Delight and Love never stoppt its course, never ebbed; but as he speaks in the Text, *I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.* Once more, consider the fulness of that delight, the perfection of that pleasure; *I was delights:* So the word is in its original; not only plural delights, all delights, but also in the abstract Delight it self: As afterwards from the abundance of his sorrows, he was filled, a Man of Sorrows, so here, from the fulness of his delights: As who should say, even constituted and made up of pleasure and delight.

3. Once more, let us consider it *comparatively*, and this state will yet appear more glorious, comparing it with either the choicest delights that one creature takes in another, or that God takes in the creature, or that the creature takes in God: Measure these immense delights be-

twixt the Father, and his Son, by either of these lines, and you shall find them infinitely short: For, (1.) Tho' the delights that creatures take in each other, be sometimes a great delight; such was *Jacob's* delight in *Benjamin*, whose Life is said to be bound up in the lad's life, a dear and high expression, *Gen. 44. 30.* such was that of *Jonathan* in *David*, whose Soul was knit with his Soul, and he loved him as his own Soul, *1 Sam. 13. 1.* and such is the delight of one Friend in another, *there is a Friend that is as a Man's own Soul*, *Deut. 13. 6.* yet all this is but Creature-delight, and can in no particular match the delights betwixt the Father and the Son: For this is but a finite delight, according to the measure and abilities of Creatures; but that is infinite, suitable to the infinite perfection of the Divine Being: This is always mixed, that perfectly pure. (2.) Or if you compare it with the delight that God takes in the Creatures; it is confessed that God takes great delight in some Creatures, *The Lord takes pleasure in his Saints, he rejoices over them with singing; and rests in his Love, Zeph. 3. 17. lla. 62. 5.* But yet there is a great difference betwixt his delight in Creatures, and his delights in Christ; for all his delight in the Saints is *secondary*, and for Christ's sake: But his delights in Christ are *primary*, and for his own sake: We are accepted in the beloved, *Eph. 1. 6.* he is beloved, and accepted for himself. (3.) To conclude, compare it once more with the delights that the best of creatures take in God and Christ, and it must be confessed that is a choice Delight, and a transcendent Love, with which they love and delight in him, *Psal. 73. 25. Whom have I in Heaven but thee! and on Earth there is none that I desire besides thee.* What pangs of Love? What raptures of delight, did the Spouse express to Christ? *O thou whom my Soul loveth!* But surely our delight in God is no perfect rule to measure his delight in Christ by: For our love to God (at the best) is still imperfect, that's the burden and constant complaint of Saints, but this is perfect: Ours is inconstant, up and down, ebbing and flowing, but this is constant. So then to conclude, the Condition and State of *Jesus Christ* before his Incarnation, was a state of highest and matchless Delight, in the enjoyment of his Father. The *Lives* follow.

Use of Incarnation. In *Intercession*

Inference 1. What an astonishing act of Love was this then, for the Father to give the Delight, the Darling of his Soul, out of his very Bosom, for poor Sinners? All Tongues must needs pause and falter, that attempt the expression of his Grace; expressions being here swallowed up: *God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son, John 3. 16.* here is a *sic*, without a *scit*; so loved them: How did he love them? Nay, here you must excuse the Tongues of Angels, which of us would deliver a Child, the Child of our Delights, an only Child to death, for the greatest Inheritance in the World? What tender Parent can endure a parting pull with such a Child? When *Hagar* was taking her last leave (as he thought) of her *Ismael*, *Gen. 21. 26.* the Text saith, *she went and sat her down over against him, a good way off; for she said, Let me not see the Death of the Child; and she sat*

Amore,
Dumine,
pluquam
meos, plu-
quam meos,
pluquam
me. Bern.
Supple
(fair one)
there were
a Hell be-
twixt me
and Christ,
and Christ
should say,
was in thy
foot and
came
through, or
thou should
have none
of me, would
I not do it!

fare over again? him, and lift up her Voice, and wept: Tho' she were none of the best Mothers, nor he the best of Children; yet she could not give up a Child. O 'twas hard to part! What an outcry did David make, even for an *Abraham*! Withing he had died for him. What a Hole (as I may say) hath the Death of some Children made in the Hearts of some Parents, which will never be closed up in this World? Yet surely, never did any Child lye so close to a Parent's Heart, as Christ did to his Father's; and yet he willingly parts with him, tho' his only One, the Son of his Delights, and that to Death, a cursed Death, for Sinners, for the worst of Sinners. O *miranda Dei Philanthropia*! matchless Love, a Love past finding out! Let all Men therefore, in the Business of their Redemption, give equal Glory to the Father with the Son, *John* 5. 23. if the Father had not loved thee, he had never parted with such a Son for thee.

It is admirable that Christ should not only put himself out of comfort, but also from the enjoyment of that manifested Glory and Honour he might have retained to himself; for that Glory which he had with the Father from the beginning of the World: He had it in Right, but not in Possession: He voluntarily divested himself of that to accomplish our Redemption.

on. Burgeß on *John* 17. v. 19.

Infer. 2. From one wonder, let your Souls turn to another, for they are now in the midst of Wonders: adore, and be for ever astonished at the Love of Jesus Christ to poor Sinners; that ever he should consent to leave such a Bosom, and the ineffable Delights that were there, for such poor Worms as we are. O heights, depths, lengths, and breadths of unmeasurable Love! O see *Rom.* 5. 6, 7, 8. read, and wonder: how is the Love of Christ commended in ravishing Circumstances to poor Sinners! You would be loth to leave a Creature's Bosom, a comfortable Dwelling, a fair Estate, for the best Friend in the World; your Souls are loth to leave their Bodies, tho' they have no such great content there: But which of you, if ever you found by experience what it is to be in the Bosom of God by Divine Communion, would be perswaded to leave such a Bosom for all the good that is in the World? And yet Jesus Christ, who was embraced in that Bosom, after another manner than ever you were acquainted with, freely left it, and laid down the Glory and Riches he enjoyed there, for your sakes; and as the Father loved him, even so (Believers) hath he loved you, *John* 17. 22. What manner of Love is this! Who ever loved as Christ loves? who ever denied himself for Christ, as Christ denied himself for us?

Infer. 3. Here we are informed, That Interest in Jesus Christ is the true way to all spiritual Preferment in Heaven. Do you covet to be in the Heart, in the favour and delight of God? Get Interest in Jesus Christ, and you shall presently be there. What old *Israel* said of the Children of his beloved *Joseph*, thy Children are my Children, the same God saith of all the dear Children of Christ, *Gen.* 48. 5, 9. You fee among Men, all things are carried by Interest; Persons rise in this World, as they are befriended; Preferment goes by Favour: So 'tis in Heaven, Persons are preferred according to their Interest in the Beloved, *Ephes.* 1. 6. Christ is the great Favourite in Heaven; his Image upon your Souls, and his Name in your Prayers, makes both accepted with God.

Infer. 4. How worthy is Jesus Christ of all our Love, and Delight? You see how infinitely the Father delighteth in him, how he ravishes the Heart of God; and shall he not ravish our Hearts? I present you a Christ this Day, able to ravish any Soul that will but view and consider him. O that you did but see this lovely Lord, Jesus Christ! Then would you go home sick of Love: surely he is a drawing Saviour, *John* 12. 32. Why do ye lavish away our precious Affections upon Vanity? None but Christ is worthy of them; when you spend your precious Affections upon other Objects, what is it, but to dig for Dross with golden Mattocks? The Lord direct our Hearts into the Love of Christ. O that our Hearts, Loves and Delights did meet and concenter with the Heart of God in this most blessed Object! O let him that left God's Bosom for you, be embosomed by you, tho' yours be nothing to God's; he that left God's Bosom for you, deserves yours.

Infer. 5. If Christ be the beloved Darling of the Father's Soul, think what a grievous and unsufferable thing it is to the Heart of God, to see his dear Son despised, slighted, and rejected by Sinners: Verily there is no such cut to the Heart of God in the whole World. Unbelievers trample upon God's darling, tread under foot him that eternally lay in his Bosom, *Heb.* 10. 29. Smite the apple of his Eye, and how God will bear this, that Parable, *Mat.* 21. 37, to 40. will inform you; surely he will miserably destroy such wretched Sinners. If you would study to do God the greatest despite, there is none like this. What a dismal word is that, *1 Cor.* 16. 22. If any Man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha, (i. e.) let the great Curse of God lye upon that Man till the Lord come. O Sinners! You shall one day know the price of this Sin, you shall feel what it is to despise a Jesus, that is able to compel Love from the hardest Heart. O that you would slight him no more! O that this Day your Hearts might fall in love with him! I tell you, if you would set your Love to sale, none bids so fair for it as Christ.

2. Use of Exhortation.

1. To Saints; If Christ lay eternally in his Bosom of Love, and yet was content to forsake and leave it for your sakes; then, (1.) Be you ready to forsake and leave all the Comforts you have on Earth for Christ; famous *Galleacius* left all for his Enjoyment. *Moses* left all the glory of Egypt. *Peter*, and the other Apostles, left all, *Luk.* 18. 28. But what have we to leave for Christ, in comparison of what he left for us? Surely Christ is the highest pattern of Self-denial in the World. (2.) Let this confirm your Faith in Prayer: If he that has such an Interest in the Heart of God intercede with the Father for you, then never doubt of Audience and Acceptance with him; surely you shall be accepted through the Beloved, *Ephes.* 1. 6. Christ was never denied any thing that he asked, *John* 11. 42. the Father hears him always; tho' you are not worthy, Christ is, and he ever lives to make Intercession for you, *Heb.* 7. 25. (3.) Let this encourage thy Heart, O Saint, in a dying Hour, and not only make thee patient in Death, but

but in a holy manner impatient till thou be gone, for whither is thy Soul now going, but to that Bosom of Love whence Christ came? John 17. 24. *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am: and where is he? But in that Bosom of Glory and Love where he lay before the World was, ver. 5.* O then let every Believer encourage his Soul; comfort ye one another with these words, I am leaving the Bosom of a Creature, I am going to the Bosom of God.

2. To Sinners, exhorting them to embrace the Bosom-Son of God: Poor Wretches! What-

ever you are, or have been; whatever Guilt or Discouragement at present you lye under, embrace Christ who is freely offered you, and you shall be as dear to God as the holiest and most eminent Believer in the World: But if you still continue to despise and neglect such a Saviour, forer Wrath is treasured up for you than other Sinners, even something worse than dying without Mercy, *Heb. 10. 28.* O that these discoveries and overtures of Christ may never come to such a fatal Issue with any of your Souls, in whose Eyes his Glory hath been this day opened!

Serm. 3.
Opens
the Co-
venant
of Re-
demption
betwixt
the Fa-
ther and
the Re-
deemer.

S E R M O N III.

ISA. LIII. 12.

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his Soul unto death: And he was numbred with the Transgressors, and he bare the Sin of many, and made Intercession for the Transgressors.

IN this Chapter the Gospel seems to be epitomized, the subject Matter of it is the death of Christ, and the glorious Issue thereof; by reading of it, the Eunuch of old, and many Jews since, have been converted to Christ. Christ is here considered *absolutely and relatively*; absolutely, and so his Innocency is industriously vindicated, *ver. 9.* Tho' he suffer'd grievous things, yet not for his own Sins, *for he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his Mouth;* but relatively considered in the capacity of a Surety for us: So the Justice of God is as fully vindicated in his Sufferings; *ver. 6.* *The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.* How he came to sustain this Capacity, and relation of a Surety for us, is in these Verses plainly assured to be by his Compact and Agreement with his Father before the Worlds were made, *ver. 10, 11, 12.*

In this Verse we have, (1.) His Work. (2.) His Reward. (3.) The Respect or Relation of each to the other. (1.) His Work, which was indeed a hard Work, *to pour out his Soul unto Death,* aggravated by the Companions, *set down of, with whom, being numbred with Transgressors;* the Capacity in which, bearing all the Sins of the Elect, *he bear the Sins of many;* and by the manner of his bearing it, *viz. meekly,* and forgivingly, *he made Intercession for the Transgressors;* this was his Work. (2.) The Reward or Fruit which is promised him for this work, *Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the Spoil with the strong;* wherein is a plain Al-

Vol. I.

lusion to Conquerors in War, for whom are reserved the richest Garments, and most honourable Captives to follow the Conqueror as his addition to his Magnificence and Triumph; these were wont to come after them in Chains, *Isa. 45. 14.* see *Judg. 5. 3.* (3.) The Respect or Relation betwixt that Work and this Triumph: Some will have this Work to have no other relation to that Glory than a meer Antecedent to a Consequent: Others give it the respect and relation of a meritorious Cause to a Reward. 'Tis well observed by Dr. Featly, that the Hebrew particle *וְ* which we render therefore, noting order, it is not worth so much contention about it, whether it be the order of *Causality*, or meer *Antecedency*; neither do I foresee any absurdity in calling Christ's Exaltation, the Reward and Fruit of his Humiliation: However 'tis plain, whether one or other, 'tis that the Father here agrees and promises to give him, if he will undertake the Redemption of the Elect, by pouring out his Soul unto death: of all which this is the plain result,

Doct. That the business of Man's Salvation was transacted upon Covenant terms, betwixt the Father and the Son, from all Eternity.

I would not here be mistaken, as tho' I were now to treat of the Covenant of Grace, made in Christ betwixt God and us; it is not the Covenant of Grace, but of Redemption I am now to speak to, which differs from the Covenant of Grace both and regard of the *Federates*: In this 'tis God the Father, and Jesus Christ, that mutually covenant; in that it's

way of Co-
venant. It
his Soul
should set
it self an
Offering
for Sin,
(for so ac-
cording to
the Original
do good
Authors
read the
Text) he
shall see
his Seed,
prolong
his Days,
and the
Pleasure of
the Lord
shall prosper
in his
hand, *ver. 10.*

Norton's
Orthodox
Evangelist,
pag. 41. The
Call of the
Lord Jesus
unto Office,
includes E-
lection on
the Father's
part, and
Acceptation
on the Me-
diator's
part; and is
set down of
with whom,
being numbred
with Trans-
gressors; for
the manner of
mutual
Transaction
between
God and
Christ,
whereby he
was design-
ed thereunto,
as it
were, by

God and Man: They differ also in the *preceptive* part; in this it is required of Christ that he should shed his Blood, in that it is required of us that we believe: They also differ in their *Promises*; in this God promises to Christ a Name above every Name, ample Dominion from Sea to Sea; in that to us Grace and Glory: So that these are two distinct Covenants.

The substance of this Covenant of Redemption is Dialoguewise exprest to us in *Isa. 49* where (as Divines have well observed) Christ begins at the first and second Verses, and shews his Commillion, telling his Father, how he had both called and prepared him for the Work of Redemption: *The Lord hath called me from the Womb—h. hath made my Mouth like a sharp Sword, and made me a polished Shaft, &c. q. d.* by reason of that superabundant measure of the Spirit of Wisdom and Power wherewith I am anointed and filled, my Doctrine shall as a Sword pierce the Hearts of Sinners, yea, like an Arrow drawn to the head, strike point-blank into Souls standing at a great distance from God and Godliness.

Having told God how ready and fit he was for his Service, he will know of him what Reward he shall have for his Work, for he resolves his Blood shall not be sold at low and cheap Rates: Hereupon, *ver. 2.* The Father offers him the Elect of *Israel* for his Reward, bidding low at first (as they that make Bargains use to do) and only offers him that small Remnant, still intending to bid higher: But Christ will not be furnished with these, he values his Blood higher than so; therefore in *ver. 4.* He is brought in complaining, *I have laboured in vain, and spent my Strength for nought, q. d.* This is but a small Reward for so great a Suffering as I must undergo, my Blood is much more worth than this comes to, and will be sufficient to redeem all the Elect dispersed among the Isles of the Gentiles, as well as the lost Sheep of the House of *Israel*. Hereupon the Father comes up higher, and tells him, he intends to reward him better than so; and therefore, *ver. 6.* tells him, *It's a light thing that thou shouldst be my Servant, to raise up the Tribes of Jacob, and to rest over the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my Salvation to the ends of the Earth.* Thus is the Treaty carried on betwixt them, transacting it after the manner of Men.

Now to open this great Point, we will here consider, (1.) The Persons transacting one with another. (2.) The Business transacted. (3.) The quality and manner of the Transaction, which is federal, (4.) The Articles to which they agree. (5.) How each Person performs his Engagement to the other. And lastly, The Antiquity or Eternity of this Covenant-Transaction.

(1.) The Persons transacting and dealing with each other in this Covenant; and indeed they are great Persons, God the Father, and God the Son; the former as a *Creditor*, and the latter as a *Surety*: The Father stands upon Satisfaction, the Son engages to give it. If it be demanded why the Father and the Spi-

rit might not as well have treated upon our Redemption, as the Father, and Son? It is answered, Christ is the natural Son of God, and therefore fittest to make us the adopted Sons of God. Christ also is the middle Person in the Trinity, and therefore fittest to be the Mediator and middle Person betwixt us and God. The Spirit hath another Office assigned him, even to apply, as Christ's Vicegerent, the Redemption designed by the Father, and purchased by the Son for us.

(2.) The Business transacted betwixt them, and that was the Redemption and Recovery of all God's Elect; our Eternal Happiness lay now before them, our Dearest and Everlasting Concerns were now in their hands; the Elect (tho' not yet in being) are here considered as existent, yea, and as fallen, miserable, forlorn Creatures: How these may again be restored to Happiness (*salva justitia Dei*) without prejudice to the Honour, Justice, and Truth of God; this, this is the Business that lay before them.

(3.) For the manner or quality of the Transaction, it was *federal*, or of the nature of a Covenant; it was by mutual engagements and stipulations, each Person undertaking to perform his part in order to our recovery.

We find each Person undertaking for himself by solemn Promise; the Father promisseth that he will *bold his Hand and keep him*, *Iſa. 42. 6.* The Son promisseth he will obey his Father's call to suffering, and *not be rebellious*, *Iſa. 50. 5.* And having promised, each holds the other to his Engagement. The Father stands upon the Satisfaction promised him: And when the Payment was making, he will not abate him one Farthing; *Rom. 8. 32.* *God spared not his own Son, (i. e.)* he abated nothing of the full Price he was to have at his hands for us.

And as the Father stood strictly upon the Terms of the Covenant, so did Christ also; *Joh. 17. 45.* *I have glorified thee on Earth, (saith he to the Father) I have finished the Work thou gavest me to do; and now, Father, glorify me with thine own self:* As if he had said, Father, the Work is done, now where's the Wages I was promised? I call for Glory as my due, as much my due as the hire of the Labourer is his due when his Work is done.

(4.) More particularly, we will next consider the Articles to which they do both agree, or what it is that each Person doth for himself promise to the other. And to let us see how much the Father's Heart is engaged in the Salvation of poor Sinners, there are five things which he promisseth to do for Christ if he will undertake that Work.

First, He promisseth to invest him, and appoint him to a threefold Office, answerable to Misery that lay upon the Elect, as so many bars to all communion with, and enjoyment of God; for if ever Man be restored to that Happiness, the blindness of his Mind must be cured, the guilt of Sin expiated, and his Captivity to Sin led captive: Answerably, Christ must of God be made *unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*, *1 Cor.*

1. 30.

Vide Robert's Medulla Bib. p. 1577. & Lyf. Test. p. 83, 84.

Causa externa facit facinorosa, id est peccata & poenam promerentia, inquam misericordia Dei feracior, & ob quam poenas omnes nobis debitas subit Filius Dei, ut per eum pristinæ felicitati restitueretur. Synop. purior. Theol. p. 350.

Vid. Goodwin's Triumph of Faith.

1. 30. And he is made so to us, as our *Prophet, Priest, and King*: but he could not put himself into either of these, for if so, he had acted without Commission, and consequently all he did had been invalid; Heb. 5. 5. *Christ glorified not himself to be made a High-Priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son.* A Commission there for to act authoritatively in these Offices being necessary to our recovery, the Father engages to him to seal him such a three-fold Commission.

He promised to invest him with an *External and Royal Priesthood*; Psal. 110. 4. *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedeck.* This *Melchisedeck* being King of *Righteousness*, and King of *Salem*, that is, *Peace*, had a *Royal Priesthood*: and his descent not being reckoned, it had an adumbration of Eternity in it, and so was more apt to type and shadow forth the Priesthood of Christ, than *Aaron's* was, Heb. 7. 16, 17, 24, 25. as the Apostle accommodates them there.

He promiseth moreover to make him a *Prophet*, and that an extraordinary one, even the *Prince of Prophets*; the chief *Shepherd*, as much superior to all others, as the *Sun* is to the *lesser Stars*: So you have it, Isa. 42. 6, 7. *I will give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, to open the blind Eyes, &c.*

And not only so, but to make him *King* also, and that of the whole *Empire of the World*; so Psal. 2. 6, 7, 8. *Ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the utmost ends of the Earth for thy Possession.* Thus he promiseth to qualify and furnish him completely for the work, by his investiture with this threefold Office.

Secondly, And for as much as he knew it was a hard and difficult work his Son was to undertake, a work that would have broken the backs of all the Angels in Heaven, and Men on Earth, had they engaged in it, therefore he promiseth to stand by him, and assist and strengthen him for it: So Isa. 42. 5, 6, 7. *I will hold thy hand, or take hold of thee with my hand, for so it may be rendered, (i. e.) I will under-prop and support thy Humanity when it's even overweighed with the Burden that is to come upon it, and ready to sink down under it; for so you know the case stood with him, Mark 14. 34. and so it was foretold of him, Isa. 53. 7. He was oppressed, &c. and indeed the Humanity needed a prop of no less strength than the infinite power of the Godhead: The same Promise you have in the first verse also, Behold my Servant, whom I uphold.*

Thirdly, He promiseth to crown his work with success, and bring it to a happy Issue, Isa. 53. 10. *He shall see his Seed, he shall prolong his Days; and the Pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.* He shall not begin, and not finish; he shall not shed his invaluable blood upon hazardous Terms; but shall see and reap the sweet fruit thereof: As the joyful Mother forgets her pangs, when the delightfully embraces and kills her living Child.

Fourthly, The Father promiseth to accept him in his work, tho' millions should eternally perish, Isa. 49. 4. *Surely (saith he) my work is with the Lord.* And (verse 5.) *I shall be glorious in*

the eyes of the Lord. His Faith had therein respect to this compact and Promise. Accordingly the Father manifests the satisfaction he had in him, and in his work, even while he was about it on Earth, when there came such a voice from the excellent Glory, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

Fifthly, He engaged to reward him highly for his work by exalting him to singular and supereminent Glory and Honour, when he should have dispatched and finished it. So you read, Psal. 2. 7. *I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* It's spoken of the day of his Resurrection, when he had just finished his suffering. And so the Apostle expounds and applies it, Acts 13. 32, 33. For then did the Lord wipe away the reproach of his Cross, and invested him with such Glory that he looked like himself again. As if the Father had said, Now thou hast again recovered thy Glory, and this day is to thee as a new Birth-day.

These are the Incuragements and Rewards proposed and promised to him by the Father. This was the joy set before him, (as the Apostle phraseth it in Heb. 12. 2.) which made him so patiently to endure the Cross, and despise the Shame.

And in like manner Jesus Christ restipulates, and gives his engagement to the Father; that upon these Terms he is content to be made Fleth, to divest (as it were, himself) of his Glory, to come under the obedience and malediction of the Law, and not to refuse any, the hardest sufferings it should please his Father to inflict on him. So much is carried in Isa. 50. 5, 6, 7. *The Lord hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back; I gave my back to the Smiters, and my cheeks to them that pulled off the hair; I hid not my Face from shame and spitting: For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded, I have set my Face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.* When he saith I was not *Rebellious*, he meaneth I was most heartily willing and content to accept the Terms; for there is a *Meiosis* in the words, and much more is intended than expressed. And the sense of this place is well delivered to us in other terms, Psal. 40. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. *Then said I, lo I come, I delight to do thy will O God, thy Law is within my heart.* O see with what a full consent the heart of Christ closeth with the Father's Offers and Proposals; like some Echo, that answers your voice twice or thrice over. So doth Christ here answer his Father's call, *I come, I delight to do thy will; yea, thy Law is in my heart.* And thus you see the Articles to which they both subscribed, or the Terms they agreed on,

(5.) I will briefly show how these Articles and Agreements were on both parts performed, and that precisely and punctually to a tittle. For, (1.) The Son having thus consented, accordingly he applies himself to the discharge of his work. He took a Body, in it fulfilled all Righteousness, even to a tittle, Mat. 3. 15. And at last his Soul was made an Offering for Sin. So that he could say as it is, John 17. 4. *Father, I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do.* He went through all the parts of his active and passive Obedience

cheerfully and faithfully. (2.) The Father made good his engagements to Christ all along with no less Faithfulness than Christ did his. He promised to *visit and hold his hand*, and so he did; *Luke 22. 23. And there appeared to him an Angel from Heaven strengthening him.* That was one of the foret brunts that ever Christ met with, it was seasonable aid and succour. He promised to accept him in his work, and that he should be glorious in his Eyes, so he did. For he not only declared it by a voice from Heaven, *Luke 3. 22. Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:* But it was fully declared in his Resurrection and Ascension, which were a full Discharge and Justification of him. He promised him that *he should see his Seed*, and so he did, for his very Birth-dew was as the dew of the Morning; and ever since his Blood hath been fruitful in the World. He promised gloriously to reward, and exalt him; and so he hath, *Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11.* and that highly and supereminently, *giving him a Name above every name in Heaven and Earth.* Thus were the Articles performed.

(6.) Lastly, When was this Compact made betwixt the Father and Son? I answer, It bears date from Eternity. Before this World was made, then were his delights in us, while as yet we had no existence, but only in the infinite mind and purpose of God, who had decreed this for us in Christ Jesus, as the Apostle speaks, *2 Tim. 1. 9.* What Grace was that which was given us in Christ before the World began, but this Grace of Redemption, which from everlasting was thus contrived and designed for us, in that way which hath been here opened? Then was the Council, or Consultation of Peace betwixt them both, as some take that Scripture, *Zech. 6. 13.*

Next let us apply it to our selves.

Use 1. The first Use that offers itself to us from hence, is the abundant security that God hath given the Elect for their Salvation, and that not only in respect of the Covenant of Grace made with them, but also of this Covenant of Redemption made with Christ for them; which indeed is the foundation of the Covenant of Grace. God's single promise is security enough to our Faith, his Covenant of Grace adds *ex abundantia* farther security; but both these viewed as the effects and fruits of this Covenant of Redemption, make all fast and sure. In the Covenant of Grace, we question not the performance on God's part, but are often stumbled at the grand defects on our parts: But when we look to the Covenant of Redemption, there's nothing to stagger our Faith, both the Federates being infinitely able and faithful to perform their parts; so that there is no possibility of a failure there. Happy were it, if puzzled and perplexed Christians would turn their eyes from the defects that are in their own obedience, to the fulness and compleateness of Christ's Obedience; and see themselves compleat in him, when most lame and defective in themselves.

Hence also be informed, that God the Father, and God the Son, do mutually rely and trust to one another, in the business of our Redemption. The Father relies upon the Son for the performance of his part; as it is, *IJa. 42. 1. Behold my*

Servant, whom I uphold. Montanus turns it on whom I lean or depend. As if the Father had said, behold what a faithful Servant I have chosen, in whom my Soul is at rest: I know he will go through with his work, I can depend upon him. And to speak plain, the Father so far trusted Christ, that upon the credit of his Promise to come into the World, and in the fulness of time to become a Sacrifice for the Elect, he saved all the Old-Testament-Saints, whose Faith also respected a Christ to come; with reference where to it is said, *Heb. 11. 39, 40. That they received not the Promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect, (i. e.) without Jesus Christ manifested in the Flesh in our Times; tho' believed on as to come in the Flesh, in their Times.* And as the Father trusted Christ, so doth Christ in like manner depend upon and trust his Father. For having performed his part, and left the World again, he now trusteth his Father for the accomplishment of that Promise made him, *IJa. 53. 10. That he shall see his Seed, &c.* He depends upon his Father for all the Elect that are behind, yet unregenerated, as well as those already called, that they shall be all preserved unto the Heavenly Kingdom, according to that, *John 17. 11. And now I am no more in the World, but these are in the World; and I come unto thee: Holy Father, keep through thine own Name those whom thou hast given me.* And can it be imagined, that the Father will fail his Trust, who every way acquitted himself so punctually to the Son? It cannot be.

Use 3. Moreover, Hence we infer the validity and unquestionable success of Christ's Intercession in Heaven for Believers. You read, *Heb. 7. 25. That he ever lives to make Intercession;* and *Heb. 12. 24. That his Blood speaks for good things for them.* Now that his Blood shall obtain what it pleads in Heaven for, is undoubted, and that from the consideration of this Covenant of Redemption. For here you see that the things he now asks of his Father, are the very same which his Father promised him, and covenanted to give him, before this World was: So that besides the interest of the Person, the very equity of the matter speaks its success, and requires performance: Whatever he asks for us, is as due to him as the Wages of the Hirdling, when the work is ended; if the work be done, and done faithfully, as the Father hath acknowledged it is, then the Reward is due, and due immediately: And no doubt but he shall receive it from the hands of a righteous God.

Use 4. Hence in like manner you may be informed of the consistency of Grace with full satisfaction to the Justice of God. The Apostle, *2 Tim. 1. 9.* tells us. *We are saved according to his own purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the World began.* That is, according to the gracious terms of this Covenant of Redemption; and yet you see notwithstanding, how strictly God stands upon Satisfaction from Christ: So then, Grace to us, and Satisfaction to Justice, are not so inconsistent as the Socinian Adversaries would make them; what was Debt to Christ, is Grace to us: When you hear Men

cry

Antequam
ab omni-
bus retro
seculis
tempora
fluere inci-
perent, de-
crevit
Deus hanc
nobis salu-
tis gratiam
per Chri-
stum con-
ferre, in
hoc.

cry out, Here's Grace indeed ! pay me all, and I will forgive you ; remember, how all Mouths are stop'd with that one Text, *Rom. 3. 24. being justified freely by his Grace*, and yet he adds, *through the Redemption that is in Christ*.

Use 5. Again, Hence judge of the Antiquity of the Love of God to Believers : what an ancient Friend he hath been to us ; who loved us, provided for us, and contrived all our Happiness, before we were, yea, before the World was. We reap the fruits of this Covenant now, the Seed whereof was sown from Eternity ; yea, it is not only ancient, but also most free : No excellencies of ours could engage the Love of God, for as yet we were not.

Use 6. Judge hence, *How reasonable it is that Believers should embrace the hardest terms of Obedience unto Christ, who complied with such hard Terms for their Salvation* : They were hard and difficult Terms indeed, on which Christ received you from the Father's hand ; it was, as you have heard, to pour out his Soul unto Death, or not to enjoy a Soul of you. Here you may suppose the Father to say, when driving this Bargain with Christ for you :

Father. My Son, here be a company of poor miserable Souls, that have utterly undone themselves, and now lye open to my Justice ! Justice demands Satisfaction for them, or will satisfie it self in the eternal ruin of them : What shall be done for these Souls ? And thus Christ returns.

Son. O my Father, such is my love to, and pity for them, that rather than they shall perish eternally, I will be responsible for them as their Surety : bring in all thy Bills, that I may see what they owe thee. *Lord*, bring them in all, that there may be no after reckonings with them ; at my hand shalt thou require it. I will rather chuse to suffer thy wrath, than they should suffer it. Upon me, my Father, upon me be all their Debt.

Father. But, my Son, if thou undertake for them, thou must reckon to pay the last Mite, expect no Abatements ; if I spare them, I will not spare thee.

Son. Content, Father, let it be so : Charge it all upon me, I am able to discharge it ; and tho' it prove a kind of undoing to me, tho' it impoverish all my Riches, empty all my Treasures, (for so indeed it did, *2 Cor. 8. 9. Tho' he were rich, yet for our sakes became poor*) yet I am content to undertake it. Blush ungrateful

Believers, O let shame cover your Faces. Judge in your selves now, hath Christ deserved that you should stand with him for Trifles, that you should shrink at a few petty Difficulties, and complain, this is hard, and that is harsh ? O if you knew the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ in this his wonderful Condescension for you, you could not do it.

Use 7. Lastly, *How greatly are we all concerned to make it sure to our selves, that we are of this number, which the Father and the Son agreed for before the world was, that we were comprehended in Christ's bargain and compact with the Father ?*

Obj. Yea, but you will say, Who can know that : there were no Witnesses to that Bargain.

Sol. Yes, We may know without ascending into Heaven, or prying into unrevealed Secrets, that our names were in that Covenant, if, (1.) You are Believers indeed ; for all such the Father then gave to Christ, *John 17. 8. The men that thou gavest me*, (for of them he spake immediately before) *they have believed that thou didst send me.* (2.) If you lovingly know God in Jesus Christ, such were given him by the Father, *John 17. 6. I have manifested thy Name unto the men thou gavest me* : By this they are discriminated from the rest, *ver. 25. The World hath not known thee, but these have known*, &c. (3.) If you are Men and Women of another World : *John 17. 16. They are not of the World, as I am not of the World.* May it be said of you, as of dying Men, that you are not Men and Women for this World, that you are crucified and dead to it, *Gal. 6. 14. that you are Strangers in it ? Heb. 11. 13, 14.* (4.) If you keep Christ's word ; *Job. 17. 5. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me ; and they have kept thy word* : By keeping his word, understand this receiving of the Word in its sanctifying effects and influences into your Hearts, and your perseverance in the profession and practice of it to the end ; *John 17. 17. Sanctifie them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth ; Joh. 15. 7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will. Blessed and happy is that Soul upon which these blessed Characters appear, which our Lord Jesus hath laid so close together within the compass of a few Verses in this 17th of John ; these are the Persons the Father delivered unto Christ, and he accepted from the Father in this blessed Covenant.*

S E R M O N IV.

JOHN III. 16.

For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.

YOU have heard of the gracious Purpose and Design of God to recover poor Sinners to himself by Jesus Christ, and how this design of Love was laid and contrived in the Covenant of Redemption, whereof we last spake.

Now, according to the Terms of that Co-

venant, you shall hear from this Scripture, how that Design was by one degree advanced towards its accomplishment, in God's actual giving or parting with his own Son for us : *God so loved the World, that he gave*, &c.

Serm. 4.
Opens
the ad-
mirable
Love of
God in
giving
his own
Son for
us.

The

The whole precedent Context is spent in discovering the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration; and the Necessity thereof is in this Text argued and inferred from the peculiar respect and eye God had upon Believers, in giving Christ for them; they only reaping all the special and saving Benefits and Advantages of that Gift: *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish.*

In the Words are considerable.

1. The original Spring or Fountain of our best Mercies, the Love of God. The Love of God is either *benovolent, beneficent, or complacential*: His benovolent Love is nothing else but his desire and purpose of saving and doing us good: So his Purpose and Grace to Jacob is called Love, *Rom. 9. 12. Jacob have I loved*; but this being before Jacob was, could consist in nothing else but the gracious Purpose of God towards him. His *beneficent* Love is his actual doing good to the Persons beloved, or the bestowing the Effects of his Love upon us according to that purpose. His *complacential* Love is nothing else but that Delight and Satisfaction he finds in beholding the Fruits and Workings of that Grace in us which he first intended for us, and then actually collated or bestowed on us. This Love of Benevolence is that which I have opened to you under the former head, God's Compact with Christ about us, or his design to live on the Articles and Terms therein specified.

The Love of *Beneficence*, is that which this Scripture speaks of; out of this Fountain Christ flowed to us, and both run into that of Complacency; for therefore he both purposed, and actually bestowed Christ on us, that he might everlastingly delight in beholding the Glory and Praise of all this reflected on himself by his *redeemed* Ones. This then is the Fountain of our Mercies.

2. The Mercy flowing out of this Fountain, and that is Christ: *The Mercy*, as he is emphatically called, *Luke 1. 72. The Marrow, Kernel, and Substante of all other Mercies.* He gave his only begotten Son: This was the Birth of that Love, the like whereunto it never brought forth before, therefore it's exprest with a double Emphasis in the Text, the one is that particle *οτι* so; he so loved the World: Here is a *sic* without a *scilicet*: How did he love it? why *he so loved it*; but how much the Tongues of Angels cannot declare. And moreover, to encrease and aggravate the Mercy, he is styled his only begotten Son: to have given a Son, had been wonderful; but to give an only begotten Son, that's Love unexpressible, unintelligible.

3. The *Objects* of this Love, or the Persons into whose Lap and Arms the eternal Love delivered Christ, and that is the [World] this must respect the Elect of God in the World, such as do or shall actually believe, as it is exegetically exprest in the next breath, *That whosoever believes in him, should not perish*: Those whom he calls the *World* in that, he styles *Believers* in this expression; and the word [World] is put to signify the Elect, because they are scattered through all parts, and

are among all Ranks of Men in the World; these are the *Objects* of this Love: It is not Angels, but Men that were so loved; he is called *εισαγγελος*, a Lover, a Friend of Man, but never *εισαγγελος*, or *εισαγγελος*, the Lover or Friend of Angels, or Creatures of another Species.

4. The manner in which this never-enough-celebrated Mercy flows to us from the Fountain of Divine Love, and that is most freely and spontaneously. He gave, not he sold, or barely parted from, but gave. Nor yet doth the Father's giving imply Christ to be merely passive; for as the Father is here said to give him, so the Apostle tells us, *Gal. 2. 20. That he gave himself, who loved me, and gave himself for me*: The Father gave him out of good will to Men, and he as willingly bestowed himself on that Service. Hence the Note is,

Doct. *That the Gift of Christ is the highest and fullest Manifestation of the Love of God to Sinners, that ever was made from Eternity to them.*

How is this Gift of God to Sinners signified in that place of the Apostle, *1 Joh. 4. 10. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins*? Why doth the Apostle so magnify this Gift, in saying herein is love, as if there were love in nothing else? May we not say, that to have a being, a being among the rational Creatures, therein is Love: To have carried our Life so many years like a Taper in the hand of Providence, thro' so many dangers, and not yet put out in obscurity, therein is love? to have Food and Raiment convenient for us, Beds to lye in, Relations to comfort us, in all these is love? Yea, but if you speak comparatively, in all these there is no love, to the Love exprest in sending or giving Christ for us: These be great Mercies in themselves, but set by this Mercy, they are all swallowed up, as the light of Candles when brought into the Sunshine. No, no, herein is the Love, that God gave Christ for us. And it is remarkable that when the Apostle would shew us in *Rom. 5. 8. what is the noblest Fruit that most commends to Men the Root of Divine Love that bears it*, he shews us this very Fruit of it that I am now opening; *But God (saith he) commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us*: This is the very Flower of that Love.

The Method into which I will cast this precious Point shall be this: (1.) To shew how Jesus Christ was given by the Father. (2.) How that Gift is the fullest and richest Manifestation of the Love of God that was ever made to the World. (3.) And then draw forth the Uses of it.

1. How was Jesus Christ given by the Father, and what is implied therein.

You are so to understand it, as tho' God parted with his interest and propriety in his Son, when he is said to give him; he was as much his own as ever. When Men give, they transfer Propriety to another; but when God had given him, he was, I say, still as much his own as ever: But this giving of Christ implies,

(1.) His

Hic igitur
unigeniti
nomen
υπαπαντος
est ad com-
mendandam
in nos
amoris di-
vini vehem-
entiam.
Bulling in
lk.

Omnia di-
ligit Deus
quæ recit,
& inter ea,
magis crea-
turas ratio-
nales, & de
illis ea am-
plius quæ
sunt mem-
bra unigeni-
ti, & multo magis ipsum
unigeni-
tum. Aug. T.
9 in Joh. n.

(1.) His designation and appointment unto Death for us; for so you read that it was done according to the determinate Counsel of God, *Acts 2. 23.* Look as the Lamb under the Law was separated from the Flock, and set apart for a Sacrifice; tho' it were still living, yet it was intentionally and preparatively given, and consecrated to the Lord: So Jesus Christ was by the counsel and purpose of God, thus chosen, and set apart for his Service; and therefore in *Ista. 42. 1.* God calls him *his Eleit*, or chosen one.

(2.) His giving Christ, implies a parting with him, or setting him (as the French hath it) at some distance from himself for a time. There was a kind of parting betwixt the Father and the Son, when he came to tabernacle in our Flesh: So he expresseth it, *John 16. 28. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the World; again, I leave the World, and go to the Father.* This distance that his Incarnation and Humiliation set him at, was properly as to his Humanity, which was really distant from the Glory into which it is now taken up, and in respect of manifestation of delight and love: The Lord seemed to carry it as one at distance from him. O this was it that so deeply pierced and wounded his Soul, as is evident from that complaint, *Psal. 22. 1, 2. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from the voice of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the day time, and thou hearest not? &c.*

(3.) God's giving of Christ, implies his delivering him into the hands of Justice to be punished: even as condemned Persons are by sentence of Law, given or delivered into the hands of Executioners. So *Acts 2. 23. Him being delivered by the determinate Counsel of God, ye have taken, and wicked hands have slain:* And so he is said, *Rom. 8. 32. To deliver him up to death for us all.* The Lord, when the time was come that Christ must suffer, did as it were, say, O all ye roaring Waves, of my incensed Justice, now swell so high as Heaven, and go over his Soul and Body; sink him to the bottom, let him go like *Jonah* his Type into the Belly of Hell, unto the roots of the Mountains. Come all ye raging Storms that I have reserved for this day Wrath, beat upon him, beat him down, that he may not be able to look up, *Psal. 40. 12.* Go Justice, put him upon the Rack, torment him in every part, till all his Bones be out of joint, and his Heart within him be melted as Wax in the midst of his Bowels, *Psal. 22. 14.* And ye Assembly of the wicked Jews and Gentiles, that have so long gaped for his Blood, now he is delivered into your Hands, you are permitted to execute your Malice to the full: I now loose your Chain, and into your Hand and Power is he delivered.

(4.) God's giving of Christ, implies his Application of him, with all the Purchases of his Blood, and setting all this upon us as an Inheritance and Portion; *John 6. 22, 23. My Father giveth you the true Bread from Heaven; for the Bread of God is he which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Life unto the World.* God hath given him as Bread to poor starving

Creatures, that by Faith they might eat and live. And so he told the *Samaritanes*, *John 4. 10. If thou knewest the Gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living Waters.* Bread and Water are the two necessities for the support of natural Life; God hath given Christ you see to be all that, and more to the spiritual Life.

2. How this Gift of Christ was the highest and fullest Manifestation of the Love of God, that ever the World saw: And this will be evidenced by the following Particulars.

(1.) If you consider how near and dear Jesus Christ was to the Father: He was his Son, his only Son, saith the Text: The Son of his Love: The darling of his Soul: His other self; yea one with himself: The express Image of his Person: The brightness of his Father's Glory: In parting with him, he parted with his own Heart, with his very Bowels, as I may say. Yet to us a Son is given, *Ista. 9. 6.* And such a Son as he calls his dear Son, *Col. 1. 13.* A late Writer tells us, that he hath been informed, that in the Famine in Germany, a poor Family being ready to perish with famine, the Husband made a motion to the Wife, to sell one of the Children for Bread, to relieve themselves and the rest; the Wife at last consents it should be so, but then they began to think which of the four should be sold: and when the Eldest was named, they both refused to part with that, being their first-born, and the beginning of their strength. Well, then they came to the Second, but could not yield that he should be sold, being the very Picture and lively Image of his Father. The Third was named, but that also was a Child that best resembled the Mother. And when the Youngest was thought on, that was the Benjamin, the Child of their old Age; and so were content rather to perish altogether in the Famine, than part with a Child for relief. And you know how tenderly *Jacob* took it, when his *Joseph* and *Benjamin* were rent from him. What is a Child, but a piece of the Parent wrapt up in another Skin? And yet our dearest Children are but as Strangers to us, in comparison of the unspeakable dearth that was betwixt the Father and Christ. — Now that he should ever be content to part with a Son, and such an only one, is such a manifestation of Love, as will be admired to all Eternity! And then,

(2.) Let it be considered, to what he gave him, even to death, and that of the Cross; to be made a Curse for us; to be the Scorn and Contempt of Men; to the most unparalleled sufferings that ever were inflicted or born by any. It melts our Bowels, it breaks our Heart, to behold our Children striving in the pangs of Death: But the Lord beheld his Son struggling under Agonies that never any felt before him. He saw him falling to the ground, groveling in the dust, sweating Blood; and amidst those Agonies turning himself to his Father, and with a heart-rending Cry beseeching him, *Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass*, *Luke 22. 42.* To Wrath, to the Wrath of an Infinite God

God might have redeemed us in another way (for I suppose the opus liberi consilii) a free Disposition; but God loved the world, (i.e.) he took this way, that we might love Christ as well as believe in him. He might have redeemed us so much in another way, but he could not oblige us so much in another way, in his None but Christ.

Dolor Christi major fuit omnibus doloribus. Aquinas.

without mixture, to the very torments of Hell, was Christ delivered, and that by the Hand of his own Father. Sure then that Love must needs want a Name, which made the Father of Mercies deliver his own only Son to such miseries for us.

(3.) It is a special Consideration to enhance the Love of God in giving Christ, that in giving him, he gave the richest Jewel in his Cabinet; a Mercy of the greatest worth, and most inestimable value: Heaven it self is not so valuable and precious as Christ is. He is the better half of Heaven. And so the Saints account him; *Psal. 72. 25. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? Ten thousand thousand Worlds, (saith one) as many Worlds as Angels can number, and then as a new World of Angels can multiply, would not all be the bulk of a Ballance, to weigh Christ's Excellency, Love, and Sweetness. O what a fair one! what an only one! what an excellent, lovely, ravishing one, is Christ! Put the Beauty of ten thousand Paradises, like the Garden of Eden, into one; put all Trees, all Flowers, all Smells, all Colours, all Tastes, all Joys, all Sweetness, all Loveliness in one: O what a fair and excellent thing would that be! And yet it should be less to that fair and dearest well-beloved Christ, than one drop of Rain to the whole Seas, Rivers, Lakes, and Fountains of ten thousand Earths. Christ is Heaven's wonder, and Earth's wonder.*

Now for God to bestow the Mercy of Mercies, the most precious thing in Heaven or Earth, upon poor Sinners; and as great, as lovely, as excellent as his Son was, yet not to account him too good to bestow upon us, what manner of Love is this?

(4.) Once more, let it be considered on whom the Lord bestowed his Son: Upon Angels? No, but upon Men. Upon Man his Friend? No, but upon his Enemies. This is Love; and on this consideration the Apostle lays a mighty weight, in *Rom. 5. 8, 9, 10. But God (saith he) commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us.*—When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Who would part with a Son for the sake of his dearest Friends? but God gave him to, and delivered him for Enemies. O Love unspeakable!

(5.) Lastly, Let us consider how freely this Gift came from him. It was not wrested out of his hand by our importunity; nor was as little desired as deserved it: It was surprizing, preventing, eternal Love that delivered him to us: *Not that we loved him, but he first loved us, 1 John 4. 19.* Thus as when you weigh a thing, you cast in Weight after Weight, till the Scales break; so doth God, one Consideration upon another to overcome our Hearts, and make us admiringly to cry, what manner of Love is this? And thus I have shewed you what God's giving of Christ is, and what matchless Love is manifested in that incomparable Gift.

Next we shall apply this, in some practical Corollaries.

Corollary 1. Learn hence the exceeding Preciousness of Souls, and at what a high rate God

values them, that he will give his Son, his only Son out of his Bosom, as a Ransom for them. Surely this speaks their Preciousness: God would not have parted with such a Son for small matters! All the World could not redeem them; Gold and Silver could not be their Ransom. 1 Pet. 1. 18. So speaks the Apostle, You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, but with the precious Blood of Christ. Such an esteem God had for them, that rather than they should perish, Jesus Christ shall be made a Man, yea, a Curse for them. O then learn to put a due Value upon your own Souls: Don't sell that cheap, which God hath paid so dear for: Remember what a Treasure you carry about you: The Glory that you see in this World, is not equivalent in worth to it, Mat. 16. 26. What shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?

Corollary 2. If God has given his own Son for the World, then it follows, that these for whom God gave his own Son, may warrantably expect any other temporal Mercies from him. This is the Apostle's Inference, Rom. 8. 32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up to death for us all; how shall he not with him freely give us all things? And so 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. All is yours, for ye are Christ's, (i. e.) They hold all other things in Christ, who is the capital, and most comprehensive Mercy.

To make out the grounds of this comfortable Deduction, let these four things be pondered, and duly weighed in your thoughts. (1.) No other Mercy you need, or desire, is, or can be so dear to God, as Jesus Christ is: He never laid any other thing in his Bosom, as he did his Son. As for the World, and the Comforts of it, it is the dust of his Feet, he values it not; as you see by his providential disposals of it, having given it to the worst of Men. All the *Turkish Empire* (saith *Luther*) as great and glorious as it is, is but a crumb which the Master of the Family throws to the Dogs. Think upon any other outward enjoyment that's valuable in your eyes, and there is not so much compare betwixt it and Christ, in the esteem of God, as is betwixt your dear Children, and the lumber of your Houses, in your esteem. If then God have parted so freely from that which was infinitely dearer to him than these; how shall he deny these, when they may promote his Glory, and your Good? (2.) As Jesus Christ was nearer the Heart of God than all these, so Christ is in himself much greater and more excellent than them all: Ten thousand Worlds, and the Glory of them all, is but the Dust of the Ballance, if weighed with Christ. These things are but poor Creatures, but he is over all, God blessed for ever, *Rom. 9. 5.* They are common Gifts, but he is the Gift of God, *John 4. 10.* They are ordinary Mercies, but he is the Mercy, *Luke 1. 72.* As one Pearl or precious Stone is greater in value than ten thousand common Pebbles. Now if God have so freely given the greater, how can you suppose he should deny the lesser Mercies? Will a Man give to another a large Inheritance, and stand with him for a Trifle? How can it be?

(3.) There is no other Mercy you stand in want of, but you are entitled to it by the Gift of

Christus, &
coelum
non pati-
untur hy-
perbolam.

Torum
Turcicum
imperium
quantum,
quantum
est; mica
cratum est,
quam Pa-
ter famili-
propiet ca-
ribus. Lu-
ther.

of Christ: It is (as to right) conveyed to you with Christ. So in the forecited 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23. *The World is yours, yea, all is yours; for ye are Christ's.* So 2 Cor. 1. 20. *For all the promises of God in Christ, in him they are yea, and in him Amen.* With him he hath given you all things, *ὅς ἀποδίδωκεν*, 1 Tim. 6. 17. richly to enjoy. The word signifies *rem aliquam cum lætitia percipere*, to have the sweet relish and comfort of an Enjoyment. So have we in all our Mercies, upon the account of our title to them in Christ. (4.) Lastly, If God have given you this nearer, greater, and all-comprehending Mercy, when you were enemies to him, and alienated from him; it is not imaginable he should now deny you any inferior Mercy, when you are come into a state of Reconciliation and Amity with him. So the Apostle reasons, *Rom. 5. 8, 9, 10. For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his Life.* And thus you have the second Inference with its grounds.

Corollary 3. If the greatest Love hath been manifested in giving Christ to the World, then it follows that the greatest Evil and Wickedness is manifested in despising, slighting and rejecting Christ. 'Tis sad to abuse the love of God manifested in the lowest gift of Providence, but to slight the richest discoveries of it, even in that peerless Gift, wherein God commends his Love in the most taking and astonishing manner, this is Sin with a witness. Blush, O Heavens, and be astonished, O Earth; yea, be ye horribly afraid! No guilt like this. The most flagitious wretches among the barbarous Nations are innocent in comparison of these. But are there any such in the World? Dare any slight this gift of God? Indeed if Mens words might be taken, there are few or none that dare do so; but if their Lives and Practices may be believed, this, this is the Sin of the far greater part of the Christianized World. Witness the lamentable stupidity and supineness; witness the contempt of the Gospel; witness the Hatred and Persecution of his Image, Laws and People. What is the Language of all these but a vile esteem of Jesus Christ?

And now let me a little expostulate with these ungrateful Souls that trample under foot the Son of God, that value not this Love that gave him forth. What is that Mercy which you so contemn and undervalue? Is it so vile and cheap a thing as your entertainment speaks it to be? Is it indeed worth no more than this in your eyes? Surely you will not be long of that opinion. Will you be of that mind, think you, when Death and Judgment shall have thoroughly awakened you? O no, then a thousand Worlds for a Christ! As it's storied of our Crook-back'd Richard, when he lost the Field, and was in great danger by his Enemies that pressed upon him; O now (said he) a Kingdom for a Horse! Or think ye, that any beside you in the World are of your mind? You are deceived if you think so. *To them that believe he is precious through all the World,* 1 Pet. 2. 7. And in the other World they are of a quite contrary mind. Could you but hear what is said of him in Heaven, in what a dialect the

Saved of the Lord do extol their Saviour; or could you but imagine the Self-revenges, the Self-torments, which the Damned suffer for this their Folly, and what a value they would set upon one tender of Christ if it might but again be hoped for; you would see that such as you are the only despisers of Christ. Beside, methinks it's astonishing that you should despise a Mercy in which your own Souls are so dearly so deeply, so everlastingly concerned, as they are in this Gift of God. If it were but the Soul of another; nay, less, if but the Body of another; and yet less than that, if but another's Beast, whose Life you could preserve, you are obliged to do it: But when it is thy self, yea, the best part of thy self; thine own invaluable Soul that thou ruinest and destroyest hereby, O what a Monster art thou to cast it away thus! What! will you slight your own Souls? Care you not whether they be saved, or whether they be damned? Is it indeed an indifferent thing with you which way they fall at Death? Have you imagined a tolerable Hell? Is it easy to perish? Are you not only turned God's Enemies, but your own too? O see what Monsters can Sin turn Men and Women into! O the stupefying, befotting, intoxicating Power of Sin! But perhaps you think that all these are but uncertain Sounds, with which we alarm you. It may be thine own Heart will preach such Doctrines as this to thee. Who can assure thee of the Reality of these things? What shouldst thou trouble thy self with an invisible World, or be so much concerned for what thine Eyes never saw, nor didst ever receive the Report from any that have seen them? Well, tho' we cannot now show you these things, yet shortly they shall be shewn you; and your own Eyes shall behold them. You are convinced and satisfied that many other things are real which you never saw. But be assured, That if the Word spoken by Angels was steadfast, and every Transgression and Disobedience received a just recompence of Reward: How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation, which at first began to be spoken to us by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness? Heb. 2. 2, 3, 4. But if they be certain, yet they are not near: it will be a long time before they come. Poor Soul! how dost thou cheat thy self? It may be not by twenty parts so long a time as thy own Fancy draws it forth for thee; thou art not certain of the next moment.

And suppose what thou imaginest, What is Twenty or Forty Years when it is past? yea, what is a Thousand Years to the vast Eternity? Go trifle away a few Days more, sleep out a few Nights more, and then lye down in the Dust; it will not be long e'er the Trump of God shall awaken thee, and thine Eyes shall behold Jesus coming in the Clouds of Heaven, and then you will know the price of this Sin. O therefore, if there be any sense of Eternity upon you, any pity or love for your selves in you; if you have any Concernments more than the Beasts that perish, despise not your own offered Mercies, slight not the richest Gift that ever was yet opened to the World; and a sweeter cannot be opened to all Eternity.

Serm. 5.
Treats
of
Christ's
wonder-
ful Per-
son.

S E R M O N V.

JOHN I. 14.

And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, &c.

YOU have heard the Covenant of Redemption opened. The work therein propounded by the Father, and consented to by the Son, is such as infinitely exceeds the power of any meer Creature to perform. He that undertakes to satisfy God by Obedience for Man's Sin, must himself be God; and he that performs such a perfect Obedience, by doing and suffering all that the Law required in our rooms, must be Man. These two Natures must be united in one Person, else there could not be a concurrence or co-operation of either Nature in his Mediatory Works. How these Natures are united in the wonderful Person of our *Immanuel*, is the first part of the great Mystery of Godliness: A Subject studied and adored by Angels! And the Mystery thereof is wrapped up in this Text. Wherein we have,

The Incarnation in the Miracles of Miracles, a Testimony against Unbelievers, Isa. 7. 14. and a Document to Believers, None can declare his have,

Generation, Isa. 53. 8. Neither can any declare his Incarnation, his Name is Secret, Judg. 13. 18. Wonderful, Isa. 9. 6. A Name that no Man knoweth, viz. perfectly, but himself. The Trinity is the greatest, the Incarnation the next Mystery. Norton's Orth. Evang. p. 38.

First, The Incarnation of the Son of God plainly asserted.

Secondly, That Assertion strongly confirmed.

(1.) In the Assertion we have three Parts.

1. The Person assuming, *ὁ λόγος*, the Word, (i. e.) the second Person, or Subsistent in the most glorious Godhead, call'd the Word, either because he is the scope and principal matter, both of the prophetic and promissory word; or because he expounds and reveals the Mind and Will of God to Men, as *verse 18*. The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared or expounded him.

Verbum Subsistiale, non prolarum. Fulgent. lib. 1.

2. The Nature assumed, *σαρξ*, Flesh, (i. e.) the intire Human Nature, consisting of a true Human Soul and Body. For so this word *σαρξ* in *Rom. 3. 20.* and the *Hebrew word בשר* which answers to it, by a usual Metonymy of a part for the whole is used, *Gen. 6. 12.* And the word *Flesh* is rather used here, than *Man*, on purpose to aggravate the admirable Condescension and Abasement of Christ: there being more of vileness, weakness, and opposition to Spirit in this word than in that, as is pertinently noted by some. Hence the whole Nature is denominated by that part, and called *Flesh*.

Voluit Evangelista uti potius carnem, quam hominis nomine; ut magis appareret, quo se di-

3. The Assumption it self, *ἔγενετο*, he was made, not *suit*, he was, (as *Socinus* would render, in delign to overthrow the Existence of Christ's glorified Body now in Heaven) but *factus est*, it was made, (i. e.) he took or assumed the true Human Nature, (called *Flesh*, for the Reason before rendered) into the unity of his Divine Person, with all its integral Parts,

and essential Properties; and so was made, or became a true and real Man, by that Assumption. The Apostle speaking of the same act, *Heb. 2. 16.* uses another word, *He took on him*, *ἐνσαρκώσας*, fitly rendered he took on him, or he assumed: Which assuming, tho' *inchoative*, it was the Work of the whole Trinity, God the Father, in the Son, by the Spirit forming or creating that Nature; as if three Sifters should make a Garment betwixt them, which only one of them wears: yet *terminative* it was the act of the Son only; 'twas he only that was made *Flesh*. And when 'tis said, he was made *Flesh*, miscoactive not, as if there was a mutation of the Godhead into *Flesh*, for this was performed, * not by changing what he was, but by assuming what he was not, as *Augustine* well exprelleth it. As when the Scripture in a like Expression saith, *He was made Sin*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. and made a Curse, *Gal. 3. 13.* the meaning is not, that he was turned into Sin, or into a Curse: no more may we think here the Godhead was turned into *Flesh*, and lost its own Being and Nature, because it's said he was made *Flesh*. This is the sum of the Assertion.

vinum verbum abiecerit, cum caro factum est. Nam & vilis major in carne apparet, & oppositio major cum spiritu. Macrov. loc. cum.

* Non mutando quod erat, sed assumendo quod non erat. Aug.

(2.) This Assertion [that the Word was made *Flesh*] is strongly confirmed. He dwelt among us, and we saw his Glory. This was no Phantasm, but a most real and indubitable thing. For *ἵνα ἑμεῖς ἐν ᾧ*, he pitcht his Tent, or tabernacled with us. And we are eye-witnesses of it. Parallel to that, 1 John 1. 1, 2, 3. This which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life, &c. declare we unto you. Hence note,

Doct. That Jesus Christ did really assume the true and perfect nature of Man, into a personal union with his Divine Nature; and still remains true God, and true Man, in one Person for ever.

The Proposition contains one of the deepest Mysteries in Godliness, 1 Tim. 3. 16. A est opus Dei, quo Filius Dei secundum oeconomicum am divini consilii parit, & sui, & spiritus sancti ingulph us in the Boggs of Error. Arius sese humilia, unde consilium persona Christi *θεογονία*, &c. Synops purioris Theologiae, p. 295.

would

would but have gratified him in a Letter, *quæritur*, and *inquitur*. The Nestorians also desired but a Letter, *Quæritur*, *inquitur*. These seemed but small and modest Requests, but if granted, had proved no small prejudice to Jesus Christ and his Truths. I desire therefore the Reader would with greatest attention of mind apply himself to these Truths. 'Tis a Doctrine hard to understand, and dangerous to mistake. I am really of his mind that said, *It's better not touch the bottom, than not keep within the Circle; *melius est nescire centrum, quam non tenere circum.* He did assume a true humane Body; that is plainly asserted, *Phil. 2. 7, 8, &c. Heb. 2. 14, 16.* In one place it's call'd taking on him the Seed of Abraham, and in the Text *Flesh*. He did also assume a true humane Soul, that's undeniable by its operations, passions, and expiration at last, *Matth. 26. 38. and 27. 50.* And that both these Natures make but one Person, is as evident from *Rom. 1. 3, 4. Jesus Christ was made of the seed of David according to the Flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the Resurrection from the Dead.* So *Rom. 9. 5. Of whom as concerning the Flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen.* But that you may have a found and clear understanding of this Mystery, I will,

(1.) open the Nature; (2.) the Effects; and (3.) the Reasons or Ends of this wonderful Union.

Unus tantum sit Christus, necesse est. Tietici. p. 67.

The Nature of the Hypostatical Union opened.

First; The Nature of this Union. There be three illustrious and dazzling Unions in Scripture: That of three Persons in one God, *Essentially*. That of two distinct Natures, and Persons; by one Spirit, *Mystically*: And this of two distinct Natures in one Person, *Hypostatically*. This is my task to open at this time. And for the more distinct and perspicuous management thereof, I shall speak to it both *Negatively* and *Positively*.

Non confusio.

1. *Negatively*. Think not when Christ assumed our Nature that it was united *Consubstantially*, so as the three Persons in the Godhead are united among themselves. They all have but one in the same Nature and Will; but in Christ are two distinct Natures and Wills, tho' but one Person.

Non confusio.

2. Nor yet that they are united *Physically*, as Soul and Body are united in one Person. For Death actually dissolves that, but this is indissoluble. So that when his Soul was expired, and his Body interred, both Soul and Body were still united to the second Person as much as ever.

Non confusio.

3. Nor yet is it such a *mystical Union*, as is between Christ and Believers. Indeed that is a glorious Union; but tho' Believers are said to be in Christ, and Christ in them, yet they are not one Person with him. They are not Christed into Christ, or Godded into God, as blasphemous Familists speak.

2dly, *Positively*. But this Assumption of which I speak, is that whereby the Second Person in the Godhead did take the Humane

Nature into a Personal Union with himself, by virtue whereof the Manhood subsists in the Second Person, yet without Confusion, both making but one Person, *Quæritur*, or *Inmanuel*, God with us.

liis, sed domi ai quærit; dux ipse naturæ, in personam unitæ, Damasc.

So that tho' we truly ascribe a twofold Nature to Christ, yet not a double Person. For the Human Nature of Christ never subsisted separately and distinctly, by any personal subsistence of its own, as it doth in all other Men, but from the first Moment of conception subsisted in union with the Second Person.

To explicate this Mystery more particularly, let it be considered.

First, The Human Nature was united to the Second Person *miraculously* and extraordinarily, being supernaturally fram'd in the Womb of the Virgin, by the overthadowing power of the Highest, *Luke 1. 34, 35.* By reason whereof it may truly and properly be said to be the fruit of the Womb, not of the Loins of Man, but not by Man. And this was necessary to exempt the assumed Nature from the stain and pollution of Adam's Sin, which it wholly escaped; in as much as he received it not; as all others do, in the way of ordinary Generation, wherein Original Sin is propagated: But this being extraordinarily liad, led produced, was a most pure and holy thing, *Luke 1. 35.* And indeed this perfect shining Holiness in which it was produced was absolutely necessary, both in order to its union with the Divine Person, and the design of that Union; which was both to satisfy for, and to sanctify us. The two Natures could not be conjoined in the Person of Christ, had there been the least taint of Sin upon the Humane Nature. For God can have no Fellowship with Sin, much less be united to it. Or supposing such a conjunction with our sinful Nature, yet he being a Sinner himself, could never satisfy for the Sins of others; nor could an unholy thing ever make us holy. Such a High-Priest therefore became us as is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners, *Heb. 7. 26.* And such an one must he needs be, whom the Holy Ghost produces in such a peculiar way, *1. Cor. 12.* that holy thing.

Secondly, As it was produced miraculously, so it was assumed *integrally*; that is to say, Christ took a complete and perfect Humane Soul and Body, with all and every Faculty and Member pertaining to it. And this was necessary (as both *Austin* and *Fulgentius* have well observed) that hereby he might heal the whole Nature of that Leprosie of Sin, which Fulgentius had seiz'd and infected every Member and Faculty. *Patris divinitus ita vultu dicitur.* He assumed all, to sanctify all; as *Damascen* expresseth it. He design'd a perfect recovery by sanctifying us wholly in Soul, Body, and Spirit; and therefore assumed the whole in order to it.

Humana natura non erat inchoata, sed perfecta; per se subsistens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & postea assumpta fuit, sed

Humana natura non erat inchoata, sed perfecta; per se subsistens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & postea assumpta fuit, sed

Humana natura non erat inchoata, sed perfecta; per se subsistens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & postea assumpta fuit, sed

Humana natura non erat inchoata, sed perfecta; per se subsistens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & postea assumpta fuit, sed

Humana natura non erat inchoata, sed perfecta; per se subsistens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & postea assumpta fuit, sed

Humana natura non erat inchoata, sed perfecta; per se subsistens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & postea assumpta fuit, sed

Humana natura non erat inchoata, sed perfecta; per se subsistens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & postea assumpta fuit, sed

Humana natura non erat inchoata, sed perfecta; per se subsistens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & postea assumpta fuit, sed

Humana natura non erat inchoata, sed perfecta; per se subsistens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & postea assumpta fuit, sed

Humana natura non erat inchoata, sed perfecta; per se subsistens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & postea assumpta fuit, sed

Humana natura non erat inchoata, sed perfecta; per se subsistens, neque prius humana natura fuit, & postea assumpta fuit, sed

Pfal. 45. 8. and so becomes the Object of Adoration and Divine Worship, *Aids* 7. 59. This the *Socinians* oppugn with this Argument. He that is worshipped with a Divine Worship, as he is Mediator, is not so worshipped as God: but Christ is worshipped as Mediator. But we say, that to be worshipped as Mediator, and as God, are not opposite, but the one is necessarily included in the other; and therein is further included the *ratio formalis sub qua* of that Divine Religious Worship.

3. Hence in the last place, follows, as another excellent fruit of this Union, *The concurrence and co-operation of each Nature to his Mediatorial Works*: For in them he acts according to both Natures. The Human Nature doing what is Human, viz. Suffering, Sweating, Bleeding, Dying; and his Divine Nature stamping all these with infinite value; and so both sweetly concur unto one glorious work and design of Mediation, *Papists* generally deny that he performs any of this Mediatorial works as God, but only as Man; but how boldly do they therein contradict these plain Scriptures: See 2 Cor. 5. 19. Heb. 9. 14, 15. And so much as to the second thing propounded, viz. the fruits of this Union.

Thirdly, The last thing to be opened is the grounds and reasons of this Assumption. And we may say touching that, (1.) That the Human Nature was not assumed to any intrinsic perfection of the Godhead, not to make that Human Nature it self perfect. The Divine did not assume the Human Nature necessarily, but voluntarily; not out of indigence, but bounty; not because it was to be perfected by it, but to perfect it, by causing it to lye as a Pipe to the infinite all-filling Fountain of Grace and Glory, of which it is the great Receptacle. (2.) And so consequently to qualify and prepare him for a full discharge of his Mediatorship in the Offices of our Prophet, Priest, and King. Had he not this double Nature in the unity of his Person, he could not have been our Prophet: for *as God* he knows the Mind and Will of God, *Joh. 1. 18. & 3. 13.* and *as Man* he is fitted to impart it suitably to us, *Dent. 18. 15, 16, 17, 18.* compared with *Deut. 3. 22.*

As *Priest*, had he not been Man, he could have shed no Blood; and if not God, it had been no adequate value for us, *Heb. 2. 17. Acts 20. 28.*

As King, had he not been Man, he had been an Heterogenous, and so no fit Head for us. And if not God, he could neither rule nor defend his Body the Church.

These then were the designs and ends of that assumption:

Let all Christians rightly inform their Minds in this Truth of so great concernment in Religion; and hold it fast against all subtle Adviceries that would wrest it from them. The Learned Hooker observes, that the dividing of Christ's Person, which is but one, and the confounding of his Natures, which are two, hath been the occasion of those Errors which have so greatly disturbed the Peace of the Church. The Arians deny'd his Deity, levelling him with all other meer Men. The Apollinarians maintained his Humanity. The Subellans affirmed that

the Father and Holy Ghost were incarnated, as well as the Son; and were forced upon that Absurdity by another Error, *viz.* denying three distinct Persons in the Godhead, and affirming they were but three Names. The *Eutychians* confounded both Natures in Christ, denying any distinction of them. The *Seleucians* affirmed that he unclothed himself of his Humanity when he ascended, and hath no Human Body in Heaven. The *Nestorians* so rent the two Natures of Christ asunder, as to make two distinct Persons of them.

But ye (Beloved) have not so learned Christ.
Ye know he is, (1.) True and very God. (2.) ^{ΑΛΛΗΘΙΝΟΣ} True
and very Man: that, (3.) These two Na- ^{ΟΙΟΙ ΤΕ}
tures make but one Person, being united in- ^{ΕΝ}
separable. (4.) That they are not confounded or ^{ΜΕΣΤΗ}
swallowed up one in another, but remain still ^{ΔΙΣΤΗΝΕΙ}
distinct in the Person of Christ. Hold ye the
form of sound words, which cannot be con-
demned. Great things hang upon all these Truths.
O suffer not a stone to be loosed out of the
Foundation.

Life 2. Adore the Love of the Father, and Son, who bid so high for your Soul; and at this rate were contented you should be recovered.

1. The Love of the Father is herein admirably conspicuous, who so vehemently willed our Salvation, that he is content to degrade the Darling of his Soul to so vile and contemptible a State, which was upon the matter an undoing to him, in point of Reputation; as the Apostle intimates, *Phil.* 2. 7. If two Persons be at variance, and the Superior, who also is the wronged Person, begin to stoop first, and say, you have deeply wronged me, yea, your Blood is not able to repair the wrongs you have done me; however such is my Love to you, and willingness to be at peace with you, that I will part with what is most Dear to me in all the World, for peace-sake; yea, tho' I stoop below my self, and seems as it were to forget my own Relation and Endearments to my own Son, I will not suffer such a breach betwixt me and you. *Job.* 3. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.*

2. And how astonishing is the Love of Christ! that would make such a stoop as this to exalt us! O 'tis ravishing to think he should pass by a more excellent and noble species of Creatures, refusing the Angelical Nature, *Heb. 2. 16.* to take Flesh; and not to † solace and dispart himself in it neither, not to experience sensitive Pleasures in the Body: for as he needed them not, being at the Fountain-head of the highest Joys, so it was not at all in his design, but the very contrary, even to make himself a Subject capable of Sorrows, Wounds and Tears. 'Tis was, as the Apostle elegantly expresseth it, in *Heb. 2.*

Use 3.

*The Reasons
of the Hy-
pothetical
Union.*

in naturā
humanā fa-
cificer, sed
pretium,
dignitas, ef-
ficacia &
applicatio
illius satisf-
factionis a
natura di-
vina præ-
venit.
*Amsf. B-II.
Enerw. lib.
5.*

Nullus ja-
centem
suscitat, nisi
infectione
sui. *Nicem.*
† Ideo car-
nem as-
sumpsit, ut
per patibili-
le, id quod
est impati-
bile, passio-
nem, susti-
neret. *The-*

Non est
ingenit vel
humani,
vel angeli-
ci etiam,
ejusmodi
aliquem
inventum
iri; aut
ex cogita-
tione spe-
rare. Unde
fr peccator
maledicti-
onis divi-
nae pecca-
tis suis de-
bitur, ad e-
jusmodi
investigan-
dum fili
ipsum relin-
queretur;
quo magis
in negotio
isto defen-
daret, eo
se magis in
infinitum
horroris &
desperati-
onis bara-
thrum
precipi-
tem daret.

Beati-
tudine
de Justiti-
a 74.

Antiver-
tens, antici-
pat, obve-
nit. Bac-
tuf.

Use 3. And here the Infinite Wisdom hath also left a famous and everlasting mark of it self; which invites, yea, even chains the eyes of Angels and Men to it self. Had there been a general Council of Angels, to advise upon a way of recovering poor Sinners, they would all have been at an everlasting demurr and loss about it. It could not have entred their thoughts, tho' they are Intelligencies, and most sagacious Creatures) that every Mercy, Pardon and Grace should find such a way as this to issue forth from the Heart of God to the Hearts of Sinners. O how wisely is the method of our Recovery laid! So that Christ may well be call'd *Sanctus, & cetera*, 1 Cor. 1. 24. the Power and Wisdom of God; for as much as in him the Divine Wisdom is more glorified than in all the other Works of God, upon which he hath imprest it. Hence it is that some of the Schoolmen affirm (tho' I confess my self unsatisfied with it) that the Incarnation of Christ was in it self so glorious a Demonstration of God's Wisdom and Power, and thereupon so desirable in it self, that tho' Man had not sinned, yet Christ would have been made Man.

Use 4. Hence also we infer the incomparable sweetness of the Christian Religion, that shewes poor Sinners such a fair foundation to rest their trembling Consciences upon. While poor distressed Souls look to themselves, they are perpetually puzzled. That's the cry of distressed natural Conscience, Mic. 6. 6. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?* the Hebrew is *אֵיךְ אֶקְרֶה לַיהוָה* how shall I prevent or anticipate the Lord? and so Montanus renders it, *in quo praeoccupabo Dominum?* Conscience sees God arming himself with Wrath to avenge himself for Sin; cries out, O how shall I prevent him! If he would accept the fruit of my Body (tho' dear pledges of Nature) for the Sin of my Soul, he should have them. But now we see God coming down in Flesh, and so intimately uniting our Flesh to himself, that it hath no proper subsistence of its own, but is united with the Divine Person; hence it's easie to imagine what worth and value must be in that Blood, and how eternal Love, springing forth triumphantly from it, flourishes into Pardon, Grace, and Peace. Here is a way in which the Sinner may see Justice and Mercy killing each other, and the latter exercised freely without prejudice to the former. All others Consciences through the World lye either in a deep sleep in the Devil's Arms, or else are rolling (Sea sick) upon the Waves of their own Feats and dismal Prefages. O happy are they that have dropt Anchor on this Ground, and not only know they have Peace, but why they have it!

Use 5. Of how great concernment is it, that Christ should have Union with our particular Persons, as well as with our common Nature? For by this Union with our Nature alone never any Man was or can be saved. Yea, let me add, that this Union with your Natures is utterly in vain to you, and will do you no good, except he have Union with your Persons by Faith also. It is indeed infinite Mercy that God is come so near you, as to dwell in your Flesh; and that he hath fitted such an ex-

cellent Method to save poor Sinners in. And hath he done all this? Is he indeed come home, even to your own doors, to seek Peace? Doth he vail his unsupportable Glory under Flesh, that he might treat thee more familiarly? And yet do you refuse him, and shut your hearts against him; then hear one word, and let thine ears tingle at the found of it; thy Sin is hereby aggravated beyond the Sin of Devils, who never sinn'd against a Mediator in their own Nature; who never despised, or refused, because indeed they were never offered terms of Mercy, as you are.

And I doubt not but the Devils themselves, who now tempt you to reject, will to all Eternity upbraid your Folly for rejecting this great Salvation, which in this excellent way is brought down, even to your own doors.

Use 6. If Jesus Christ has assumed our Nature, Then he is sensibly toucht with the Infirmities that attend it, and so hath pity and compassion for us under all our Burdens. And indeed this was one end of his assuming it, that he might be able to have compassion on us, as you read, Heb. 2. 17, 18. *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the Sins of the People. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.* O What a comfort is this to us, that he who is our High-priest in Heaven, hath our Nature on him, to enable him to take compassion on us!

Use 7. Hence we see, To what a height God intends to build up the Happiness of Man, in that he hath laid the Foundation thereof so deep, in the incarnating of his own Son.

They that intend to build high, use to lay the Foundation low. The Happiness and Glory of our Bodies, as well as Souls, is founded in Christ's taking our Flesh upon him. For therein, as in a Model or Pattern, God intended to shew what in time he resolves to make of our Bodies; for he will *μετεσχηματισεν*, transform our vile Bodies, and make them one day conformable to the glorious Body of Jesus Christ, Phil. 3. 21. This Flesh was therefore assumed by Christ, that in it might be shewn, as in a Pattern, how God intends to honour and exalt it. And indeed a greater Honour cannot be done to the Nature of Man, than what is already done it, by this Grace of Union. Nor are our Persons capable of higher Glory, than what consists in their conformity to this glorious Head. Indeed the Flesh of Christ will ever have a distinct Glory from ours in Heaven, by reason of this Union; for being the Body which the Word assumed, it is two ways advanced singularly above the Flesh and Blood of all other men, viz., Subjectively, and Objectively; Subjectively, it is the Flesh and Blood of God, Acts 20. 28. and so hath a distinct and incommunicable Glory of its own. And Objectively, it is the Flesh and Blood which all the Angels and Saints adore. But tho' in these things it be supereminently exalted, yet it is both the Medium and Pattern of all that Glory which God designs to raise us to.

Use 8.

Use 8. Lastly, *How wonderful a comfort is it that he who dwells in our Flesh is God! What Joy may not a poor Believer make out of this? What Comfort one made out of it, I will give you in his own words. I see it a work of God (saith he) that Experiences are all lost, when Summons of Improbation to prove our Charters of Christ to be counterfeit, are raised against poor Souls in their heavy Trials. But let me be a Sinner, and worse than the chief of Sinners, yea, a guilty Devil, I am sure my Well-beloved is God, and my Christ is God. And when I say my Christ is God, I have said all things, I can say no more. I would I could build as much on*

this, My Christ is God, as it would bear: I might lay all the World upon it.

God and Man in one Person, O thrice happy Conjunction! As Man, he is full of experimental sense of our Infirmities, Wants, and Burdens; and as God, he can support and supply them all. The Aspect of Faith upon this wonderful Person, how relieving, how reviving, how abundantly satisfying is it? God will never divorce the believing Soul and its Comfort; after he hath married our Nature to his own Son, by the Hypothetical, and our Persons also by the blessed Mystical Union.

S E R M O N VI.

JOHN VI. 27.

For him hath God the Father sealed.

Serm. 6.
Shows
the Au-
thority
by which
Christ as
Mediator
act-
ed.

YOU have heard Christ's Compact or Agreement with the Father in the Covenant of Redemption; as also what the Father did in pursuance of the Ends thereof, in giving his Son out of his Bosom, &c. also what the Son hath done towards it, in assuming Flesh. But tho' the glorious Work be thus far advanced, yet all he should act in that assumed Body, had been invalid and vain, without a due Call and Commission from the Father to do. Which is the import of the Words now before you.

This Scripture is a part of Christ's excellent reply to a self ended Generation, who followed him, not for any spiritual excellencies that that they saw in him, or Soul-advantages they expected by him, but for Bread. Instead of making his Service their Meat and Drink, they only served him that they might eat and drink. Self is a thing may creep into the best Hearts and Actions; but it only predominates in the Hypocrite. These people had fought Christ from place to place, and having at last found him, they salute him with an impertinent Compliment, *Rabbi, whence comest thou hither?* *vers. 25.* Christ's reply is partly *dismissive*, and partly *directive*. He dissuades them from putting the secondary and subordinate in the place of the principal and ultimate end; not to prefer their Bodies to their Souls, their fleshly Accommodations to the Glory of God. *Labour not for the meat that perisheth.* Wherein he doth not take them off from their lawful Labours and Calling: but he dissuades them, *first*, from minding these things too intently; and *secondly*, he dissuades them from that odious Sin of making Religion but a pretence for the Belly.

And it is partly *directive*, and that in the main end and business of Life. *But labour for that Meat which endures to eternal Life;* to get Bread for your Souls to live eternally by. And that he might engage their Diligence in seeking it to purpose, he shews them not only where they may have it, [*Which the Son of Man shall give you*] but also how they may be fully

satisfied that he hath it for them, in the Clause I have pitched on; *For him hath God the Father sealed.*

In these words are three parts observable.

1. The Person sealing or investing Christ with Authority and Power; which is said to be *God the Father*. Tho' all the Persons in the God-head are equal in Nature, Dignity and Power, yet in their Operation there is an Order observed among them; the Father sends the Son, the Son is sent by the Father, the *Holy Ghost* is sent by both.

2. The Subject in which God the Father lodges this Authority, [*Him*] that is the Son of Man. Jesus Christ he is the *vestro Altaris*, first Receptacle of it. And he must here be understood exclusively. God the Father hath so sealed him as he never sealed any other before him, or that shall arise after him. No Name is given in Heaven or Earth, but this Name by which we are saved, *Acts 4. 12.* *The Government is upon his Shoulders,* *Isa. 9.*

3. Here is farther observable, the way and manner of the Father's delegating and committing this Authority to Christ; and that is, by *Sealing* him. Where we have both a *Metonymy*, the Symbol of Authority being put for the Authority it self; and a *Metaphor*, *Sealing*, which is a human act, for the ratifying and confirming an Instrument or Grant, being here applied to God. *Like as Princes, by sealed Credentials, confirm the Authority of those that are sent by them:* as the Dutch Annotators well express the meaning of it. Hence we note,

Doct. That Jesus Christ did not of himself undertake the work of our Redemption, but was solemnly sealed unto that Work by God the Father.

When I say, he did not of himself undertake this Work, I mean not that he was unwilling to go about it, for his Heart was as fully and ardently engaged in it as the Father's was: So he tells us, *Psal. 40. 7. Lo, I come to do thy will, O God; thy Law is in my Heart.* But the meaning is, he came not without a due Call, and

and full Commission from his Father. And so it is to be understood in opposition to Intrusion, not voluntary Susception. And this is the meaning of that Scripture, *Job. 8. 42. I proceeded and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.* And this the Apostle plainly expresses, and fully clears, *Heb. 5. 4, 5. And no Man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron: so also, Christ glorified not himself to be made a High-Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son.* And on the account of these sealed Credentials: he received from his Father, he is called the Apostle and High-Priest of our Profession, *Heb. 3. 1. i. e. one called and sent forth by the Father's Authority.* Our present business then is to open Christ's Commission, and view the great Seal of Heaven by which it was ratified.

And to preserve a clear Method in the explication of this great Truth, into which your Faith and Comfort is resolved, I shall,
First. Shew what was the Work and Office to which the Father sealed him.
Secondly. What his sealing to this Work doth imply.
Thirdly. How and by what acts the Father sealed him to it.
Fourthly. Why it was necessary that he should be thus sealed and authorized by his Father. And then improve it in its proper Uses.

First. What was that Office or Work to which his Father sealed him? I answer more generally, he was sealed to the whole Work of Mediation for us, thereby to recover and save all the Elect, whom the Father had given him: So *John 17. 2. It was to give eternal Life to as many as were given him: It was to bring Jacob again to him.* *Isa. 49. 5. or, as the Apostle expresses it, 1 Pet. 3. 18. That he might bring us to God.* More particularly, in order to the sure and full effecting of this most glorious Design, he was sealed to the Offices of a Prophet, Priest and King, that so he might bring about and compass this Work.

1. God sealed him a Commission to preach the glad-tidings of Salvation to Sinners. This Commission Christ opened and read in the audience of the People, *Luke 4. 18, 19, 20, 21. And when he had opened the Book, he found the place where it is written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the Poor; he hath sent me to heal the Broken-hearted, to preach Deliverance to the Captives, and to the recovering of Sight to the Blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable Year of the Lord. And he closed the Book, &c. And he began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears.*

2. He also sealed him to the Priesthood, and that the most excellent; authorizing him to execute both the parts of it, *viz. Oblatory and Intercessory.* He call'd him to offer up himself a Sacrifice for us, *I have Power* (saith he) *to lay down my Life; this Commandment have I received of my Father.* *Joh. 10. 18.* And upon that account his offering up of his Blood is by the Apostle stiled an Act of Obedience, as it is *Phil. 2. 8. He became obedient unto Death.* He also call'd him to intercede for us, *Heb. 7.*

21, 24, 25. These Priests were made without an Oath, but this with an Oath; by him that said unto him, The Lord swear, and will not repent, thou art a Priest for ever: Because his Sacrifice is virtually continued in his living for ever to make Intercession, as it is *ver. 24. Yea, he call'd him to his Regal Office; he was set upon the highest Throne of Authority by his Father's Commission, as it is, Mat. 28. 18. All Power in Heaven and Earth is given to me.* To all this was Christ sealed and authorized by his Father.

Secondly. What doth the Father's sealing of Christ to this Work and Office imply? There are divers things implied in it. As,

1. The Validity and Efficacy of all his Mediatory Acts. For by virtue of this his sealing, whatever he did was fully ratified. And in this very thing lies much of a Believer's Comfort and Security: for as much as all Acts done without Commission and Authority, (how great or able soever the Person that doth them is, yet) are in themselves null and void. But what is done by Commission and Authority, is authentick and most allowable among Men. Had Christ come from Heaven, and entered upon his Mediatory Work without a due Call, our Faith had been stumbled at the very threshold; but this greatly satisfies.

2. It imports the great Obligation lying upon Jesus Christ to be faithful in the Work he was sealed to. For the Father in this Commission devolves a great Trust upon him, and relies upon him for his most faithful discharge thereof. And indeed upon this very account Christ reckons himself specially obliged to pursue the Father's design and end, *Job. 9. 4. I must work the Works of him that sent me.* And *Job. 5. 30. I seek not my own Will, but the Will of the Father which sent me.* Still his Eye is upon that Work and Will of his Father. And he reckons himself under a necessity of punctual and precise Obedience to it; and, as a faithful Servant, will have his own Will swallowed up in the Father's Will.

3. It imports Christ's compleat qualification or instrumental fitness to serve the Father's design and end in our Recovery. Had not God known him to be every way fit and qualified for the Work, he would never have sealed him a Commission for it. Men may, but God will not seal an unfit or incapable Person for his Work. And indeed whatever is desirable in a Servant, was eminently found in Christ. For Faithfulness, none like him. *Moses* indeed was faithful to a Pin, but still as a Servant: But Christ as a Son, *Heb. 3. 2.* He is the faithful and true Witness, *Rev. 1. 5.* For Zeal, none like him. The Zeal of God's House did eat him up, *Job. 2. 16, 17.* He was so intent upon his Father's Work, that he forgot to eat Bread, counting his Work his Meat and Drink, *Job. 4. 32.* Yea, and Love to his Father carried him on through all his Work, and made him delight in the hardest piece of his Service; for he served him as a Son, *Heb. 3. 5, 6.* All that ever he did was done in love. For Wisdom, none like him. The Father knew him to be most wise, and said of him before he was employ'd, *Behold, my Servant shall deal prudently*

Nihil aliud
posse ex-
ditto Apo-
stolici,
nisi hoc,
Christum
ab eo vo-
catum esse
ad munus
mediato-
rium, a
quo geni-
tus est.
Cameron
Myrathus,
p. 317.

ly, *Iſa.* 52. 13. To conclude, for Self-denial, never any like him; he fought not his own Glory, but the Glory of him that ſent him, *Joh.* 8. 50. Had he not been thus faithful, zealous, full of Love, prudent, and ſelf-denying, he had never been employed in this great Affair.

4. It implies Chriſt's ſole Authority in the Church, to appoint and enjoy what he pleaſeth. And this is his peculiar Prerogative. For the Commiſſion God ſealed him in the Text, is a ſingle, not a joint Commiſſion; he hath ſealed him, and none beſide him. Indeed there were ſome that pretended a Call and Commiſſion from God; but all that were before him were Thieves and Robbers, that came not in at the Door as he did, *Joh.* 10. 8. And he himſelf foretells, that after him ſome ſhould ariſe, and labour to deceive the World with a feigned Commiſſion, and a counterfeit Seal, *Matth.* 24. 24. *There ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets, and ſhall ſhew great Signs and Wonders; inſomuch, that if it were poſſible, they ſhould deceive the very Eleſt.* But God never commiſſioned any beſides him, neither is there any other Name under Heaven, *Acts* 4. 12. Thus you ſee how the validity of his Acts, his Obligation to be faithful, his compleat Qualifications, and ſole Authority in the Church, are imported in his Sealing.

Thirdly, Let us inquire how God the Father ſealed Jeſus Chriſt to this Work, and we ſhall find that he was ſealed by four Acts of the Father.

1. By ſolemn Deſignation to this Work. He ſingled him out, and ſet him apart to it; and therefore the Prophet *Iſaiah*, chap. 42. v. 1. calls him *God's Eleſt*. And the Apoſtle *Per.* 1 *Pet.* 2. 4. *Chosen of God.* This word which we render *Eleſt* doth not only ſignify one that in himſelf is eximious, worthy, and excellent, but alſo one that is ſet a part and deſigned, as Chriſt was for the work of Mediation. And ſo much is carried in *Joh.* 10. 36. where the Father is ſaid to ſanctifie him, *i. e.* to ſeparate, and devote him to this Service.

2. He was ſealed not only by ſolemn Deſignation, but alſo by *ſuper-eminent and unparalleled Sanctification*. He was anointed as well as appointed to it. The Lord filled him with the Spirit, and that without meaſure, to qualify him for this Service. So *Iſa.* 61. 1, 2, 3. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe he hath anointed me to preach, &c.* Yea, the Spirit of the Lord was not only upon him, but he was full of the Spirit, *Luke* 4. 1. and ſo full as never was any beſide him: For God anointed him with the Oil of Gladneſs above his fellows, *Pſal.* 45. 7. Believers are his Fellows, or Copartners of this Spirit: They have an Anointing alſo, but not as Chriſt had: In him it dwelt in its fulneſs, in them according to meaſure. It was poured out on Chriſt our Head abundantly, and ran down to the hem of his Garment. God gave not the Spirit to him by meaſure, *Joh.* 3. 34. God filled Chriſt's Humane Nature to the utmoſt capacity with all fulneſs of the Spirit of Knowledge, Wiſdom, Love, &c. beyond all Creatures, for the plenary and more effectual Adminiſtration of his Mediator-

ſhip: He was full *extenſively* with all kinds of Grace; and full *intenſively* with all degrees of Grace. It pleaſed the Father that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell, *Col.* 1. 19. as Light in the Sun, or Water in a Fountain, that he might not only fill all things, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Ephes.* 1. 22. but that he might be prompt, expedite, and every way fit to diſcharge his own Work, which was the next and immediate end of it: So that the holy Oil that was poured out upon the Heads of Kings and Prieſts, whereby they were conſecrated to their Offices, was but typical of the Spirit by which Chriſt was conſecrated or ſealed to his Offices.

3. Chriſt was ſealed by the Father's immediate Teſtimony from Heaven, whereby he was declared to be the Perſon whom the Father had ſolemnly deſigned and appointed to this Work. And God gave this extraordinary Teſtimony of him at two remarkable ſeaſons; the one was juſt as his entrance on his publick Miniſtry, *Mat.* 3. ult. the other but a little before his Sufferings, *Matth.* 17. 5. This Voice was not formed by ſuch Organs and Inſtruments of Speech as ours are, but by creating a Voice in the Air, which the People heard ſounding there; by this God owned, approved, and as by a Seal ratified his Work.

4. Chriſt was ſealed by the Father in all theſe extraordinary miraculous Works wrought by him, in which the Father gave yet more full and convincing Teſtimonies to the World, that this was He whom he had appointed to be our Mediator. Theſe were convictive to the World that God had ſent him, and that his Doctrine was of God. God anointed Jeſus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghoſt and Power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil; for God was with him, *Acts* 10. 38. And ſo *Joh.* 5. 36. *I have a greater Witneſs than that of John; for the Works which the Father hath given me to finiſh, the ſame Works that I do bear witneſs of me, that the Father hath ſent me.* Therefore he ſtill refer'd thoſe that doubted of him, or of his Doctrine, to the Seal of his Father, even the miraculous Works he wrought in the Power of God, *Matth.* 11. 3, 4, 5. And thus the Father ſealed him.

Fourthly, and laſtly, We will inquire why it was neceſſary Chriſt ſhould be ſealed by his Father to this Work: And there are theſe three weighty Reaſons for it.

1. Elſe he had not correſponded with the Types which prefigured him, and in him it was neceſſary that they be all accompliſhed. You know under the Law, the Kings and High Prieſts had their Inaugurations by ſolemn Unctions; in all which, this Conſecration, or ſealing of Chriſt to his Work, was ſhadow'd out: And therefore you ſhall find, *Heb.* 5. 4, 5. *No Man taketh this Honour to himſelf, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron: So alſo (mark the neceſſary Correſpondency betwixt Chriſt and them) Chriſt glorified not himſelf, to be made a High-Prieſt; but he that ſaid unto him, Thou art my Son.*

2. Moreover, hereby the Hearts of Believers are the more engaged to love the Father, in as much as it appears hereby that the Father's Love

Omoes
are me
(id est, me
non mi-
tente,
Ulro cam
non fuerit
miſſi cu-
currente,
ſe pro
Meſſia ven-
ditarunt)
ſunt ſures,
& latro-
nes; latro-
num more
adulterino
quapiam
officiis coeli
commen-
ſant, & per
ea homi-
nes in
aeternae
damnatio-
nis ſententia
communi-
cantur.
Dilectus.

דלעס, י.
ע. ערמי-
פּרעלן,
עוועלען.

Vid. Dutch
Joh. in
loc.

A Chriſto
Chriſtiani
dicuntur
(i. e.) un-
ctiois fan-
ctae ungu-
is non com-
munium ge-
neris ſine
re, ſed qui
dicuntur
vere Chriſ-
tiani,
Xpiſtae
cum obſe-
rent. Glor-
iam. Dona
iſta abſo-
lute & in
ſe ſua
ſunt ſicut,
& iſta Chri-
ſti natura
ſua eſt;
noſtri na-
ture re-
ſpectu ſunt
abſq;
meſura.
Dr. A. Ex-
plicat. Cat.
p. 10. p. 70.

and God-will to them was the Original and Spring of their Redemption. For had not the Father sealed him such a commission, he had not come; but now he comes in the Father's Name, and in the Father's Love as well as his Name; and to all Men are bound to ascribe equal Glory and Honour to them both; as it is *Joh. 5. 21.*

3. And especially, Christ would not come without a Commission, because *else you had no ground for your Faith in him.* How should we have been satisfied that this is indeed the true Messiah, except he had opened his Commission to the World, and shew'd his Father's Seal annexed to it? If he had come without his Credentials from Heaven, and only told the World that God had sent him, and that they must take his bare word for it: Who could have rested his Faith on that Testimony? And that is the true meaning of that place, *Joh. 5. 31. If I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true. How so? You will say, doth not that contradict what he saith, Joh. 8. 14. Tho' I bear record of my self, yet my Record is true?* Therefore you must understand Truth, not as it is opposed to Reality; but the meaning is, if I had only given you my bare word for it, and not brought other Evidence from my Father, my Testimony had not been authentick and valid, according to human Laws; but now all Doubtings are precluded. Let us next improve this.

Inf. 1. Hence we infer the *unreasonableness of Infidelity*, and how little the Rejecters of Christ can have to pretend for their so doing. You see he hath opened his Commission in the Gospel, shewn the World his Father's Hand and Seal to it, given as ample Satisfaction as Reason itself could desire or expect; yet even his own received him not, *Joh. 1. 11.* And he knew it before-hand, and therefore complain'd by the Prophet, *Isa. 53. 1. Who hath believed our Report? &c.* Yea, and that he is believed on in the World, is by the Apostle put among the great Mysteries of Godliness, *1 Tim. 3. 16.* A Man that well confiders with what convincing Evidence Christ comes, would rather think it a Mystery that any should not believe. But O the brutish Obstinacy and devilish Enmity that is in Nature to Jesus Christ! Devilish did I say: you must give me that word again, for he compell'd the Devils Afflict; *We know thee whom thou art.* And it is equally as wonderful to see the facility that is in Nature to comply (mean while) with any, even the most foolish Imposture. Let a false Christ arise; and he shall deceive many, as it is *Mat. 24. 24.* Of this Christ complains, and not without great reason, *Joh. 5. 43. I am come in my Father's Name, and ye receive me not: If another come in his own Name, him will ye receive, q. d.* You are incredulous to none but me: Every Deceiver, every pitiful Cheat that hath but Wit, or rather Wickedness enough to tell you the Lord hath sent him, tho' you must take his own single word for it, he shall obtain and get Disciples: but tho' I come in my Father's Name, *i. e.* shewing you a Commission sign'd and seal'd by him, doing those Works that none but a God can do, yet ye receive me not. But in all this

we must adore the Justice of God in permitting it to be so, giving Men up to such unreasonable Obstinacy and Hardness. It is a fore Plague that lyes upon the World, and a wonder that we all are not ingulph'd in the same Infidelity.

Inf. 2. If Christ were sealed to his Work by his Father, then *how great is the Sin of those that reject and despise such as are sent and sealed by Jesus Christ?* for look as he came to us in his Father's Name, so he hath sent forth, by the same Authority, Ministers in his Name; and as he acts in his Father's, so they in his Authority. *As thou hast sent me into the World, even so have I also sent them into the World, Joh. 17. 18.* And so *Joh. 20. 21. As my Father hath sent me, so have I sent you.* You may think it a small matter to despise or reject a Minister of Christ, (a Sin, in the guilt whereof I think no Age hath been plunged deeper than this) but hear, and let it be a warning to you for ever; in so doing you despise, and put the slight both upon the Father that sent Jesus Christ, and upon Christ that sent them: So that it is a Rebellion, that however it seems to begin low in some small piques against their Persons, or some little quarrels at their Parts and Utterance, Tones, Methods or Gestures; yet it runs high, even to the Fountain-head of the most suprem Authority. You that set your selves against a Minister of Christ, set your selves against God the Father, and God the Son; *Luke 10. 16. He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* God expects that you behave your selves under the Word spoken by us as if he himself spake it: Yea, he expects submission to his Word in the mouths of his Ministers from the greatest on Earth. And therefore it was that God so severely punished *Zedekiah, because he humbled not himself before Jeremiah the Prophet, speaking from the Mouth of the Lord, 2 Chron. 36. 12.* God was angry with a great King, for not humbling himself before a poor Prophet. Yet here you must distinguish both of *Persons*, and of *Acts*. This reverence and submission is not due to them as Men, but as Men in Office, as Christ's Embassadors; and must involve that respect still in it. Again, we owe it not to them, commanding or forbidding in their own names, but in Christ's; not in venting their own Spleen, but the Terrors of the Lord: And then to resist is a high Rebellion and Affront to the sovereign Authority of Heaven. And by the way, this may instruct Ministers, that the way to maintain that veneration and respect that is due scripto; to them in the Consciences of their Hearers, is by keeping close to their Commission.

Inf. 3. Hence also we infer, *How great an evil it is to intrude into the Office of the Ministry without a due Call.* It's more than Christ himself would do; he glorified not himself: The Honours and Advantages attending that office, have invited many to run before they were sent. But surely this is an insufferable violation of Christ's Order. Our Age hath abounded with as many Church-levellers as State levellers. I with the Ministers of Christ might at last see and consider, what they were once warned of by a faithful Watchman: *I believe (saith he) God hath permitted so many to intrude*

Hæc Apolo-
logorum à
Christo
missionis
formula fa-
tis eviden-
ter com-
probat Ap-
ostolici
muneris
dignitatem
in Aposto-
lorum au-
thoritate
& potesta-
te, quæ fuit
summa, &
incompara-
bilis.
Cameron.

Ut si herus
famulo
prescribit
primum
quid de-
beat scri-
bere &
gendum in
familia;
tum sub-
jungeret
Quæ re au-
dit, me au-
dit: non
inde se-
queretur
fieri non
posse ut ille
famulus
discedat ab
heri præ-
scripto;
aut sic ubi
discesserit,
ei esse præ-
randum.
Camer. My-
st. P. 130.

Mr. Strong.

into the Ministers Callings, because Ministers have too much meddled with, and intruded into other Mens Callings.

Inference 4. Hence be convinced of the great Efficacy that is in all Gospel-Ordinances duly administered: For Christ having received full Commission from his Father, and by virtue thereof having instituted and appointed those Ordinances in the Church, all the Power in Heaven is engaged to make them good, to back and second them, to confirm and ratifie them. Hence, in the Censures of the Church you have that great Expression, *Mat. 18. 18. Whatsoever ye bind on Earth, shall be bound or loosed in Heaven.* And so for the Word and Sacraments, *Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20. All Power in Heaven and Earth is given unto me: Go therefore, &c.* They are not the Appointments of Men; your Faith stands not in the Willdom of Men, but in the Power of God. That very Power God the Father committed to Christ, is the Fountain whence all Gospel-Institutions flow. And he hath promised to be with his Officers, not only the extraordinary Officers of that Age, but with his Ministers in succeeding Ages to the end of the World. O therefore when we come to an Ordinance, come not with slight thoughts, but with great reverence, and great expectations, remembering Christ is there to make all good.

Inference 5. Again, here you have another Call to admire the Grace and Love both of the Father and Son to your Souls: It is not lawful to compare them, but it's duty to admire them. Was it not wonderful Grace in the Father, to seal a Commission for the Death of his Son, for the humbling him as low as Hell, and in that method to save you, when you might have expected he should have sealed your *Mittemus* for Hell, rather than a Commission for your Salvation? He might rather have set his irreversible Seal to the Sentence of your Damnation, than to a Commission for his Son's Humiliation for you. And no less is the Love of Christ to be wondered at, that would accept such a Commission as this for us, and receive this Seal, understanding fully (as he did) what were the Contents of that Commission that the Father delivered him thus sealed, and knowing that there could be no reverting of it afterwards.

O then, love the Lord Jesus all ye his Saints, for still you see more and more of his Love breaking out upon you. I commend to you a

sealed Saviour this day: O that every one that reads these Lines might, in a pang of Love, cry out with the enamoured Spouse, *Cant. 8. 6. Set me as a Seal upon thy Heart, as a Seal upon thy Arm; for Love is strong as Death, Jealousie is cruel as the Grave: The Coals thereof are Coals of Fire, which have a vehement Flame.*

Inference 6. Once more, hath God sealed Christ for you? Then draw forth the Comfort of his sealing for you, and be restless till ye also be sealed by him.

1. Draw out the Comfort of Christ's sealing for you. Remember that hereby God stands engaged, even by his own Seal, to allow and confirm whatever Christ hath done in the business of your Salvation. And on this ground you may thus plead with God: Lord, thou hast sealed Christ to this Office, and therefore I depend upon it, that thou allowest all that he hath done, and all that he hath suffered for me, and wilt make good all that he hath promised me. If Men will not deny their own Seals, much less wilt thou.

2. Get your Interest in Christ sealed to you by the Spirit, else you cannot have the Comfort of Christ's being sealed for you. Now the Spirit seals two ways, *Objectively* and *Effectively*; the first is by working those Graces in us, which are the Conditions of the Promises, the latter is by shining upon his own Work, and helping the Soul to discern it, which follows the other both in order of Nature, and of Time. And these Sealings of the Spirit are to be distinguished both *ex parte Subjecti*, by their Subject, or the Quality of the Person sealed, which always is a Believer, *Eph. 1. 13.* for there can be no reflex, till there have been a direct Act of Faith; and *ex parte Materie*, by the Matter of which that Comfort is made; which if it be of the Spirit, is ever consonant to the written Word, *Isa. 8. 20.* And partly *ab effectis*, by its Effects; for it commonly produces in the sealed Soul great care and caution to avoid Sin, *Ephes. 4. 30.* Great love to God, *John 14. 22.* Readiness to suffer any thing for Christ, *Rom. 5. 3, 4, 5.* Confidence in Addresses to God, *1 John 5. 13, 14.* and great Humility and Self-abasement; as in *Abraham*, who lay on his face when God sealed the Covenant to him, *Gen. 17. 1, 2, 3.* This, O this brings home the sweet and good of all, when this Seal is super-added to that.

S E R M O N VII.

JOHN XVII. 19.

And for their sakes I sanctifie myself.

Serm. 7.
Treats
of the so-
lemn
Conse-
cration
of the
Media-
tor.

JESUS Christ being fitted with a Body, and authorized by a Commission, now actually devotes, and sets himself apart to his Work. In the former Sermon you heard what the Father did; in this you shall hear what the Son hath done towards the farther advancement of that glorious Design of our Salvation: *He sanctified*

himself for our sakes. Wherein observe, (1.) Christ's sanctifying of himself. (2.) The End or Design of his so doing.

1. You have Christ's sanctifying of himself. The word *ἁγιάζω* is not here to be understood for the cleansing, purifying, or making holy that which was before unclean and unholy, either in a moral

Vol. J.

F. 2

ferre;

Sanctifica-
te est in
ulius divi-
nos sepa-
rare. Rem-
itti in loc.

sense, as we are cleansed from Sin by Sanctifica-
tion; or in a ceremonial sense, as persons and
things were sanctified under the Law? tho'
here is a plain Allusion to those legal Rites. But
Christ's sanctifying himself, imports, (1.) His
Separation, or setting apart to be an Oblation
or Sacrifice. So *Beza, nempe ut sacerdos &*
victimam; as the Priest and Sacrifice. I sanctifie
my self, imports, (2.) His *Consecration, or*
Dedication of himself to his holy Use and Ser-
vise. So the Dutch Annotations, I sanctifie my
self, (*i. e.*) *I gave up my self for a Holy Sacrifice.*
And so our English Annotations, I sanctifie,
(*i. e.*) *I consecrate and voluntarily offer my self*
a holy and unblemished Sacrifice to thee for
their Redemption. And thus under the Law,
whenever Day, Person, or Vessel was consecra-
ted and dedicated to the Lord, it was so intire-
ly for his use and service, that to use it after-
ward in any common Service, was to profane
and pollute it, as you see, *Num. 5. 3.*

Est igitur
lentus;
ego sancti-
fico meip-
sum, i. e.
monor pro
ipsis. Pre-
cipi per
mortem
meam spi-
ritu sancti-
tatis im-
pleantur,
& fane
sancta Dei
vafa, per
revelatum
Dei spiri-
tum. Mar-
tinet. in
loc.

2. The End of his so sanctifying himself, [*for*
their sakes, and that they might be sanctified]
where you have the *finis cuius*, the End for
whom, for their, (*i. e.*) for the Elect Sake, for
them whom thou gavest me; and the *finis cui*,
the End for which, that they might be sanctified.
Where you also see that the Death of Christ
wholly respects us: he offered not for himself,
as other Priests did, but for us, that we may
be sanctified. Christ is so in love with Holi-
ness, that at the price of his Blood he will buy
it for us. Hence the Observation is;

Doct. That Jesus Christ did dedicate, and
wholly set himself apart to the Work of a Me-
diator, for the Elect sake.

This Point is a Glass, wherein the eye of
your Faith may see Jesus Christ preparing him-
self to be offered up to God for us, fitting him-
self to die. And to keep a clear method, I
shall open these two things in the doctrinal
part; *First*, What his sanctifying himself im-
plies. *Secondly*, How it respects us.

First, What is implied in this Phrase, *I san-*
ctifie my self. And there are seven things carri-
ed in it.

1. This Phrase [*I sanctifie my self*] implies
the *personal union of the two Natures in Christ*:
For what is that which he here calls *himself*, but
the same that was consecrated to be a Sacrifice,
even his humane Nature? This was the Sacri-
fice. And this also was himself: So the
Apostle speaks, *Heb. 9. 14. He through the*
eternal Spirit, offered up himself to God, with-
out spot. So that our Nature by that assump-
tion is become himself. Greater honour can-
not be done it, or a greater ground of Comfort
proposed to us. But having spoken of that
Union in the former Sermon, I shall remit the
Reader thither.

2. This sanctifying or consecrating himself
to be a Sacrifice for us, implies the *greatness*
and dreadfulness of that Breach which Sin
made betwixt God and us. You see no less
Sacrifice than Christ himself must be sanctified
to make Atonement. Judge of the greatness of
the Wound by the breadth of the Plaster. *Sacri-*
fice and offering, and burnt-offering for Sin,
thou couldst not, but a Body hast thou prepared
me, *Heb. 10. 5.* All our Repentance, could we

shed as many tears for Sin, as there have fallen
drops of Rain since the Creation, could not have
been our Atonement: *But God was in Christ*
reconciling the World to himself. And had he
not sanctified Christ to this end, he would
have sanctified himself upon us in Judgment
and Fury for ever.

3. This his sanctifying himself, implies *his*
free and voluntary undertaking of the Work.
It is not *I am sanctified*, as if he had been meely
passive in it, as the Lambs that typed him out
were when plucked from the Fold; but it's an
active Verb that he useth here, *I sanctifie my*
self; he would have none think that he died
out of a necessity of compulsion, but out of
choice: Therefore he is said to *offer up himself*
to God, *Heb. 9. 14.* And in *John 10. 18. I lay*
down my Life of my self: no Man takes it from
me. And altho' it's often said *his Father sent him,*
and *gave him*; yet his Heart was as much set on
that Work, as if there had been nothing but
Glory, Ease and Comfort in it; he was under
no constraint but that of his own Love. There-
fore as when the Scripture would set forth the
willingness of the Father to this Work, he saith,
God sent his Son, and God gave his Son; so
when it would set forth Christ's willingness to
it, he saith, *he offered up himself, gave himself,*
and here in the Text, *sanctified himself.* The
Sacrifice that struggled, and came not without
force to the Altar, was reckon'd ominous and
unlucky by the Heathen: Our Sacrifice dedicated
himself; he died out of choice, and was a free-
will Offering.

4. His sanctifying himself, implies *his pure*
and perfect Holiness; *That he had no spot or*
blemish in him. Those Beasts that prefigured
him, were to be without blemish, and none
else were consecrated to that service. So, and
more than so, it behoved Christ to be, *Heb. 7.*
29. Such a High Priest became us, who is holy,
harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners:
And what it became him to be, he was. There-
fore in allusion to the Lambs offered under the
Law, the Apostle calls him, *a Lamb without*
blemish, or spot, *1 Pet. 1. 19.* Every other
Man hath a double spot on him, the Heart-spot
and the Life-spot; the Spot of Original, and the
Spots of Actual Sins. But Christ was without
either, he had not the Spot of Original Sin, for
he was not by Man: he came in a peculiar
way into the World, and so escaped that: Not
yet of Actual Sins; for as his Nature, so his
Life was spotless and pure, *Isa. 53. 9. He did*
no iniquity. And tho' tempted to sin externally,
yet he was never defiled in heart or practice;
he came as near it as he could for our sakes, yet
still without sin, *Heb. 4. 15.* If he sanctifie him-
self for a Sacrifice, he must be such as the Law
required, pure and spotless.

5. His sanctifying himself for our sakes, speaks
the *strength of his Love, and largeness of his*
Heart to poor Sinners that he set himself *wholly*
and entirely apart for us: So that what he did
and suffered, must all of it have a respect
and relation to us. He did not (when consecrated
for us) live a moment, do an act, or speak a
word, but it had some tendency to promote the
great Design of our Salvation. He was only
and wholly, and always doing your Work,
when

when consecrated for your sakes. His Incarnation respects you; *Isa. 9. 6. For as a Child is born, to us a Son is given.* And he would never have been the Son of Man, but to make you the Sons and Daughters of God. God would not have come down in the likeness of sinful flesh, in the habit of a Man, but to raise up sinful Man into the likeness of God. All the Miracles he wrought were for you, to confirm your Faith. When he raised up *Lazarus*, *John 11. 42. Because of the People which stand by, I said it, that they might believe that thou hast sent me.* While he lived on Earth, he lived as one wholly set apart for us; and when he died, he died for us, *Gal. 3. 13. He was made a Curse for us.* When he hanged on that cursed Tree, he hanged there in our room, and did but fill our place. When he was buried, he was buried for us; for the end of it was, to perfume our Graves, against we come to lye down in them. And when he rose again, it was (as the Apostle saith) *for our Justification*, *Rom. 4. 25.* When he ascended into Glory, he proteited it was about our business, that he went to *prepare places for us*. And if it had not been so, he would have told us, *John 14. 2.* And now he is there, it is for us that he there lives: *For he ever lives to make intercession for us*, *Heb. 7. 25.* And when he shall return again to Judge the World he will come for us too. *He comes* (whenever it be) *to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in them that believe*, *2 Thell. 1. 10.* He comes to gather his Saints home to himself; that where he is, there they all may be, in Soul and Body with him for ever. Thus you see how, as his Consecration for us doth speak him set apart for our use; so he did wholly bestow himself, time, life, death, and all upon us; living and dying for no other end, but to accomplish this great Work of Salvation for us.

6. His sanctifying himself for us, plainly speaks the *Vicegerency of his Death*, that it was in our room or stead. When the Priest consecrated the Sacrifice, it was set apart for the People. So it's said for the Scape-Goat; *And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the Live-Goat, and confess over him all the Iniquities of the Children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their Sins, putting them upon the head of the Goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit Man into the Wilderness*, *Levit. 16. 21.* Thus *Isa. 53. 6, 7.* He stood in our room, to bear our burden. And as *Aaron* laid the Iniquities of the People upon the Goat, so were ours laid on Christ: It was laid to him in that day; On thee be their pride, their unbelief, their hardness of heart, their vain thoughts, their earthly-mindedness, &c. Thou art consecrated for them, to be the Sacrifice in their room. His Death was in our stead, as well as for our good. And so much his sanctifying himself [for us] imports.

7. His sanctifying himself, imports the *extraordinariness of his Person*: For it speaks him to be both Priest, Sacrifice and Altar, all in one; a thing unheard of in the World before. So that this Name might well be called *Wonderful*. *I sanctifie my self*: I sanctifie, according to both Natures; my self, that is my humane Nature, which was the Sacrifice upon

the Altar of my Divine Nature; for 'tis the Altar that sanctifies the Gift. As the three Offices never met in one Person before, so these three things never met in one Priest before. The Priests indeed consecrated the bodies of Beasts for Sacrifice, but never offered up their own Souls and Bodies as a whole Burnt-offering, as Christ did. And thus you have the import of this Phrase, *I sanctifie my self for their sake.*

Secondly, I shall shew you briefly the habitude and respect that all this hath to us; for unto us the Scriptures everywhere refer it. So in *1 Cor. 3. 7. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us*, *Eph. 5. 2. He loved the Church, and gave himself for it*. See *Tit. 2. 14.* This will be made out by a threefold consideration of Christ's Death. And,

1. Let it be considered, that he was not offered up to God for his own Sins, for he was most holy. *Isa. 53. 9.* No Iniquity was found in him. Indeed the Priests under the Law offered for themselves as well as the People; but Christ did not so, *Heb. 7. 27. He needed not daily, as those High Priests, to offer up Sacrifice, first for his own Sins, and then for the Peoples.* And indeed had he been a Sinner, what value or efficacy could have been in his Sacrifice? He could not have been the Sacrifice, but would have needed one. Now if Christ were most holy, and yet put to death, and cruel sufferings; either his Death and Sufferings must be an act of Injustice and Cruelty; or it must respect others, whose Persons and Cause he sustained in that suffering capacity. He could never have suffered or died by the Father's hand, had he not been a Sinner by imputation. And in that respect (as *Luther* speaks) he was the greatest of Sinners; or, as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks, *all our Sins were made to meet upon him*: not that he was so intrinically, but was made so, *sc.* by imputation, as is clear from *2 Cor. 5. 11. He was made Sin for us, that had no Sin.* So that hence it's evident, that Christ's Death, or Sacrifice, is wholly a respective or relative thing.

2. It is not to be forgotten here, that the Scriptures frequently call the Death of Christ a Price, *1 Cor. 6. 20.* and a Ransom, *Mat. 20. versio 28.* or Counterprice. To whom then doth it relate, but to them that were and are in Bondage and Captivity? If it were to redeem any, it must be Captives: But Christ himself was never in Captivity; he was always in his Father's Bosom, as you have heard; but we were in cruel Bondage and Thralldom, under the Tyranny of Sin and Satan: And it's we only that have the benefit of this Ransom.

3. Either the Death of Christ must relate to Believers, or else he must die in vain. As for the Angels, those that stood in their Integrity, needed no Sacrifice; and those that fell, are totally excluded from any benefit by it: He is not a Mediator for them. And among Men that have need of it, Unbelievers have no share in it, they reject it; such have no part in it. If then he neither died for himself, as I proved before, nor for Angels, nor Unbelievers; either his Blood must be shed with respect to Believers, or, which is most absurd, and never to

λύτρον,
ἀντίλωον,
i. e. pre-
cium ex ad-
spondens.

to be imagined, shed as water upon the ground, and totally cast away: So that you see by all this it was for our sakes (as the Text speaks) that he sanctified himself. And now we may say, Lord, the *Condemnation* was thine, that the *Justification* might be mine; the *Agony* thine, that the *Victory* might be mine; the *Pain* was thine, and the *Ease* mine; the *Stripes* thine, and the *healing Balm* issuing from them mine; the *Vinegar* and *Gall* was thine, that the *Honey* and *Sweet* might be mine; the *Curse* was thine, that the *Blessing* might be mine; the *Crown of Thorns* was thine, that the *Crown of Glory* might be mine; the *Death* was thine, the *Life* purchased by it mine; Thou paid'st the *Price*, that I might enjoy the *Inheritance*.

We come next to the Inferences of Truth deducible from this point, which follow.

Inference 1. If Jesus Christ did wholly set himself apart for Believers, *How reasonable is it, that Believers should consecrate and set themselves apart wholly for Christ*; Is he also for us, and shall we be nothing for him? What he was, he was for you. What ever he did, was done for you: And all that he suffer-

Synechdo-
chê He-
braica, pro
vos totos.
Sic Patet
in loc.

ed, was suffered for you. O then, I beseech you, Brethren, by the mercies of God, *present your Bodies, i. e. your whole selves*, (for so Body is there synecdochically put, to signify the whole Person) I say, *present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy acceptable to God; which is your reasonable service*, Rom. 12. 1. As your Good was Christ's end, so let his Glory be your end. Let Christ be the end of your Conversation, Heb. 13. 7. As Christ could say, to me to live is you; so do you say, for us to live is Christ, Phil. 1. 21. O that all who profess Faith in Christ, could subscribe cordially to that profession, Rom. 14. 8. *None of us liveth to himself, and no Man dieth to himself; but whether we live, we live to the Lord; and whether we die, we die to the Lord: so then whether we live or die we are the Lord's*. This is to be a Christian indeed. What is a Christian, but a holy dedicated thing to the Lord? And what greater evidence can there be that Christ set himself apart for you, than your setting your selves apart for him?

This is the Marriage-Covenant, Hof. 3. 3. *Thou shalt be for me, and not for another; so will I be for thee*. Ah what a Life is the Life of a Christian! Christ all for you, and you all for him. Blessed exchange! Soul, (saith Christ) all I have is thine. Lord, (saith the Soul) and all I have is thine. Soul, (saith Christ) my Person is wonderful, but what I am I am for thee: My Life was spent in labour, and travel; but lived for thee. And, Lord, (saith the Believer) my Person is vile, and not worth thy accepting; but such as it is, 'tis thine; my Soul, with all and every Faculty; my Body, and every Member of it, my Gifts, Time, and all my Talents are thine.

And see that as Christ bequeathed and made over himself to you, so ye in like manner bestow and make over your selves to him. He lived not, neither died (as you hear) for himself, but you. O that you in like manner would down with Self and up with Christ in the

room of it. "Wo, wo, is me (saith one) that the holy profession of Christ is made a staggery Garment by many to bring home a vain Fame; and Christ is made to serve Mens ends. This is to stop an Oven with a King's Robes. Except Men martyr and slay the Body of Sin in sanctified Self-denial, they shall never be Christ's Martyrs and faithful Witnesses. O if I could be master of that House-Idol my self, mine own, mine own Wit, Will, Credit, and Ease, how blessed were I! O but we have need to be redeemed from our selves, rather than from the Devil and the World. Learn to put out your selves, and to put in Christ for your selves. I should make a sweet Bargain, and give old for new, if I could shuffe out Self, and substitute Christ my Lord in place of my self; to say, not I, but Christ, not my will, but Christ's, not my Ease, not my Lusts, not my Credit, but Christ, Christ my wretched Idol my Self, when shall I see thee wholly decourted, and Christ wholly put in thy room? O if Christ had the fill place and room of my self, that all my Aims, Purposes, Thoughts and Desires would coast and land upon Christ, and not upon my Self."

He set himself apart for you Believers, and no others; no, not for Angels, but for you: Will ye also set your selves apart peculiarly for Christ? Be his, and no other's? Let not Christ and the World share and divide your Hearts in two halves betwixt them; let not the World step in and say, *half mine*. You will never do Christ right, nor answer this Grace, till you can say, as it is, Psal 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and on Earth there is none that I desire in comparison of thee*. None but Christ, none but Christ, is a proper Motto for a Christian.

He left the highest and best Enjoyments, even those in his Father's Bosom, to set himself apart for Death and Sufferings for you: Are you ready to leave the Bosom of the best and sweetest Enjoyments you have in this World to serve him? If you stand not habitually ready to leave Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Lands, yea, and Life too, to serve him, you are not worthy of him, Mat. 10. 37.

He was so wholly given up to your service, that he refused not the worst and hardest part of it, even bleeding, groaning, dying work; his love to you sweetned all this to him: Can you say so too? Do you account the Reproaches of Christ greater riches than the Treasures of Egypt? as Moses did, Heb. 11. 26.

He had so intirely devoted himself to your Work, that he could not be at rest till it was finished. He was so intent upon it, that he forgot to eat Bread, Joh. 4. 31, 32. So it should be with you; his service should be Meat and Drink to you. To conclude,

He was so wholly given up to your Work and Service, that he would not suffer himself to be in the least diverted, or taken off from it. And if Peter himself counsel him to favour himself, he shall hear, *Get thee behind me Satan*. O happy were it if our Hearts were but so engaged for Christ! In Galen's time it was proverbial, when they would express the impossibility of a thing; *You may as soon*

as soon take off a Christian from Christ. Thus you see what use you should make of Christ's sanctifying himself for you.

Inference 2. If Christ have sanctified or consecrated himself for us; learn hence what a horrid evil it is to use Christ or his Blood, as a common and un sanctified thing. Yet so some do, as the Apostle speaks, Heb. 10. 29. The Apostate is said to tread upon the Son of God, as if he were no better than the Dirt under his Feet, and to count his Blood an unholy (or common) thing. But wo to them that so do, they shall be counted worthy of something worse than dying without Mercy, as the Apostle there speaks.

And as this is the Sin of the Apostate, so it is also the Sin of all those that without Faith approach, and so prophane the Table of the Lord, unbelievingly and unworthily handling those awful things. Such eat and drink judgment to themselves, not discerning the Lord's Body, 1 Cor. 11. 29. whereas the Body of Christ was a thing of the deepest Sanctification that ever God created; sanctified (as the Text tells us) to a far more excellent and glorious purpose than ever any Creature in Heaven or Earth was sanctified. It was therefore the great Sin of those *Corinthians*, not to discern it, and not to behave themselves towards it, when they saw and handled the signs of it, as so holy a thing.

And as it was their great Sin, so God declared his just Indignation against it, in those sore Strokes inflicted for it. As they discerned not the Lord's Body, so neither did the Lord discern their Bodies from others, in the judgments that were inflicted. And as one well observes, God drew the Model and Platform of their Punishment, from the structure and proportion of their Sin. And truly if the moral and spiritual Seeds and Originals of many of our outward Afflictions and Sickneses were but duly sifted out, possibly we might find a great part of them in the Bowels of this Sin.

The just and righteous God will build up the Breaches we make upon the Honour of his Son, with the Ruins of that beauty, strength and honour which he hath given our Bodies. O then, when you draw nigh to God in that Ordinance, take heed to sanctifie his Name, by a spiritual discerning of this most holy, and most deeply sanctified Body of the Lord; sanctified beyond all Creatures, Angels or Men, not only in respect of the Spirit, which fill'd him without measure with inherent Holiness, but also in respect of its dedication of such a Service as this, it being set apart by him to such holy solemn ends and uses as you have heard.

And let it for ever be a warning to such as have lifted up their Hands to Christ in a holy Protection, that they never lift up their Heel against him afterwards by Apostasy. The Apostate treads on God's dear Son, and God will tread upon him for it. *Thou hast trodden down all that err from thy Statutes*, Psal. 119. 118.

Inference 3. What a choice Pattern of Love to Saints have we here before us! calling all that are in Christ to an Imitation of him, even to give up our selves to their Service, as Christ

did; not in the same kind, so none can give himself for them, but as we are capable. You see here how his Heart was affected to them, that he would sanctifie himself as a Sacrifice for them: See to what a height of Duty the Apostle improves this Example of Christ, 1 Job. 3. 16. *Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for us; and we ought also to lay down our Lives for the Brethren.* Some Christians came up fairly to this Pattern in the Primitive Times; Priscilla and Aquilla laid down their Necks for Paul, Rom. 16. 4. i. e. eminently hazarded their Lives for him; and even he himself could rejoice if he were offered up upon the Sacrifice and Service of their Faith, Phil. 2. 17. And in the next times, what more known, even to the Enemies of Christianity, than their fervent Love one to another? *Ece quam mutuo se diligunt. Et mori volunt pro alterutris!* See how they love one another, and are willing to die for one another!

Bur alas! the Primitive Spirit is almost lost in this degenerate Age. Instead of laying down Life, how few will lay down Twelve Pence for them? I remember it's the Observation of a late Worthly, upon Mat. 5. 40. That he is persuaded there is hardly that Man to be found this Day alive, that fully understands, and fully believes that Scripture. O did Men think what they do for them, is done for Christ himself, it would produce other effects than are yet visible.

Inference 4. Lastly, If Christ sanctified himself, that we might be sanctified by [or in] the Truth; then it will follow by sound Consequence, That true Sanctification is a true Evidence that Christ set apart himself to die for us.

* In vain did he sanctifie himself (as to you) unless you be sanctified. Holy Souls only can claim the benefit of the great Sacrifice. O try then, whether true Holiness (and that is only to be judged by its conformity to its Pattern, 1 Pet. 1. 15. *As he that called you is holy. So be ye holy*) whether such a Holiness as is, and acts (according to its measure) like God's Holiness in the following Particulars, be found in you.

1. God is universally holy in all his ways; so Psal. 145. 17. *His Works are all holy*: whatever he doth, it's still done as becoms a holy God. He is not only holy in all things, but at all times unchangeably holy. Be ye therefore holy in all things, and at all times too, if ever ye expect the benefit of Christ's sanctifying himself to die for you.

O Brethren, let not the Feet of your Conversation be as the Feet of a lame Man, which are unequal, Prov. 20. 7. Be not sometimes hot, and sometimes cold; at one time careful, at another time careless; one day in spiritual Rapture, and the next in a Hellish Frolick: but be ye holy *in every conversation*, 1 Pet. 1. 15. in all manner of Conversation; in every creek and turning of your lives: And let your holiness hold out to the end. *Let him that is holy, be holy still*, Rev. 22. 11. Not like the Hypocrites paint, but as a true natural complexion.

2. God is exemplarily holy, Jesus Christ is the great Pattern of Holiness. Be ye Examples of Holiness too, unto all that are about you. *Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may*

* Neque enim sic sanctificavit semetipsum Christus pro nobis, ut nos mandemus profani, & alieni a consuetudine spiritus, & sanctificationis illius. Qui illius sunt expectes, frustra sibi cummercum Christi pollicentur. *Mat. 23. 16.*

may see your good Works, Mat 5. 16. As wicked Men infect one another by their Examples, and diffuse their Poison and Malignity where-ever they come; so do ye disseminate Godliness in all places and companies, and let those that frequently converse with you, especially those of your own Families, receive a deeper Dye and Tincture of Heavenliness, every time they come nigh you; as the Cloth doth, by every new dipping into the Fat.

3. God *delights in nothing but Holiness, and Holy Ones*; he hath set all his pleasure in the Saints. Be ye holy herein, as God is holy. Indeed there is this difference betwixt God's Choice and yours; he chuses not Men, because

they are holy, but that they may be so; so you are to chuse them for your delightful Companions, that God hath chosen, and made holy. *Let all your Delights be in the Saints, even them that excel in Vertue*, Pal. 16. 3.

4. God *abhors and hates all Unholiness*, Do ye also, that you may be like your Father which is in Heaven. And when the Spirit of Holiness runs down thus upon you, a sweeter evidence the World cannot give that Christ was sanctified for you. Holy Ones may confidently lay the Hand of their Faith on the Head of this great Sacrifice, and say, *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us*.

Serm. 8.
Gives
an ac-
count of
the na-
ture of
Christ's
Media-
tion.

S E R M O N VIII.

I T I M. II. V.

And one Mediator betwixt God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus.

God is most
holy, Man a
lump of Ini-
quity. Ex-
tremes meet
not but by
their mid-
dle, sinful
Man can
never have
Communion
with, or En-
joyment of
God, but in
and by a
Mediator.

Great and long Preparations bespeak the Solemnity and Greatness of the Work for which they are designed: A Man that had but seen the Heaps of Gold, Silver and Brass which David amassed in his time, for the building of the Temple, might easily conclude before one Stone of it was laid, that it would be a magnificent Structure. But lo here is a design of God as far transcending that, as the Substance doth the Shadow. For indeed that glorious Temple was but the Type and Figure of Jesus Christ, Job. 2. 19, 21. and a weak adumbration of that living spiritual Temple which he was to build, cementing the lively Stones thereof, together with his own Blood, 1 Pet. 2. 5, 6. that the great God might dwell and walk in it, 2 Cor. 6. 16. The Preparations for that Temple were but of few years, but the Consultations and Preparations for this were from Eternity, Prov. 8. 31. And as there were Preparations for this Work (which Christ dispatch'd in a few years) before the World began; so it will be matter of eternal Admiration and Praise, when this World shall be dissolved. What this astonishing glorious Work is, this Text will inform you, as to the general nature of it. It is the Work of Mediation betwixt God and Man; managed by the sole Hand of the Man Christ Jesus.

In this Scripture (for I shall not spend time to examine the Works in their Contexture) you have a description of *Jesus the Mediator*; and he is here described four ways, viz. by his Work or Office, a *Mediator*; by the Singularity of his Mediation, *one Mediator*; and by the Nature and Quality of his Person, imploy'd in this singular way of Mediation, *the Man*; and lastly, his Name, *Jesus Christ*.

1. He is described by the Work or Office he is imploy'd about, *Medius* a Mediator, a middle Person. So the word imports a fit, indifferent, and equal Person, that comes between two Persons that be at variance, to take up the Difference, and make Peace. Such a middle,

equal, indifferent Person is Christ. *A Days-man, to lay his hand upon both*; to arbitrate and award justly, and give God his due, and that without ruin to poor Man.

2. He is described by the Singularity of his Mediation, *One Mediator*, and but one. Tho' there be many Mediators of Reconciliation among Men, and many Intercessors in a petitionary way, betwixt God and Men; yet but *one Mediator*, one only Mediator of Reconciliation betwixt God and Men: And 'tis as needful and impious to make more Mediators than one, as to make more Gods than one. *There is one God, and one Mediator betwixt God and Men*.

3. He is described by the Nature and Quality of his Person *ἀνθρώπου καὶ θεοῦ*; &c. *the Man Christ Jesus*. This Description of him by one Nature, and that the Human Nature also; (wherein, as you shall see anon, the Lord especially consulted our Encouragement and Comfort) I say, his being so described to us, hath through the Corruption of Men been improved to the great dishonour of Jesus Christ; both by the *Arians* and *Papists*. The former took occasion from hence, to affirm that he was but *εἰς ἀνθρώπου* a meer Man. The latter allow him to be the true God, but on this weak ground affirm, that he performed not the Work of Mediation as God, but only as Man. Thus what the Spirit ordered for our comfort is wickedly retorted to Christ's dishonour. For I doubt not but he is described by his Human Nature in this place; not only because in this Nature he paid that Ranfom, (which he speaks of in the words immediately following) but especially for the drawing of Sinners to him; seeing he is the Man Christ Jesus, one that clothed himself in their own Flesh; and to encourage the Faith of Believers, that he tenderly represents all their Wants, and Miseries, and that they may safely trust him with all their Concerns, as one that will carefully mind them as his own, and will be for them a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God.

4. He

Car quæ-
stio addidit
homo? nisi
ad expro-
mendum
naturam,
secundum
quam
Christus
est media-
tor? Bell.
de Christo
Med. lib.
3. cap. 9.
Item 2.

De absolute
ta enim
bonitate, &
voluntate
servandi,
scriptura
magis mu-
ta est
quam pi-
cis. *Diete-
ric.* His po-
tius, sequi-
tur Dei ne-
que natu-
ram, neque
iustitiam
suum, ut
patis, ut
gressus tran-
sgressio ul-
ta, sine
compensa-
tione iusta,
dimittat-
ur. *Brat-
tor. Brat-
tor. de
iustit. p.
68.* Nec in
bonitate
misericor-
diae perdit
iudicii fe-
veritatem;
nec in ju-
dicando
cum seve-
ritate a-
mittit mi-
sericordiam
bonitatem.
*Aug. in Pf.
100.*

Parce uni-
ce specio-
sus orbis,
O tu qui
destruis
necessarium
decus
fidei. *Ter-
tul. lib. de
Carne Chri-
sti.*

Peace, by giving full Satisfaction to the Party that was wronged. The *Photinians* and some others, have dreamed of a Reconciliation with God, founded not upon Satisfaction, but upon the absolute Mercy, Goodness, and Free-will of God. But concerning that absolute Goodness and Mercy of God, reconciling Sinners to himself, there is a deep silence throughout the Scriptures: And whatever is spoken of it upon that account, is as it works to us through Christ. *Ephes. 1. 3, 4, 5. Acts 4. 12. Job. 6. 40.* And we cannot imagine, either how God could exercise Mercy to the prejudice of his Justice, which must be, if we must be reconcil'd without full Satisfaction; or how such a full Satisfaction should be made by any other than Christ. Mercy indeed moved in the Heart of God to poor Man; but from his Heart it found no way to vent it self for us, but through the Heart-blood of Jesus Christ: And in him the Justice of God was fully satisfied, and the Miserie of the Creature fully cured. And so, as *Augustine* speaks, God neither lost the severity of his Justice in the goodness of Mercy, nor the goodness of his Mercy in the exactness of his Severity. But if it had been possible God could have found out a way to reconcile us without satisfaction, yet it's past doubt now, that he hath pitch'd and fix'd on this way. And for any now to imagine to reconcile themselves to God by any thing but Faith in the Blood of this Mediator, is not only most vain in it self, and destructive to the Soul, but most insolently derogatory to the Wisdom and Grace of God.

And to such I would say, as *Tertullian* to *Marcion*, whom he calls the Murderer of Truth, Spare the only hope of the whole World, O thou who destroyest the most necessary Glory of our Faith! All that we hope for is but a Phantasm without this. Peace of Conscience can be rationally settled on no other Foundation but this: For God having made a Law to govern Man, and this Law violated by Man; either the Penalty must be levied on the Delinquent, or Satisfaction made by his Surety. As good no Law, as no Penalty for Disobedience; and as good no Penalty, as no Execution. He therefore that will be a Mediator of Reconciliation betwixt God and Man, must bring God a Price in his hand, and that adequate to the Offence and Wrong done him, else he will not treat about Peace; and so did our Mediator.

3. Christ's being a Mediator of Reconciliation and Intercession, implies the infinite value of his Blood and Sufferings, as that which in it self was sufficient to stop the course of God's Justice, and render him not only placable, but abundantly satisfied and well pleased, even with those that before were Enemies. And so much is said of it, *Col. 1. 21, 22.* And ye that were sometimes alienated, and Enemies in your Minds by wicked Works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the Body of his Flesh through Death, to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreproucheable in his sight. Surely, that which can cause the Holy Ghost, justly incensed against Sinners, to lay aside all his Wrath, and take an Enemy into his Bosom, and establish such an Amity as can never more be broken, but to rest in his Love, and to joy over him with singing, as it is *Zeph. 3. 17.* this must be a most excellent and efficacious thing.

4. Christ being a Mediator of Reconciliation, implies the ardent Love, and large Pity that filled his Heart towards poor Sinners. For he doth not only mediate by way of Intreaty, going betwixt both, and persuading and begging Peace; but he mediates as you have heard) in the capacity of a Surety, by putting himself under an Obligation to satisfy our Debts. O how compassionately did his Heart work towards us, that when he saw the Arm of Justice lifted up to destroy us, would interpose himself, and receive the stroke, tho' he knew it would smite him dead! Our Mediator, like *Jonah* his Type, seeing the stormy Sea of God's Wrath working tempestuously, and ready to swallow us up, cast in himself to appease the Storm. I remember how much that noble Act of *Marcus Curtius* is celebrated in the Roman Story, who being informed by the Oracle, that the great Breach made by the Earthquake could not be closed, except some love of worth were cast into it; heard with love to the Commonwealth, he went and cast in himself. This was looked upon as a bold and brave Adventure: But what was this to Christ?

5. Christ being a Mediator betwixt God and Men, implies, as the *finest of his Person*, so his authoritative Call to undertake it. And indeed the Father, who was the wronged Person, call'd him to be the Umpire and Arbitrator, trusting his Honour in his hands. Now Christ was invested with this Office and Power virtually, soon after the Breach was made by *Adam's* Fall; for we have the early promise of it, *Gen. 3. 15.* Ever since, till his Incarnation, he was a virtual and effectual Mediator; and on that account he is call'd the Lamb slain from the beginning of the World, *Rev. 13. 8.* And actually, from the time of his Incarnation. But having discussed this more largely in a former Discourse, I shall dismiss it here, and apply my self to the third Thing proposed, which is,

Thirdly, How it appears that Jesus Christ is the true and only Mediator betwixt God and Men. I reply, It's manifest he is so,

1. Because he, and no other, is revealed to us by God: And if God reveal him, and no other, we must receive him, and no other as such. Take but two Scriptures at present, that in *1 Cor. 8. 5.* The Heathen have many gods, and many Lords, i. e. many great gods, supreme Powers and ultimate Objects of their Worship; and lest these great gods should be defiled by their immediate and unhallowed approaches to them, they therefore invented Heroes, Demigods, Intermediate Powers, that were to be as Agents, or Lord-Mediators betwixt the gods, and them, to convey their Prayers to the gods, and the Blessings of the gods back again to them. But unto us (saith he) there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we by him, i. e. one supreme Essence, the first Spring and Fountain of Blessings; and one Lord, i. e. one Mediator, *si est mediator, si quis si deus*; by whom are all things, and we by him. By whom are all things which come from the Father to us, *Origen*

*i. e. Aliis
coequalibus i. e. usque,
non negatis i. e. usque,
quasi in celo sunt alii præter Christum deprecatores; in terra vero non item: sed in Aeth. est Placatus.*

and by whom are all our Addressees to the Father, so *Acts* 4. 12. *Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved.* No other Name, i. e. no other Authority, or rather no other Person authorized under Heaven, i. e. in the whole World: for Heaven is not here opposed to Earth, as tho' there were other Intercessors in Heaven besides Christ; no, in Heaven and Earth God has given him, and none but him, to be our Mediator. One Sun is sufficient for the whole World; and one Mediator for all Men in the World. So that the Scriptures affirm this is he, and exclude all others.

2. Because he, and no other, is fit for and capable of this Office. Who but he that hath the Divine and Human Nature united in his single Person, can be a fit Days man to lay his Hand upon both? Who but he that was God could support under such Sufferings as were by Divine Justice exacted for Satisfaction? Take a Person of the greatest Spirit, and put him but an hour in the case Christ was in when he sweat Blood in the Garden, or utter'd that heart-rending Cry upon the Cross, and he had melted under it as a Moth.

3. Because he is alone sufficient to reconcile the World to God by his Blood, without Accessions from any other. The virtue of his Blood reach'd back as far as *Adam*, and reaches forward to the end of the World; and will be as fresh, vigorous, and efficacious then, as the first moment it was shed. The Sun makes Day before it actually rise, and continues Days to us some time after it is set: So doth Christ, who is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, so that he is the true and only Mediator betwixt God and Men: No other is revealed in Scripture: no other sufficient for it; no other needed beside him.

Fourthly, The last thing to be explained is, in what a Capacity he executed his Mediatory Work.

About which we affirm, according to Scripture, that he performs that Work as God-Man in both Natures. Papists, in denying Christ to act as Mediator according to his Divine Nature, do at once spoil the whole Mediation of Christ of all its Efficacy, Dignity and Value, which rises from that Nature, which they deny to co-operate, and exert its virtue in his active and passive Obedience. They say the Apostle in my Text distinguishes the Mediator from God, in saying, *There is one God, and one Mediator.* Ours aptly reply, that the same Apostle distinguishes Christ from Man, *Gal. 1.*

1. *Not by Man, but by Jesus Christ.* Doth it thence follow, that Christ is not true Man? Or that, according to his Divine Nature only he call'd *Paul*? But what need I stay my Reader here? Had not Christ, as Mediator, power to lay down his Life, and power to take it up again? *Joh. 10. 17, 18.* Had he not, as Mediator, all Power in Heaven and Earth to institute Ordinances, and appoint Officers? *Matth. 28. 18.* To Baptize Men with the Holy Ghost and Fire? *Matth. 3. 11.* to keep those his Father gave him in this World? *Joh. 17. 12.* to raise up the Saints again in the last day? *Joh. 1. 54.* Are

these, with many more I might name, the Effects of the meer Human Nature? Or, were they not performed by him as God-man? And besides, how could he, as Mediator, be the Object of our Faith, and Religious Adoration, if we are not to respect him as God-man? But I long now to be at the Application of this: And the first Inference from it is this.

Inference 1.

That it is a dangerous thing to reject Jesus Christ, the only Mediator betwixt God and Men. Alas! there is no other to interpose and screen thee from the devouring Fire, the everlasting Burnings! *O it's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!* And into his hands you must needs fall, without an Interest in the only Mediator. Which of us can dwell with devouring Fire? who can endure the everlasting Burnings? *1 Ja. 3. 14.* You know how they singed and scorched the green Tree, but what would they do to the dry Tree? *Luke 23. 21.* Indeed, if there were another Plank to save after the Shipwreck, any other way to be reconciled to God beside Jesus the Mediator, somewhat might be said to excuse this Folly; but you are shut up to the Faith of Christ, as to your last Remedy, *Gal. 3. 23.* You are like starving Beggars that are come at the last door. O take heed of despising or neglecting Christ! if so, there's none to intercede with God for you; the Breach betwixt him and you can never be compos'd. I remember here the words of *Eli* to his prophane Sons, who caus'd Men to abhor the Offerings of the Lord, *1 Sam. 2. 25.* *If one Man sin against another, the Judge shall judge him; but if a Man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?* the meaning is, in common Trespasses betwixt Men, the Civil Magistrate takes cognizance of it, and decides the Controversie by his Authority, so that there is an end of that Strife: but if Man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat or arbitrate in that case? *Eli's* Sons had despised the Lord's Sacrifices, which were the sacred Types of Christ, and the stated way that Men had then to act Faith on the Mediator in. Now (saith he) if a Man thus sin against the Lord, by despising Christ (shadowed out in that way, who shall intreat for him? what hope, what remedy remains?

I remember it was the Saying of *Luther*, and he spake it with deep resentment, *Nolo Deum absolutum*, I will have nothing to do with an absolute God, i. e. with God without a Mediator. Thus the Devils have to do with God: but will ye, in whose Nature Christ is come, put your selves into their state and case? God forbid:

Inference 2.

Hence also be inform'd, how great an Evil it is to join any other Mediators, either of Reconciliation, or meritorious Intercession, with Jesus Christ. O this is a horrid Sin, and that which both pours the greatest Contempt upon Christ, and brings the surest and forest Destruction upon the Sinner! I am ashamed my Pen should enghen what mine Eyes have seen in the Writings of Papists, ascribing as much, yea, more to the Mediation of *Mary* than to Christ, with no less than blasphemous Impudence, thus commenting upon Scripture:

F 2 What

Sol non-
dam con-
spectus, il-
luminat
orbem.

Divinitas
sive huma-
nitas, &
humanitas
sive divini-
tate, non
est Media-
trix, sed
inter divi-
nitatem so-
lum, & hu-
manitatem
solum, Me-
diatrix est
humana
divinitas,
& divina
humanitas.
Aug. Hom.
2. Appel-
lationes
officii
competent
Christo se-
cundum
utramque
naturam.
Aver. Bel-
m. cap. 9.

Concul-
da-
rebo
shall
intreat
for him?
the mean-
ing is, in
common
Trespas-
ses betwixt
Men, the
Civil
Magistrate
takes cog-
nizance of
it, and de-
cides the
Controversie
by his Au-
thority, so
that there
is an end
of that
Strife: but
if Man sin
against
the Lord,
who shall
intreat or
arbitrate
in that
case? *Eli's*
Sons had
despised
the Lord's
Sacrifices,
which were
the sacred
Types of
Christ, and
the stated
way that
Men had
then to act
Faith on
the Media-
tor in. Now
(saith he)
if a Man
thus sin
against
the Lord,
by despising
Christ (shad-
owed out
in that way,
who shall
intreat for
him? what
hope, what
remedy re-
mains?

quod ita
quantum
in se erat
sustulerunt
et medio
omnia pra-
sidia. Sic
Grotius in
1a.

Mariale
Argenti-
nenſe lib.
1. c. 4. fol.
12. Vin-
cent. Brun-
ſi in medi-
ſt. B.
Virginia,
1577.

What is that which the Lord ſaith, *I have trod the Wine-press alone, and of the People there was no Man with me?* True, Lord, there was no Man with thee, but there was a Woman with thee, who received all theſe Wounds in her Heart, which thou receiv'dſt in thy Body. I will not blot my Paper with more of this, but refer the learned Reader to the Margin, where he may (if he have a mind to ſee more) be inform'd, not only what Blaſphemy hath dropt from ſingle Pens, but even from Councils, to the reproach of Jeſus Chriſt, and his Blood.

Coln. 1552. p. 11. Liber Canticum Diligæ, Anno Concil. Trident. ſeſſ. 25. ſalt. Mariz, Anno 1573. p. 29.

How they ſtamp their own ſordid Works with the peculiar dignity and value of Chriſt's Blood; and therein ſeek to enter at the Gate which God hath ſhut to all the World, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt the Prince enter'd in thereby, *Ezek. 44. 2, 3.* He enter'd into Heaven in a direct immediate way, even in his own Name, and for his own ſake; this Gate, ſaith the Lord, ſhall be ſhut to all others: And I with Men would conſider it, and fear, leſt while they ſeek entrance into Heaven at the wrong Door, they do not for ever ſhut againſt themſelves the true and only Door of Happineſs.

Inference 2.

If Jeſus Chriſt be the only Mediator of Reconciliation betwixt God and Men; *then reconciled Souls ſhould thankfully aſcribe all the Peace, Favour, and Comforts they have from God, to their Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Whenever you have had free Admiſſion, and ſweet Entertainment with God in the more publick Ordinances, or private Duties of his Worſhip; when we had his Smiles, his Seals, and with Hearts warmed with Comfort, are returning from thoſe Duties, ſay, O my Soul, thou may'ſt thank thy good Lord Jeſus Chriſt for all this! Had not he interpoſ'd as a Mediator of Reconciliation, I could never have had acceſs to, or friendly Communion with God to all Eternity.

Immediately upon Adam's Sin, the Door of Communion with God was lock'd, yea, chain'd up. and no more coming nigh the Lord: Not a Soul could have any acceſs to him, either in a way of Communion in this World, or of Enjoyment in that to come. It was Jeſus the Mediator that open'd that Door again, and in him it is that we have Boldneſs, and Acceſs with Confidence, *Ephes. 3. 12.* We can now come to God by a new and a living way, *conſecrated for us through the Vail, that is to ſay, his Fleſh,* Heb. 10. 20. The Vail had a double uſe, as Chriſt's Fleſh univerſally hath: It hid the Glory of the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, and alſo gave entrance into it. Chriſt's Incarnation rebates the Edge of the Divine Glory and Brightneſs, that we may be able to bear it, and converſe with it; and it gives admiſſion into it alſo. O thank your dear Lord Jeſus for your preſent, and your future Heaven! Theſe are Mercies which daily emerge out of the Ocean of Chriſt's Blood, and come ſwimming in it to our Doors. Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.

Inf. 4. If Jeſus Chriſt be the true and only Mediator, both of Reconciliation and merito-

ous Interceſſion betwixt God and Men, *how ſafe and ſecure then is the condition and ſtate of Believers!* Surely, as his Mediation by Sufferings hath fully reconciled, ſo his Mediation by Interceſſion will everlaſtingly maintain the ſtate of Peace betwixt them and God, and prevent all future Breaches. *Being juſtified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* Rom. 5. 1. It's a firm and laſting Peace, and the Mediator that made it, lies as a Lidger in Heaven to maintain it for ever, and prevent new Jars, *Heb. 9. 24.* There to appear in the preſence of God for us; according to the Cuſtom of Princes and States, who being confederate, have their Agents reſident in each others Courts, who upon all Occaſions appear in the preſence of the Prince, in the name and behalf of thoſe whom they repreſent, and negotiate for.

And here it's proper to reflect upon the profound and incomprehenſible Wiſdom of God, who hath made an Advantage to us even out of our Sin and Miſery. Come, ſee and adore the Wiſdom of our God, that hath fo improved, reduc'd, and diſpoſ'd the Fall of Adam, as to make a ſingular advantage, thereby to advance his Offspring to a better State. It was truly ſaid by one of the Ancients upon this account, That *Job* was a happier Man upon the Dunghil, than *Adam* was in Paradice. His Holineſs in Job in deed was perfect, his Happineſs very great; but neither of them permanent and indelible, as our Happineſs by the Mediator is. So that in the ſame ſenſe ſome Divines call *Sudas* his Treason, *Felix ſcelus*, a happy Wickedneſs; we may call *Adam's* Fall, *Felix lapſus*, a happy Fall, becauſe ordered and over-ruled by the Wiſdom of God, to ſuch an advantage for us. And to that purpoſe *Auſtin* ſomewhere ſweetly ſpeaks; O how happily did I fall in Adam, who roſe again more happily in Chriſt! Thus did the Lord turn a Poiſon into an Antidote, thus did that dreadful Fall make way for a more bleſſed and fixed State. Now we are ſo confirmed, fixed, and eſtabliſhed by Chriſt in the Favour of God, that there can be no more ſuch fatal Breaches and dreadful Jars betwixt God and his reconciled ones for ever. The Bone that's well ſet is ſtronger where it's knit than it was before. Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.

Inference 5. Did Jeſus Chriſt interpoſe betwixt us and the Wrath of God, as a Mediator of Reconciliation? Did he rather chuſe to receive the ſtroke upon himſelf, than to ſee us ruined by it? *How well then doth it become the People of God, in a thankful ſenſe of this Grace, to interpoſe themſelves betwixt Jeſus Chriſt and the Evils they ſee like to fall upon his Name and Interſt in the World?* O that there were but ſuch a Heart in the People of God! I remember it's a Saying of *Jerom*, when he heard the Revilings and Blaſphemings of many againſt Chriſt, and his precious Truths, O ſaid he *Utinam in that they would turn their Weapons from Chriſt me con- to me, and be ſatisfied with my Blood!* And verily too much to the ſame ſenſe is that ſweet one of *la, & meo Bernard*, Happy were I, if God would vouchſafe to uſe me as a Shield. And *David* could ſay, *Bo- num eſt mihi, ſi dignetur Deus me uti pro clypeo. Bern.*

say, *The Reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me*, Psal. 69. 9. Ten Thousand of our Names are nothing to Christ's Name: His Name is *ἡ ἀληθὴν ὁνομασία*, a worthy Name; and no Man that gives up his Name as a Shield to Christ, but shall thereby secure and increase the true Honour of it. And tho' wicked Men for the present may bespatter them, yet Jesus Christ will take it out of the Dirt, (as one

(speaks) wipe it clean, and give it us again. O 'tis the least one can do to interpose our selves and all that is dear to us, betwixt Jesus Christ and the Wrath of Men, when he (as you hear) interposed himself betwixt you and the eternal Wrath of God!

O, if my poor bit of Heaven could go betwixt my Lord, and Dishonour! I said another Worthy.

O if I could be a Bridge over the Water for my Lord Jesus to walk upon, and keep his Feet dry!

S E R M O N IX.

ACTS. III. 22.

A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your Brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever he shall say unto you.

Serm. 9.
Opens
the first
Branch
of the
Propheti-
cal Of-
fice, con-
sisting in
the Re-
velation
of the
Will of
God.

HAVING in the former Discourses shewn you the solemn Preparations both on the Father's part, and on the Son's part, for the blessed Design of reconciling us by the meritorious Mediation of Christ; and given you a general prospect of that his Mediation in the former Sermon; Method now requires, that I proceed to shew how he executes this his Mediation, in the discharge of his blessed Offices of Prophet, Priest and King.

His *Prophetical Office* consists of two Parts; one *External*, consisting in true and full Revelation of the Will of God to Men, according to that, *John 17. 6. I have manifested thy Name to the Men thou gavest me.* The other in *Illuminating the Mind*, and opening the Heart to receive and embrace that Doctrine. The first Part is contained in the words before us; *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up, &c.*

Which words are an Allegation out of *Moses*, recorded in *Deut. 18. 15.* and here by *Peter* pertinently applied to Christ, to convince the incredulous *Jews*, that he is the true and only *Messiah*, and the great Prophet of the Church; whose Doctrine it was highly dangerous to contemn, tho' out of the Mouths of such (otherwise contemptible) Persons as he and *John* were. And it's well observed by *Calvin*, he singles out this Testimony of *Moses* rather than any other, because of the great esteem they had for *Moses* and his Writings beyond any others. Now in the words themselves are two general Parts.

First, Christ, according to his Prophetical Office, described.

Secondly, Obedience to him as such a Prophet, strictly enjoined.

First, You have here a description of Christ in his prophetical Office; *A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your Brethren like unto me.* Where Christ is described,

1. By his Title, *Prophet*; and that, *Principes Prophetarum*, the Prince of the Prophets, or the great and chief Shepherd, as he is styled, *Heb. 13. 10.* 1 *Pet. 5. 4.* It belongs to a Prophet to expound the Law, declare the Will of God, and foretell things to come: All these meet, and that in a singular and eminent man-

ner, in Christ our Prophet, *Mat. 5. 21, &c. Job. 1. 18. 1 *Pet. 1. 11.**

2. He is described by his Type; A Prophet like unto *Moses*, who therein typified and figured him. But it is not said of *Moses*, in *Deut. 34. 10.* That there arose not a Prophet since in Israel like unto *Moses*, whom the Lord knew face to face? True, of mere Men there never arose so great a Prophet in Israel, as *Moses* was; either in respect of his Familiarity with God, or of his Miracles which he wrought in the Power of God: But *Moses* himself was but a Star to this Sun. However, in these following Particulars Christ was like him. He was a Prophet that went between God and the People, carry'd God's Mind to them, and returned theirs to God, they not being able to bear the Voice of God immediately, *Deut. 18. 16, 17.* According to all that thou desirest of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of thy Assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the Voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And upon this their Request, God makes the Promise which cited in the Text; *Verses 17, 18.* They have well spoken that which they have spoken; I will raise them up a Prophet like unto thee, &c. *Moses* was a very faithful Prophet, precisely Faithful, and exact in all things that God gave him in charge, even to a Pin of the Tabernacle. *Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a Servant, for a Testimony of those things which were to be spoken after: But Christ as a Son over his own house.* *Heb. 3. 5, 6.* Again, *Moses* confirmed his Doctrine by Miracles, which he wrought in the presence, and to the conviction of gain sayers. Herein Christ our Prophet is also like unto *Moses*, who wrought many, mighty, and uncontrolled Miracles, which could not be denied, and by them confirmed the Gospel which he Preached. Lastly, *Moses* was the Prophet which brought God's Israel out of literal Egypt, and Christ his out of spiritual Egypt, whereof that Bondage was a figure. Thus he is described by his likenesses to *Moses*, his Type.

3. He is described by his Stock and Original, from which according to his flesh he sprang, *Qui divi-
nam illam
majesta-
tem & ca-
lo loquen-
tiam formi-
darent, jam
in assump-
ta carne
desuetecon-
tem & co-
mitem illis
asiam, au-
dire non
timebant.*

3. He is described by his Stock and Original, from which according to his flesh he sprang,

I will raise him up from among thy Brethren. Of Israel, as concerning the flesh, Christ came. Rom. 9. 5. And it's evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah, Heb. 7. 14. He honoured that Nation by his Nativity. Thus the Prophet is described.

Secondly, Here is a strict Injunction of Obedience to this Prophet; Him shalt ye hear in all things, &c. By hearing, understand Obedience. So words of sense are frequently put in Scripture, to signifie those Affections that are moved by, and use to follow those senses. And this Obedience is required to be yielded to this Prophet only universally, and under great penalties.

It's required to be given to him only, for so [him] in the Text must be understood, as exclusive of all others. It's true, we are commanded to obey the Voice of his Ministers; Heb. 13. 17. But still it's Christ speaking to them, to whom we pay our Obedience: He that heareth you, heareth me: We obey them in the Lord, i. e. commanding or forbidding in Christ's Name and Authority. So when God said, Deut. 6. 13. [Thou shalt serve him] Christ expounds it exclusively, Mat. 4. 10. Him only shalt thou serve. He is the only Lord, Jude 4. and there to him only our Obedience is required. And as it's due to him only, so to him universally; Him shall ye hear in all things: His Commands are to be obeyed, not disputed. A Judgment of discretion indeed is allowed to Christians, to judge whether it be the Will of Christ or no. We must prove what is that holy, good and acceptable Will, Rom. 12. 2. His Sheep hear his Voice, and a Stranger they will not follow: They know his Voice, but know not the Voice of Strangers, John 10. 4, 5. But when his Will is understood and known, we have no liberty of choice, but are concluded by it, be the Duty commanded never so difficult, or the Sin forbidden never so tempting: And this is also required severely, under penalty of being destroyed from among the People, and of God's requiring it at our hands, as it is in Deut. 18. i. e. of revenging himself in the destruction of the Disobedient. Hence the Observation;

Doct. That Jesus Christ is called and appointed by God to be the great Prophet and Teacher of the Church.

He is anointed to preach good tidings to the meek, and sent to bind up the broken-hearted, Isa. 61. 1. When he came to Preach the Gospel among the People, then was this Scripture fulfilled, Mat. 11. 27. Yea, all things are delivered him of his Father; so as no Man knoweth who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. All Light is now collected into one Body of Light, the Son of Righteousness; and he enlighteneth every Man that cometh in the World, John 1. 1. And tho' he dispenseth Knowledge variously, in the times past, speaking in many ways, and divers manners, to the Fathers; yet now the method and way of revealing the Will of God to us is fixt and settled in Christ: In these last times he hath spoken to me by his Son.

Twice hath the Lord solemnly sealed him to this Office, or approved and owaed him in it,

by a miraculous Voice from the most excellent Glory, Mat. 3. ult. and Mat. 17. 5.

In this Point there are two things doctrinally to be discufled and opened, viz. What Christ's being a Prophet to the Church implies: And how he executes and discharges this his Office.

First, What is implied in Christ's being a Prophet to the Church. And it necessarily imports these three Things.

1. The natural ignorance and blindness of Men in the things of God. This shews us that *vain Man is born as the wild Ass's Colt.*—The World is involved in darkness: The People sit as in the region and shadow of Death, till Christ arise upon their Souls, Mat. 4. 15, 16, 17. Tis true, in the state of Innocency Man had a clear apprehension of the Will of God without a Mediator; but now that Light is quenched in the corruption of Nature, and the natural Man receiveth not the things of God, 1 Cor. 2. 14. These things of God are not only contrary to corrupt carnal Reason, but they are also above right Reason. Grace indeed useth Nature, but digests Nature can do nothing without Grace. The mind of a natural Man hath not only a native blindness, by reason whereof it cannot discern the things of the Spirit, but also a natural enmity, thum reci- Rom. 8. 7. and hates the Light, 1 John 3. 19, 20. So that until the mind be healed, and enlightened by Jesus Christ, the natural Faculty can no more discern the things of the Spirit, than the sensitive Faculty can discern the things of Reason. The Mysteries of Nature may be discovered by the Light of Nature; but when it comes to the supernatural Mysteries, there spicacia & omnis Platoniorum caligavit subtilitas, as Cy- prian somewhere speaks, the most subtil, searching, penetrating Wit and Reason is stalled, and at a loss.

rum studio progressus Dr. Reynold's Animalis homo.

2. It implies the Divinity of Christ, and proves him to be true God, so far as no other can reveal to the World in all Ages the Secrets that lay hid in the Heart of God, and that with such convincing Evidence and Authority. He brought his Doctrine from the Bosom of his Father; John 1. 18. The only begotten Son, who is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him. The same words which his Father gave him, he hath given us, John 17. 8. He spake to us that which he had seen with his Father, John 8. 38. What Man can au- tell the Bosoms-counsels and Secrets of God? Who but he that eternally lay in that Bosom can expound them?

Dei. Porro sit enim non tantum evangelium & doctrinam suam & sinu Patris, sed & non docuit ut Pharisei & alii (puri puti) homines, sed ut & iherosolymis, ut habens divinam auctoritatem, Luk. 4. 23. Id quod Phariseorum ministri, hostes ejus, confitebantur his verbis, nunquam ita locutus est homo ut hic homo; quod si ergo verba ejus Patris sunt verba, & non humana, sed divina auctoritate prolata sunt, utique; & verus Deus erit, cum effectus divinus arguat causam; & sic cum non sit, nisi unus verus Deus unicus certe, & ejusdem cum Patre essentia Christus erit. Dietericus Analysis Evang. par. 3. p. (mih) 341.

Besides, other Prophets had their times assigned them to rise, shine, and set again by Death, Zech. 1. 5. Your Fathers, where are they?

*Ipsum au-
dies, i. e.
ipsum so-
lum; sic
illi servies,
Deut. 6. 13.
exponitur
illi soli,
Mat. 4.
10.*

*Res corle-
ites ratio-
nis caprum
excedunt
sunt enim
supra rati-
onem re-
clam; pruden-
tia carnis ad-
vertantur,
sunt enim
contra rati-
onem
pravam:
natura in-
right Reason.
Grace indeed
useth Nature,
but digests
Nature can
do nothing
without Grace.
The mind
of a natural
Man hath
not only a
native
blindness,
by reason
whereof it
cannot discern
the things
of the Spirit,
but also a
natural enmity,
thum reci-
Rom. 8. 7.
and hates
the Light,
1 John 3. 19,
20. So that
until the
mind be
healed, and
enlightened
by Jesus
Christ, the
natural Faculty
& gratia
can no more
discern the
things of the
Spirit, than
the sensitive
Faculty can
discern the
things of
Reason. The
Mysteries
of Nature
may be
discovered
by the Light
of Nature;
but when
it comes to
the supernatural
Mysteries,
there spicacia
& omnis
Platoniorum
caligavit
subtilitas,
as Cy-
prius somewhere
speaks, the
most subtil,
searching,
penetrating
Wit and
Reason is
stalled,
and at a
loss.*

*Si doctrina
Christi co-
judicem
concionem
examinen-
tur, ex
lucidem fo-
le clarius
patebit
verba ejus
non esse
verba nubi
hominis,
Pro-
phetarum
aliquos, fed
ipsum Pa-
tris, adeo-
que veri*

they? And do the Prophets live for ever? But Christ is a fixed and perpetual Sun, that gives Light in all Ages of the World: For he is the *same yesterday, to day, and for ever*, Heb. 13. 8. Yea, and the very Beams of his Divinity shone with awfulness upon the Hearts of them that heard him. So that his very Enemies were forced to acknowledge, that *never any Man spake like him*, John 7. 46.

3. Implies Christ to be the Original and Fountain of all that Light which is ministerial ly diffused up and down the World by Men. Ministers are but Stars, which shine with a borrowed Light from the Sun: So speaks the Apostle, 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7. *For God who commanded the Light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ*. Those that teach Men, must be first taught by Christ. All the Prophets of the Old, and all the Apostles, Pastors, and Teachers of the New Testament, have lighted their Candles at his Torch: Twas Christ that gave them a Mouth, and Wisdom, Luk. 21. 15. What Paul received from the Lord, he delivered to the Church, 1 Cor. 11. 23. Jesus Christ is the chief Shepherd, 1 Pet. 5. 4. And all the under-Shepherds receive their Gifts and Commissions from him. These things are manifestly implied in Christ's Prophetical Office.

Secondly, We shall next enquire how he executes and discharges this his Office, or how he enlightens and teacheth Men the Will of God. And this he hath done variously, gradually, plainly, powerfully, sweetly, purely and fully.

1. Our great Prophet hath revealed unto Men the Will of God variously, not holding one even and constant tenour in the manifestations of the Father's Will, but as the Apostle speaks, *κατὰ καιρὸν ἢ πάντοτε*, at sundry times, and in divers manners, Heb. 1. 1. Sometimes he taught the Church immediately, and in his own Person, John 18. 10. He declared God's Righteousness in the great Congregation, Psal. 22. 22. And sometimes mediately, by his Ministers and Officers, deputed to that Service by him: So he dispensed the knowledge of God to the Church before his Incarnation; it was Christ that in the time, and by the Ministry of Noah, went and preached to the Spirits in Prison, as it is 1 Pet. 3. 10. that is, to Men and Women then alive, but now separated from the Body, and imprisoned in Hell for their disobedience: And it was Christ that was with the Church in the Wilderness, instructing and guiding them by the Ministry of Moses and Aaron, Acts 7. 37, 38. and so he hath taught the Church since his Ascension. He cannot now be personally with us, having other business to do for us in Heaven; but however, he will not be wanting to teach us by his Offices, whom for that end he hath set and appointed in the Church, Ephes. 4. 11, 12.

2. He hath dispensed his blessed Light to the Church gradually. The discoveries of Light have been *κατὰ μέρος*, that is, in many parts or parcels; sometimes more obscure and cloudy, as it was to the Old-Testament-Believers, by Visions, Dreams, Urim, Thummim, vocal Oracles, Types, Sacrifices, &c. which tho'

comparatively it were but a weak glimmering Light, and had no glory set by that which now shines, 2 Cor. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. yet it was sufficient for the Instruction and Salvation of the Elect in those times; but now is Light sprung up gloriously in the Gospel dispensation: *And we all with open face, behold, as in a Glass, the Glory of the Lord*. It is to us not a Twilight, but the Light of a perfect Day; and still it is advancing in the several Ages of the World. I know more (saith Luther) than blessed Austin knew; and they that come after me will know more than I know.

3. Jesus Christ our great Prophet hath manifested to us the Will of God plainly and perspicuously. When he was on Earth himself, he taught the People by Parables, and without a Parable he spake nothing, Mat. 13. 3, 4. He clothed sublime and spiritual Mysteries in earthly Metaphors, stooping them thereby to the low and dull capacities of Men; speaking so familiarly to the People about them, as if he had been speaking earthly things to them, John 3. 22. And so (according to his own Example) would he have his Ministers preach, *using great plainness of speech*, 2 Cor. 3. 12. and by manifestation of the Truth, commending themselves to every Man's Conscience, 2 Cor. 4. 2. Yet toribus not allowing them to be rude and careless in Expression, pouring out indigested, crude, & immethodical Words; po, a holy, serious, strict, and grave Expression befits the Lips of his Embassadors: And who ever spake more weightily, more logically, or persuasively than that Apostle, by whose Pen Christ hath admonished us to beware of vain affectation, and swell-sounding words of vanity? But he would have us stoop to the understandings of the meanest, and not give the People a Comment darker than the Text: He would have us rather pierce their Consciences, than tickle their Fancies; and break their Hearts, than please their Ears. Christ was a very plain Preacher.

aut Argumentorum pondere firmiorem assensum cogit? Quis suavis magis, sed celestis, effectus in transversum rapit? Reynolds's Ubi supra.

4. Jesus Christ discovered Truth powerfully; speaking as one having Authority, and not as the Pharisees, Mat. 7. 29. They were cold and dull Preachers, their words did even freeze betwixt their lips; but Christ spake with Power, there was heat as well as light in his Doctrine: And so there is still, tho' it be in the mouth of poor contemptible Men, 2 Cor. 10. 4. *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the casting down of strong holds*: 'Tis still quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged Sword; and piercing to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joins and Marrow, Heb. 4. 12. The blessed Apostle imitated Christ; and being filled with his Spirit, spake home and freely to the hearts of Men. So many Words, so many claps of Thunder, (as one said of him) which made the hearts of Sinners shake and tremble in their Breasts. All faithful and able Ministers are not alike gifted in this particular; but surely there is a holy seriousness and spiritual grace and majesty in their Doctrine, commanding reverence from their Hearers.

5. This

5. This Prophet, Jesus Christ, taught the People the Mind of God in a sweet, affectionate, and taking manner. His words made their hearts burn within them, *Luk. 24. 32.* It was prophesied of him, *Isa. 42. 2.* *He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard on high. A bruised Reed he shall not break, and smoking Flax he shall not quench.* He knew how to speak a word in season to the weary Soul, *Isa. 61. 1.* *He gathered the Lambs with his Arms, and gently led those with young,* *Isa. 4. 11.* How sweetly did his words slide to the melting hearts about him! He drew with Cords of Love, with the Bands of a Man: He discouraged none, upbraided none that were willing to come to him: His familiarity and free confessions to the most vile and despicable Sinners, was often made the matter of his reproach. Such is his gentle and sweet carriage to his People, that the Church is called the *Lamb's Wife*, *Rev. 19. 7.*

6. He revealed the Mind of God purely to the Men; his Doctrine had not the least dath of Error to deface it, his most enviously observant Hearers could find nothing to charge him: He is the faithful and true Witness, *Rev. 1. 5.* and he hath commanded his Ministers to conserve the simplicity and purity of the Gospel, and not to blend and sophisticate it, *2 Cor. 4. 2.*

7. And lastly, He revealed the Will of God perfectly and fully, keeping back nothing needful to Salvation. So he tells the Disciples, *John 15. 15.* *All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.* He was faithful as a Son over his own House, *Heb. 3. 6.* Thus you have a brief account of what is implied in this part of Christ's Prophetic Office, and how he performed it.

Inference 1. If Jesus Christ, who is now passed into the Heavens, be the great Prophet and Teacher of the Church; hence we justly infer the continual necessity of a standing Ministry of the Church: For by his Ministers he now teacheth us, and to that intent hath fixed them in the Church, by a firm Constitution, there to remain to the end of the World, *Mat. 28. ult.* He teacheth Men no more Personally, but Ministerially. His Ministers supply the want of his Personal Presence, *2 Cor. 5. 10.* *We pray you in Christ's stead.* These Offices he gave the Church at his Ascension, *i. e.* when he ceased to teach them any longer with his own Lips; and so fet them in the Church, that their Succession shall never totally fail: For so that the word *then* be hath set, *1 Cor. 12. 28.* plainly implies. They are set by a sure Establishment, a firm and unalterable Constitution, even as the *Times and Seasons*, which the Father hath put *then* in his own power; it's the same Word: and it's well they are so firmly set and fixed there; for how many Adversaries in all Ages have endeavoured to shake the very Office it self? pretending that it's needless to be taught by Men, and wresting such Scriptures as these to countenance their Error, *Joel 2. 28, 29.* *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh; and your Sons and Daughters shall prophesie, &c.* And *Jer. 31. 34.* *These shall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother,*

saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them. As to that of *Joel*, it is answered, That if an Old Testament Prophecy may be understood according to a New-Testament Interpretation, then that Prophecy doth no way oppose but confirm the Gospel Ministry. How the Apostle understood the Prophet in that his Prophecy, may be seen in *Acts 2. 16.* when the Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost upon the Apostles. And surely he must be a confident Person indeed that thinks not an Apostle to be as good an Expounder of the Prophet, as himself: And for that in *Jer. 31.* we say,

1. That if it conclude against Ministerial Teachings, it must equally conclude against Christian Conferences.

2. We say that cannot be the sense of one Scripture which contradicts the plain sense of other Scriptures: But so this would, *Eph. 4. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 28.*

3. And we say, the sense of that Text is not negative but comparative; not that they shall have no need to be taught any Truth, but no such need to be taught the first Truths; That there is a God, and who is this true God: *They shall no more teach every Man his Brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me.* To conclude, God hath given Ministers to the Church for Conversion and Edification-work, till we all come into the Unity of the Faith, to a perfect Man, *Eph. 4. 11, 12.* So that when all the Flesh are converted, and all those Converts become perfect Men; when there is no Error in Judgment or Practice, and no Seducer to cause it, then, and not till then, will a Gospel-Ministry be useless. But (as it's well observed) there is not a Man that opposes a Gospel-Ministry, but the very Being of that Man is a sufficient Argument for the continuance of it.

Inference 2. If Christ be the great Prophet of the Church, and such a Prophet; then it follows, That the weakest Christians need not be discouraged at the dulness and incapacity they find in themselves. For Christ is not only a patient and condescending Teacher, but he can also (as he often hath done) reveal that to Babes which is hid from the Wise and Learned, *Mar. 11. 25. The Testimonies of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple.* *Psal. 19. 7.* Yea, and such as you are the Lord delights to chuse, that his Grace may be the more conspicuous in your Weakness, *1 Cor. 1. 26, 27.* You will have nothing of your own to glory in: You will not say, as a proud Wretch once said, *Ego, & Deus meus;* I, and my God did this. Jesus Christ affects not social Glory, he will not divide the Praise with any. Well then, be not discouraged; others may know more in other things than you, but you are not incapable of knowing so much as shall save your Souls, if Christ will be your Teacher. In other Knowledge they excel you; but if ye knew Jesus Christ, and the Truth as it is in him, one Drop of your Knowledge is worth a whole Sea of their Gifts: One Truth sucked by Faith and Prayer from the Breast of Christ, is better than ten thousand dry Notions beaten out by wracking the Understanding. It's better in kind; the one being but natural, the other supernatural, from the saving Illuminations.

and

and inward Teachings of the Spirit: And so is one of those better things that accompany Salvation. It's better in respect of Effects; other Knowledge leaves the Heart as dry, barren, and unaffected, as if it had its seat in another Man's Head: but that little you have been taught of Christ, sheds down its gracious Influences upon your Affections, and slides sweetly to your melting Hearts. So that as one prefer'd the most despicable work of a plain Rustick Christian, before all the Triumphs of Alexander and Cesar; much more ought ye to prefer one saving Manifestation of the Spirit, to all the powerless Illuminations of natural Men.

Inference 3. If Christ be the great Prophet and Teacher of the Church; it follows, That Prayer is a proper means for the increase of Knowledge: Prayer is the Golden Key which unlocks that Treasure. When Daniel was to expound that Secret which was contained in the King's Dream, about which the Chaldean Magicians had rackt their Brains to no purpose; what course doth Daniel take? Why, he went to his Houfe (saith the Text) Dan. 2. 17, 18. and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah his Companions; that they would desire Mercies of the God of Heaven concerning this Secret. And then was the Secret revealed to Daniel. Luther was wont to say, three Things make a Divine; Meditation, Temptation, and Prayer. Holy Mr. Bradford was wont to study upon his Knees. Those Truths that are got by Prayer, leave an unusual Sweetness upon the Heart. If Christ be our Teacher, it becomes all his Saints to be at his Feet.

Inference 4. If Christ be the great Prophet and Teacher of the Church, We may thence discern and judge of Doctrines, and it may serve us as a Test to try them by. For such as Christ is, such are the Doctrines that flow from him; every Error pretends to derive it self from him: but as Christ was holy, humble, heavenly, meek, peaceful, plain and simple, and in all things alien, yea, contrary to the wisdom of the World, the Gratifications of the Flesh; such are the Truths which he teacheth. They have his Character and Image engraven on them. Would you know then whether this or that Doctrine be from the Spirit of Christ or no? Examine the Doctrine it self by this rule. And whatsoever Doctrine you find to incourage and countenance Sin, to exalt Self, to be accommodated to earthly Designs and Interests, to warp and bend to the Humours and Lufts of Men; in a word, what Doctrine fover directly, and as a proper cause makes them that profess it carnal, turbulent, proud, sensual, &c. you may safely reject it, and conclude this never came from Jesus Christ. The Doctrine of Christ is after Godlines; his Truth sanctifies. There is a Gustus spiritualis iudicii, a Spiritual taste, by which those that have their Sences exercised, can distinguish things that differ. The Spiritual Man judgeth all things, 1 Cor. 2. 15. His Ear tries Words, as his Mouth tasteth Meats, Job 34. 3. Swallow nothing (let it come never so speciously) that hath not some relish of Christ and Holiness in it. Be sure Christ never reveal'd any thing to Men, that

derogates from his own Glory, or prejudices and obstructs the ends of his own Death.

Inference 5. And as it will serve us for a Test of Doctrines, so it serves for a Test of Ministers; and hence you may judge who are authorized and sent by Christ the great Prophet to declare his Will to Men. Surely those whom he sends have his Spirit in their Hearts, as well as his Words in their Mouths. And according to measures of Grace received, they faithfully endeavour to fulfil their Ministry for Christ, as Christ did for his Father: As my Father hath sent me, (saith Christ) so send I you, Job. 20. 21. They take Christ for their Pattern in the whole course of their Ministration, and are such as sincerely endeavour to imitate the great Shepherd in these Six Particulars following.

1. Jesus Christ was a faithful Minister, the faithful and true Witness, Rev. 1. 5. He declared the whole Mind of God to Men. Of him it was prophetically said, Psalm. 40. 10. I have not hid thy Righteousness within my Heart; I have declared thy faithfulness, and thy Salvation; I have not concealed thy Loving-kindness and thy Truth from the great Congregation. To the same sense, and almost in the same words, the Apostle Paul professed, in Acts 20. 20. I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you; and verse 35. I have shewed you all things. Not that every faithful Minister doth in the course of his Ministry, anatomize the whole body of Truth, and fully expound and apply each particular to the People: No, that is not the meaning, but of those Doctrines which they have opportunity of opening, they do not out of fear, or to accommodate and secure safe low ends, withhold the Mind of God, or so corrupt and abuse his words, as to subject Truth to their own or other Mens Lufts. They preach not as pleasing men, but God, 1 Thess. 2. 4. For if we yet please men, we cannot be the servants of Christ, Gal. 1. 10. Truth must be spoken, tho' the Greatest on Earth be offended.

2. Jesus Christ was a tender-hearted Minister, full of compassion to Souls. He was sent to bind up the broken in heart. Isa. 61. 1. He was full of Bowels to poor Sinners. He grieved at the hardness of Mens Hearts, Mark 3. 5. He mourned over Jerusalem, and said, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered thy Children as a Hen gathers her brood under her wings! Matth. 23. 37. His Bowels yerned when he saw the multitude as Sheep having no Shepherd, Matth. 9. 37. These Bowels of Christ must be in all the under-Shepherds. God is my witness (saith one of them) how greatly I long after you all in (or after the pattern of) the bowels of Christ Jesus, Phil. 1. 8. He that shews a hard Heart, unaffected with the Dangers and Miseries of Souls, can never shew a Commission from Christ to authorize him for Ministerial Work.

3. Jesus Christ was a laborious painful Minister, he put a necessity on himself to finish his Work in his day; a Work infinitely great, in a very little time. Job. 9. 4. I must work the Works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work. O how much Work did Christ do in a little time on Earth! He went about doing good, Acts. 10. 38.

Si mihi
daretur
opio, eli-
gerem
Christiani
rustici for-
didissim-
um &
maxime a-
greste o-
pus, præ
omnibus
victoriis &
triumphis
Alexandri
& Cesaris.

Tria faci-
unt Theo-
logum,
Meditatio,
Tentatio,
Precatio.
Luther.

In pro
instr.

He was never idle. When he sits down at Jacob's Well, to rest himself being weary, presently he falls into his Work, preaching the Gospel to the Samaritanes. In this must his Ministers resemble him; *striving according to his working, that worketh in them mightily*, Col. 1. 28, 29. An idle Minister seems to be a contradiction in adjecto; as who should say, a dark Light.

4. Jesus Christ delighted in nothing more than the success of his Ministry; to see the Work of the Lord prosper in his hand, this was meat and drink to him. When the Seventy returned, and reported the success of their first Embassy; Lord, even the Devils are subject to us through thy Name! Why, saith Christ, I beheld Satan fall as Lightning from Heaven. As if he had said, You tell me no News, I saw it when I sent you out at first: I know the Gospel would make work where it came. And in that hour Jesus rejoiced in Spirit, Luk. 10. 17, 18, 21. And is it not so with those sent by him? Don't they value the success of their Ministry at a high rate? It is not (saith one) the expence, but the recoiling of our labours back again upon us, that kills us. Ministers would not die so fast, nor be grayheaded so soon, could they but see the travail of their Souls. My little Children (saith Paul) of whom I travel again in birth, *non enim, till Christ be formed in you*, Gal. 4. 19. As for those that have the name of Shepherds only, who visit the Flock only once a year, about shearing time; who have the in-

struments of a foolish Shepherd (*forcipes & multra*) the Shears and Pail, Zech. 11. 15. woful will be their condition at the appearing of this great Shepherd.

5. Jesus Christ was a Minister that lived up to his Doctrine: His Life and Doctrine harmonized in all things. He pressed to Holiness in his Doctrine, and was the great Pattern of Holiness in his Life, *Math. 11. 28. Learn of me, I am meek and lowly*. And such his Ministers desire to approve themselves, *Phil. 4. 9. What ye have heard, and seen in me, that do*. He preached to their Eyes, as well as Ears. His Life was a Comment on his Doctrine. They might see Holiness acted in his Life, as well as sounded by his Lips. He Preacht the Doctrine, and lived the Application.

6. And lastly, Jesus Christ was a Minister that minded and maintained sweet, secret communion with God, for all his constant publick labours. If he had been preaching and healing all the day, yet he would redeem time from his very sleep to spend in secret Prayer: *Math. 14. 23. When he had sent the Multitude away, he went up into a Mountain apart to pray, and was there alone*. O blessed Pattern! Let the Keepers of the Vineyards remember they have a Vineyard of their own to keep; a Soul of their own that must be look'd after as well as other Mens. Those that in these things imitate Christ, are surely sent to us from him, and are worthy of double honour: They are a choice Blessing to the People.

S E R M O N X.

L U K E XXIV. 45.

Then opened he their Understandings, &c.

Ser. 10.
Opens
the se-
cond
Branch
of the
Prophetic
Off-
fice, con-
sisting in
the illu-
minati-
on of the
Under-
standing.

Knowledge of Spiritual things is well distinguished into Intellectual and Practical: the first hath its seat in the Mind, that latter in the Heart. This latter Divines call a Knowledge peculiar to Saints; and in the Apostle's Dialect it is *σοφία γινώσκουσα τον Θεον*, Phil. 3. 8. The eminency, or excellency of the Knowledge of Christ.

And indeed there is but little excellency in all those petty Notions which furnish the Lips with discourse, unless by a sweet and powerful Influence they draw the Conscience and Will to the Obedience of Christ: Light in the Mind is necessarily antecedent to the sweet and heavenly motions and mountains of the Affections. For the farther any man stands from the Light of Truth, the farther he must needs be from the Heat of Comfort. Heavenly quicknings are begotten in the Heart, while the Son of Righteousness spreads the Beams of Truth into the Understanding, and the Soul sits under those its Wings: yet all the Light of the Gospel spreading and diffusing it self into the Mind, can never savingly open and change the Heart, without another act of Christ upon it; and what that is, the Text informs you, *Then open-*

ed he their Understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures.

In which Words we have both an act of Christ upon the Disciples Understandings, and the immediate end and scope of that Act.

1. Christ's Act upon their Understandings; he opened their Understandings. By Understanding is not here meant the Mind only, in opposition to the Heart, Will and Affections, but these were opened by and with the Mind. The Mind is the Heart, as the Door to the House: What comes into his Heart, comes in at the Understanding, which is Introductory to it; and altho' Truths sometimes go no farther than the Entry, never penetrate the Hearts, yet here this effect is undoubtedly included.

Expositors make this Expression parallel to that in *Acts 16. 14. The Lord opened the Heart of Lydia*. And it is well observed, that it is one thing to open the Scriptures, that is, to expound them, and give the meaning of them, as Paul is said to do in *Acts 18. 3.* and another thing to open the Mind or Heart, as it is here. There are, as a learned Man truly observes, two doors of the Soul barr'd against Christ; the Understanding by Ignorance, and the Heart

Heart by Hardness; both these are opened by Christ. The former is opened by the preaching of the Gospel, the other by the internal operation of the Spirit. The former belongs to the first part of Christ's Prophetical Office, opened in the former; the latter to that special internal part of his Prophetical Office, to be opened in this Sermon.

And that it was not a naked Act upon their Minds only, but that their Hearts and Minds did work in fellowship, being both touched by this Act of Christ, is evident enough by the Effects mentioned, *vers. 52, 53. They returned to Jerusalem with great Joy, and were continually in the Temple praising and blessing God.* It is confessed, that before this time Christ had opened their Hearts by Conversion; and his Opening is not to be understood simply, but *secundum quid*, in reference to those particular Truths, in which till now they were not sufficiently informed, and so their Hearts could not be duly affected with them. They were very dark in their apprehensions of the Death and Resurrection of Christ; and consequently their Hearts were sad and dejected about that which had befallen him. *Vers. 17.* But when he opened his Scriptures and their Understandings and Heart together, then things appeared with another Face, and they return blessing and praising God.

2. Here is farther to be considered the design and end of this Act upon their Understandings; *That they might understand the Scriptures.* Where let it be marked, Reader, That the Teachings of Christ, and his Spirit, were never designed to take Men off from the reading, studying, and searching for the Scriptures, as some vain Notionists have pretended, opposing those things which are subordinated; but to make their studies and duties the more fruitful, beneficial and effectual to their Souls; or that they might this way receive the end or blessing of all their Duties. God never intended to abolish his Word by giving his Spirit: And they are true Fanatics, (as Calvin upon this place calls them) that think, or pretend so. By this means he would at once impart more Light, and make that they had before more operative and useful to them, especially in such a time of need as this was. Hence we observe,

Doct. That the opening of the Mind and Heart, effectually to receive the Truths of God, is the peculiar Prerogative and Office of Jesus Christ.

One of the great Miseries under which lapsed Nature labours, is spiritual Blindness. Jesus Christ brings that Eye-salve which only can cure it. *Rev. 3. 18. I counsel thee to buy of me Eye-salve, that thou mayest see.* Those to whom the Spirit hath applied it, can say as it is, *1. Job. 5. 20. We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an Understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are*

in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ: this is the true God, and eternal Life.

To the Spiritual Illumination of a Soul it suffices not that the Object be revealed, nor yet that Man, the Subject of that Knowledge, have a due use of his own Reason; but it is further necessary that the Grace and special Assistance of the Holy Spirit be superadded, to open and mollify the heart, and so give it a due taste and relish of the sweetness of Spiritual Truth. By opening the Gospel, he reveals Truth to us, and by opening the heart in us. Now tho' this cannot be without that, yet it's much more excellent to have Truth revealed in us, than to us. This Divines call *præcipuum illud æternæ quæ muneris Prophetici*, the principal perspective effect of the Prophetical Office; the special Blessing promised the in new Covenant, *Heb. 8. 10. I will put my Laws in their Mind, and write them in their Hearts.*

For explication of this part of Christ's Prophetical Office, I shall, as in the former, shew what is included in the opening of the Understanding, and by what Acts Christ performs it.

First, Give you a brief account of what is included in this Act of Christ; take it in the following Particulars.

1. It implies the transcendent nature of Spiritual things, far exceeding the highest sight and reach of Natural Reason. Jesus Christ must by his Spirit open the Understandings of Men, or they can never comprehend such Mysteries. Some Men have strong natural Parts, and by improvement of them, are become Eagle-eyed in the Mysteries of Nature. Who more acute than the Heathen Sages? Yet to them the Gospel seemed Foolishness, *1 Cor. 1. 20. Austin* confesses that before his Conversion, he often felt his Spirit swell with offence and contempt of the Gospel; and he desisting it, said *dedignabar esse parvulus*, he scorned to become a Child again. *Braddoordinate*, that profound Doctor, learned *usque ad stuporem*, even to a wonder, professes that when he read *Paul's Epistles*, he contemned them, because in them he found not a Metaphysical Wit. Surely it's possible a Man may with *Berengarius*, be able to dispute *de omni scibili*, of every point of Knowledge; to unravel Nature, from the Cedar in *Lebanon*, to the Hyssop on the Wall; and yet be as blind as a Bat in the Knowledge of Christ. *Yea, it's possible a Man's Understanding may be improved by the Gospel, *myst re-* to a great ability in the literal knowledge of *fixed and ingenious sort of more-generate* it, so as to be able to expound the Scriptures orthodoxly, and enlighten others by them, as it is *Mat. 7. 22. The Scribes and Pharisees* Men have were well acquainted with the Scriptures of the Old Testament; yea, such were their abilities and esteem among the People for them, that the Apostle styles them the *Princes of this World*, *1 Cor. 2. 8.* And yet notwithstanding Christ truly calls them *blind Guides*, *Mat. 23.* Till Christ open the heart, we can know nothing of

of Nature, under the power of Sin, and in the very Suburbs of Hell, wholly as the command of Satan: And if any Man think otherwise, let him take heed that every Thought doth not nail him fast to that wretched and cursed Estate for evermore. Dr. Chynelles Divin. Trin. p. 410, 460

Neque enim spiritum Deum suis confiteri, qui verbi sui usum aboleat, sed potius qui fructuosum reddat; quare perperam Fanatici homines revelationum prætextu spernendæ scripturæ sibi licentiam concedunt. *Calv. in loc.*

Collyrium oculis inungendum quo cecitate demptâ homo spirituali visui restituitur. *Gloss. Phil. 2. part. p. 340.* Ad perfectam & propriam rerum supernaturalium cognitionem, non sufficit ex parte objecti revelatio, nec ex parte subjecti debitus usus rationis, sed insuper inquiri gratia Christi, & speciale adiutorium spiritus sancti quo cor operariur, emolliatur, & supernaturalis veritatis dulcedinem habeat proportionatam sibi & gustum spiritualis iudicii. *Reginaldus, Animal. Homo. p. 23.*

him, or of his Will, as we ought to know it. So experimentally true is that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. *The natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual, judgeth all things; yet he himself is judged of no Man.* The spiritual Man can judge and discern the carnal Man, but the carnal Man wants a faculty to judge of the spiritual Man. As a Man that carries a dark Lanthorn, can see another by its light, but the other cannot discern him. Such is the difference betwixt persons whose Hearts Christ hath, or hath not opened.

2. Christ opening the Understanding, implies the insufficiency of all external Means, how excellent soever they are in themselves, to operate savingly upon Men, till by Christ his Power open the Soul, and so makes them effectual. What excellent Preachers were *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah* to the Jews? The former spake of Christ more like an Evangelist of the New, than a Prophet of the Old Testament; the latter was a most convictive and pithy Preacher: Yet the one complains, *Isa. 53. 1. Who hath believed our Report? And to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?* the other laments the successlessness of his Ministry, *Jer. 6. 18. The Belov'd are burnt, the Lead is consumed of the Fire, the Founder melteth in vain.* Under the New Testament what People ever enjoyed such choice helps and means, as those that lived under the Ministry of Christ and the Apostles? Yet how many remained still in Darkness? *Mar. 11. 27. We have piped to you, but ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, but ye have not lamented.* Neither the delightful Airs of Mercy, nor the doleful Dirrises of Judgment, could affect or move their Hearts.

And indeed if you search into the reason of it, you will be satisfied, that the choicest Means can do nothing upon the Heart, till Christ by his Spirit open it, because Ordinances work not as natural Causes do: For then the effect would always follow, unless miraculously hindered; and it would be equally wonderful that all that hear should not be converted, as that the three Children should be in the fiery Furnace so long, and yet not be burned: no, it works not as a natural, but as a moral Cause; whose efficacy depends on the gracious and arbitrary concurrence of the Spirit. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, Joh. 3. 8.* The Ordinances are like the Pool of *Bethesda, John 5. 4.* At a certain time an Angel came down and troubled the Waters, and then they had a healing virtue in them. So the Spirit comes down at certain times in the Word, and opens the Heart, and then it becomes the power of God to Salvation. So that when you see Souls daily sitting under excellent and choice means, and remain dead still, you may say as *Martha* did to Christ of her Brother *Lazarus*, Lord, if thou hadst been here, they had not remained dead. If thou hadst been in this Sermon, it had not been so ineffectual to them.

3. It implies the utter Impotency of Man to open his own Heart, and thereby make the Word effectually to his own Conversion and

Salvation. He that at first said, *Let there be Light*, and it was so, must shine into our Hearts, or they will never be savingly enlightened. 2 Cor. 4. 6. A double Misery lyes upon a great part of Mankind, *viz. Impotency and Pride.* They have not only lost the true liberty and freedom of their Wills, but with it have so far lost their Understanding and Humility, as not to own it. But alas! Man is become a most impotent Creature by the Fall; so far from being able to open his own Heart, that he cannot know the things of the Spirit, 1 Cor. 2. 14. cannot believe, *Joh. 6. 44. cannot obey, Rom. 8. 7.* cannot spake one good Word, *Mar. 12. 34.* cannot think one good Thought, 2 Cor. 3. 5. *nostrum ad* cannot do one good Act, *Joh. 15. 5. O what a* helpless shiftless thing is a poor Sinner! Suitably to this state of Impotence, Conversion is in Scripture call'd Regeneration, *Joh. 3. 3. a Resurrection from the Dead, Eph. 2. 5. a Creation, Eph. 2. 10. a Victory, 2 Cor. 10. 5.* Which doth not only imply Man to be purely passive in his Conversion to God, but a renitency, and opposition made to that Power which goes forth from God to recover him.

Lastly, Christ's opening the Understanding imports his Divine Power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself. Who but God knows the Heart? Who but a God can unlock and open it at pleasure? no meer Creature, no not the Angels themselves, who for their large Understandings and Intelligencies, can command or open the Heart. We may stand and knock at mens Hearts, till our own ake; but no opening till Christ come. He can fit a Key to all the crofs wards of the Will, and with sweet efficacy open it, and that without any force or violence to it. These things are carried in this part of his Office, consisting in opening the Heart: Which was the first thing propounded for Explication.

Secondly, In the next place, let us see by what Acts Jesus Christ performs this Work of his, and what way and method he takes to open the Heart of Sinners.

And there are two principal ways by which Christ opens the Understandings and Hearts of Men, *viz.* By his Word and Spirit.

1. By his Word; to this end was *Paul* commissioned and sent to preach the Gospel, *Acts 26. 18. To open their Eyes, and turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God.* The Lord can, if he pleases, accomplish this immediately; but tho' he can do it, he will not do it ordinarily without Means, because he will honour his own Institutions. Therefore you shall observe, that when *Lydia's* Heart was to be opened, *there appeared unto Paul a Man of Macedonia, who prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us, Acts 19. 9.* God will keep up the Reputation of his Ordinances among Men: And tho' he hath not tied himself, yet he hath tied us to them. *Cornelius* must send for *Peter*. God can make the Earth produce Corn, as it did at first, without Cultivation and Labour; but he that shall now expect it in the neglect of Means, may perish for want of Bread.

2. But the Ordinances in themselves cannot do it, as I noted before; and therefore Jesus Christ

Wizem
Demon-
stratio est
Syllogis-
mus faciem
scire. To
pā dōra-
re dā dōr
ēxist dā
ōm pōtē
āpōstōl
dōrē.

Christ hath sent forth the Spirit, who is his *Prorex*, his Vicegerent to carry on this Work upon the Hearts of his Elect. And when the Spirit comes down upon the Souls, in the administration of the Ordinances, he effectually opens the Heart to receive the Lord Jesus, by the hearing of Faith. He breaks in upon the Understanding and Conscience by powerful Convictions and Compunctions: So much that word, *Joh. 16. 8.* imports, *He shall convince the World of Sin*; convince by clear Demonstration, such as inforges Assent, so that the Soul cannot but yield it to be so: And yet the Door of the Heart is not opened, till he has also put forth his Power upon the Will, and by a sweet and secret Efficacy overcome all its Reluctations, and the Soul be made willing in the day of his Power. When this is done, the Heart is opened. Saving Light now shines in it; and this Light set up the Spirit in the Soul is,

1. *A new Light*, in which all things appear far otherwise than they did before. The names of *Christ* and *Sin*, the words *Heaven* and *Hell* have another sound in that Man's Ears, than formerly they had. When he comes to read the same Scriptures, which possibly he had read a hundred times before, he wonders he should be so blind as he was, to overlook such great, weighty, and concerning things as he now beholds in them; and faith, Where were mine Eyes, that I could never see these things before?

2. It is a very *affecting Light*; a Light that hath Heat and powerful Influences with it, which makes deep Impressions on the Heart. Hence they whose Eyes the great Prophet opens, are said to be *brought out of Darkness into his marvellous Light*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. The Soul is greatly affected with what it sees. The Beams of Light are contracted and twisted together in the Mind; and being reflected on the Heart and Affections, soon cause them to smother and burn. *Did not our Hearts burn within us, whilst he talked with us, and opened to us the Scriptures?*

3. And it is a *growing Light*, like the Light of the Morning, which *shines more and more unto a perfect Day*, Prov. 4. 18. When the Spirit first opens the Understanding, he doth not give it at once a full sight of all Truths, or a full sense of the power, sweetness and goodness of any Truth; but the Soul in the use of Means grows up to a greater Clearness day by day. Its Knowledge grows *extensively* in measure, and *intensively* in Power and Efficacy. And thus the Lord Jesus by his Spirit opens the Understanding. Now the use of this follows in five practical Deductions.

Inference 1. If this be the Work and Office of Jesus Christ to open the Understandings of Men; hence we infer the *Miseries that lyes upon those Men, whose Understandings to this day Jesus Christ have not opened*; of whom we may say, as it is *Deut. 22. 4.* *To this day Christ hath not given them Eyes to see.* Natural Blindness, whereby we are deprived of the Light of this World, is sad; but spiritual Blindness is much more sad. See how dolefully their case is represented, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are*

lost; whose Eyes the God of this World hath blinded, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them: He means a total and final Concealment of the saving power of the Word from them. Why, what if Jesus Christ withhold it, and will not be a Prophet to them, what is their Condition? Truly no better than *lost Men*. It is hid *nōt dēmonstretur*, to them that are to perish, or be destroyed. This Blindness, like the covering of the Face, or tying the Handkerchief over the Eyes, is in order to their turning off into Hell. More particularly, because the Point is of deep concernment, let us consider,

1. *The Judgment inflicted*, and that's spiritual Blindness. A fore Misery indeed! Not an universal ignorance of all Truths, Ono! in natural and moral Truths they are oftentimes acute, and sharp-sighted Men; but in that part of Knowledge which wraps up eternal Life, *Joh. 17. 2.* they are utterly blinded: As it's said of the *Jews* upon whom this Misery lyes, that *Blindness in part is happened to Israel*. They are learned and knowing Persons in other matters, but they know not Jesus Christ, there is the grand and sad effect.

2. *The Subject* of this Judgment, the Mind, which is the Eye of the Soul. If it were but upon the Body, it would not be so considerable; this falls immediately upon the Soul, the noblest part of Man, and upon the Mind, the highest and noblest Faculty of the Soul, whereby we understand, think, and reason. This in Scripture is called *πνεύμα* the Spirit, the intellectual rational Faculty, which Philosophers call *ἀγνοῦν* the leading directive Faculty; which is to the Soul what the natural Eye is to the Body. Now the Soul being the most active and restless thing in the World, always working, and its leading directive Power blind, judge what a sad and dangerous state such a Soul is in; just like a fiery high-mettled Horse, whose Eyes are out, furiously carrying his Rider upon Rocks, Pits, and dangerous Precipices. I remember *Chrysostom*, speaking of the loss of a Soul, faith, that the loss of a Member of the Body is nothing to it; for, faith he, if a Man lose an Eye, Ear, Hand or Foot, there is another to supply its want. *Omnia Deus dedit dupliciter*, God hath given us those Members double; *animam vero unam*, but he hath not given us two Souls, that if one be lost, yet the other may be saved. Surely it were better for thee, Reader, to have every Member of thy Body made the Seat and Subject of the most exquisite racking Torments, than for spiritual Blindness to betay thy Soul. Moreover,

3. Consider the *indiscreet blindness of this Judgment* to the Soul on whom it lyes: They know it not, no more than a Man knows that he is asleep. Indeed it's the Spirit of a deep sleep poured out upon them from the Lord, *Isa. 29. 10.* like that which befel *Adam* when God opened his Side, and took out a Rib. This renders their Misery the more remediless: *Because ye say you see, therefore your Sin remaineth*, *Joh. 9. 41.* Once more,

4. Consider the *Tendency and Effects of it*. What doth this tend but to eternal Ruin? For hereby we are cut off from the only Remedy.

The

The Soul that's to be blinded, can neither see Sin, nor a Saviour; but, like the Egyptians during the palpable Darkness, sits still, and moves not after its own recovery. And as Ruin is that to which it tends, so in order thereto, it renders all the Ordinances and Duties under which that Soul comes, altogether useless and ineffectual to its Salvation. He comes to the Word, and sees others melted by it, but to him it signifies nothing. O what a heavy stroke of God is this! Most wretched is their case, to whom Jesus Christ will not apply this Eye-salve, that they may see. Did you but understand the Misery of such a State, if Christ should say to you, as he did to the blind Man, *Mar. 20. 33. What wilt thou that I shall do for thee? You would return as he did; Lord, that my Eyes may be opened.*

Inference 2. If Jesus Christ be the great Prophet of the Church, then surely he will take special care both of the Church, and the under-Shepherds appointed by him to feed them: Else both the Objects and Instruments upon and by which he executes his Office, must fail, and consequently this glorious Office be in vain. Hence he is said to walk among the Golden Candlesticks, *Rev. 1. 12.* and *Rev. 2. 1. to hold the Stars in his Right Hand.* Jesus Christ instrumentally opens the Understanding of Men by the preaching of the Gospel; and whilst there is an elect Soul to be converted, or a Convert to be farther illuminated; Means shall not fail to accomplish it by.

Inference 3. Hence you that are yet in Darkness, may be directed to whom to apply your selves for saving Knowledge. It's Christ that hath the sovereign Eye-salve, that can cure your Blindness: He only hath the Key of the House of David; he opens, and no Man shutteth: O that I might persuade you to set your selves in his way, under the Ordinances, and cry to him, *Lord, that my Eyes may be opened.* Three things are marvellously encouraging to you so to do.

So thick is that Cataract which is grown over the Eye of our Understanding, that none

but God can reach it. Christ was sent to be a Light to the Gentiles, so he enlightens the Aethiops, and to open the Eyes of the blind, so he heals the Organ: He is the only Oculist. *Firmin's Real Christian, p. 30.*

1. God the Father hath put him into this Office, for the cure of such as you be, *Isa. 49. 6. I will give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that thou may'st be my Salvation to the end of the Earth.* This may furnish you with an Argument to plead for a Cure. Why do you not go to God, and say, Lord, didst thou give Jesus Christ a Commission to open the blind Eyes? Behold me, Lord, such a one am I, a poor, dark, ignorant Soul. Didst thou give him to be thy Salvation to the ends of the Earth? No Place nor People excluded from the benefit of this Light; and shall I still remain in the shadow of Death? O that unto me he might be a saving Light also. The best and most excellent Work that ever thou wroughtest, brings thee no Glory till it come into the Light; O let me see and admire it.

2. It's encouraging to think, that Jesus Christ hath actually opened the Eyes of them that were as dark and ignorant as you now are. He hath revealed those things to Babies, that have been

hid from the wise and prudent, *Matth. 11. 25. The Law of the Lord is perfect, making wise the simple.* *Psal. 19. 7.* And if you look among those whom Christ hath enlightened, you will not find many wise after the Flesh, many mighty, or noble; but the foolish, weak, base, and despised. They are they on whom he hath glorified the Riches of his Grace: *1 Cor. 1. 26, 27.*

3. And is it not yet further encouraging to you, that hitherto he hath mercifully continued you under the Means of Light? Why is not the Light of the Gospel put out? Why are times and seasons of Grace continued to you, if God have no further design of good to your Souls? Be not therefore discouraged, but wait on the Lord in the use of Means, that you may yet be healed.

Quest. If you ask, what can we do to put our selves into the way of the Spirit, in order to such a Cure?

Sol. I say, tho' you cannot do any thing that can make the Gospel effectual, yet the Spirit of God can make those Means you are capable of using effectual, if he please to concur with them. And it is a certain Truth, that your Inability to do what is above your power, doth no ways excuse you from doing what is within the compass of your power to do. I know no Act that is saving can be done without the concurrence of special Grace; yea, and no Act that hath a remote order and tendency thereto, without a more general concurrence of God's Assistance; but herein he is not behindhand with you. Let me therefore advise,

1. That you diligently attend upon an able, faithful, and searching Ministry. Neglect no Opportunity God affords you; for how know you but that may be the time of Mercy to your Souls? If he that lay so many Years at the Pool of Bethesda, had been wanting but that hour when the Angel came down and troubled the Waters, he had not been healed.

2. Satisfie not your selves with hearing, but consider what you hear. Allow time to reflect upon what God hath spoken to you. What Power is there in Man more excellent, or more appropriate to the reasonable Nature, than it's reflexive and self-considering Power? There is little hope of any good to be done upon your Souls, till you begin to go alone, and become Thinking-Men and Women. Here all Conversion begins. I know a feverer Task can hardly be imposed upon a carnal Heart. It's a hard thing to bring a Man and himself together upon this account: But this must be if ever the Lord do your Souls good. *Psal. 4. 4. Command with your own Hearts.*

3. Labour to see, and ingeniously confess the insufficiency of all your other Knowledge to do you good. What if you had never so much skill and knowledge in other Mysteries? What if you be never so well acquainted with the Letter of the Scripture? What if you had Angelical Illumination? This can never save thy Soul. No, all thy Knowledge signifies nothing till the Lord shew thee by special Light the deplored state

of

of thy own Heart, and a saving sight of Jesus Christ, thy only Remedy.

Inference 4. Since then there is a common Light, and special saving Light, which none but Christ can give, *it's therefore the Concernment of every one of you to try what your Light is.* We know (saith the Apostle) 1 Cor. 1. 8. *that we all have Knowledge.* O but what, and whence is it? Is it the Light of Life springing from Jesus Christ that bright and Morning-star, or only such as the Devils and Damned have? These Lights differ,

1. In their very *kind and natures.* The one is heavenly, supernatural, and spiritual; the other earthly, and natural, the effect of a better Constitution or Education, *James 3. 15, 17.*

2. They differ most apparently in their *Effects and Operations.* The Light that comes in a special way from Christ, is humbling, abasing, and Soul-emptying Light: By it a Man sees the Vileness of his own Nature and Practice, which begets self loathing in him; but natural Light on the contrary, puffs up, and exalts, makes the Heart swell with self-conceitedness, 1 Cor. 8. 1.

The Light of Christ is *practical and operative*, still urging the Soul, yea, lovingly constraining it to Obedience. No sooner did it shine into *Paul's* Heart, but presently he asks, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Acts 9. 6. *It brought forth fruit in the Colossians, from the first day it came to them,* Col. 1. 6. but the other spends it self in impractical Notions, and is detained in Unrighteousness, *Rom. 1. 18.* The Light of Christ is powerfully *transformative* of its Subjects, changing the Man in whom it is into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, 2 Cor. 3. ult. But common Light leaves the Heart as dead, carnal and sensual, as if no Light at all were in it.

In a word, All saving Light *endears* Jesus Christ to the Soul, and as it could not value him before it saw him, so when once he appears to the Soul in his own Light, he is appreciated and endeared unspeakably: then none but Christ; all is but Dung that he may win Christ: None in Heaven but him, nor in Earth

desirable in comparison of him. But no such Effect flows from natural common Knowledge.

3. They differ in their *Issues.* Natural Common Knowledge vanisheth, as the Apostles speaks, 1 Cor. 13. 8. *It's but a May-flower, and dies in its Month. Doth not their Excellency that is in them go away?* Job. 4. 21. But this that springs from Christ is perfected, not destroyed by Death: It springs up into everlasting Life. The Soul in which it is subjected, carries it away with it into Glory. *Job. 17. 2.* this Light is Life eternal. Now turn in, and compare your selves with these Rules. Let not false Light deceive you.

Inference 5. Lastly, *How are they obliged to love, serve and honour Jesus Christ, whom he hath enlightened with the saving Knowledge of himself?* O that with Hands and Hearts lifted up to Heaven, ye would adore the free Grace of Jesus Christ to your Souls! How many round about you have their Eyes closed, and their Hearts shut up! How many are in Darkness, and there are like to remain, till they come to the blackness of Darkness, which is reserved for them? O what a pleasant thing is it for your Eyes to see the Light of this World! But what is it for the Eye of your Mind to see God in Christ? To see such ravishing sights as the Objects of Faith are? And to have such a Pledge as this given you of the blessed Visions of Glory? *For in this Light you shall see Light.* Bless God, and boast not. Rejoice in your Light, but be not proud of it. And beware ye sin not against the best and highest Light in this World. If God were so incensed against the Heathens for disobeying the Light of Nature, what is it in you to sin with Eyes clearly illuminated with the purest Light that shines in this World? You know God charges it upon *Solomon,* 1 Kings 11. 9. that he turned from the way of Obedience, *after the Lord had appeared to him twice.* Jesus Christ intended when he opened your Eyes, that your Eyes should direct your Feet. Light is a special help to Obedience, and Obedience a singular help to increase your Light.

S E R M O N XI.

H E B. IX. 23.

It was therefore necessary that the Patterns of things in the Heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better Sacrifices than these.

Salvation (as to the actual dispensation of it) is revealed by Christ as a Prophet, procured by him as a Priest, applied by him as a King: In vain is it revealed, if not purchased; in vain revealed and purchased, if not applied. How it is revealed, both to us and in us, by our great Prophet, hath been declared. And now from the Prophetic Office, we pass on to the Priestly Office of Jesus Christ, who as our

Priest purchased our Salvation. In this Office is contained the grand relief for a Soul distressed by the guilt of Sin. When all other Reliefs have been essayed, 'tis the Blood of this great Sacrifice, sprinkled by Faith upon the trembling Conscience, that must cool, refresh, and sweetly compose and settle it. Now seeing so great a weight hangs upon this Office, the Apostle inductiously confirms and commands

Ser. 11.
Discovers the
Nature and
Necessity of
the
Priest-
hood of
Christ.

mends it in this Epistle, and more especially in this 9th Chapter, shewing how it was figured to the World by the typical Blood of the Sacrifices, but infinitely excels them all: And as in many other most weighty respects, so principally in this, that the Blood of these Sacrifices did but purifie the Types or Patterns of the heavenly things; but the Blood of this Sacrifice purified or consecrated the heavenly things themselves signified by those Types.

The words read, contain an Argument to prove the necessity of the offering up of Christ the great Sacrifice, drawn from the proportion betwixt the Types, and Things typified. If the Sanctuary, Mercy-seat, and all things pertaining to the Service of the Tabernacle, were to be consecrated by Blood; those earthly, but facted Types, by the Blood of Bulls and Lambs, &c. much more the heavenly things shadowed by them, ought to be purified or consecrated by better Blood than the Blood of Beasts. The Blood consecrating these, should as much excel the Blood that consecrated those, as the heavenly things themselves do in their own nature excel those earthly shadows of them. Look what proportion there is between the Type and Anti-type, the like proportion also is betwixt the Blood that consecrates them; earthly things with common, heavenly things with the most excellent Blood.

So then there are two things to be especially observed here: First, The Nature of Christ's Death and Sufferings: It had the Nature; Use, and End of a Sacrifice; and of all Sacrifices the most excellent. Secondly, The Necessity of his offering up: It was necessary to correspond with all the Types and Precognitions of it under the Law; but especially it was necessary for the expiating of Sin, the propitiating of a justly incensed God, and the opening a way for reconciled ones to come to God in. The Point I shall give you from it, is,

Doct. That the Sacrifice of Christ our High Priest, is most excellent in it self, and most necessary for us.

Sacrifices are of two sorts, *Eucharistical*, or Thank-offerings, in testimony of Homage, Duty and Service; and in token of gratitude for Mercies freely received: And *Uasical*, or Expiatory, for satisfaction to Justice, and thereby the atoning and reconciling of God. Of this last kind was the Sacrifice offered by Jesus Christ for us: To this Office he was called by God, *Heb. 5.* In it he was confirmed by the unchangeable Oath of God, *Psal. 110.* 4. for it he was singularly qualified by his Incarnation, *Heb. 5.* 6, 7. and all the Ends of it he was fully answered, *Heb. 9.* 11, 12.

My present Design is from this Scripture, to open the general Nature and absolute Necessity of the Priesthood of Christ; shewing what his Priesthood implies in it, and how all this was indispensably necessary in order to our recovery from the deplorable state of Sin and Misery.

First then, we will consider what it supposes

and implies; and then, wherein it consists. And there are six things which it either presupposeth or necessarily includeth in it.

1. At first sight, it supposes Man's Revolt *The Nature and Fall from God; and a dreadful breach made of Christ's Priesthood opened.* thereby betwixt God and him, else no need of an atoning Sacrifice. If one died for all, then were all dead, *2 Cor. 5.* 14, dead in Law, under sentence to die, and that eternally. In all the Sacrifices from Adam to Christ, this was still preached to the World; that there was a fearful breach betwixt God and Man; and that even to Justice required our Blood should be shed. And the Fire flaming on the Altar, which wholly burnt up the Sacrifice, was a lively Emblem of that fiery Indignation that should devour the Adversaries. But above all, when Christ that true and great Sacrifice was offered up to God, then was the fairest Glass that ever was in the World set before us, to see our Sin and Misery by the Fall in.

2. His Priesthood supposes the unalterable Purpose of God to take vengeance for Sin; He will not let it pass. I will not determine what God could do in this Case by his absolute Power; and I think it is generally yielded, that by his ordinate Power he could do no less than punish it in the person of the Sinner, or of his Surety.

Those that contend for such a Forgiveness, as is an Act of Charity, like that whereby private persons forgive one another, must at once suppose God to part with his Right, *cedendo de pure suo*, and also render the Satisfaction of Christ altogether useless as to the procurement of Forgiveness; yea, rather an obstacle, than a means to it. Surely the Nature and Truth of God oblige him to punish Sin. He is of purer eyes than to look upon iniquity, *Heb. 1.* 13. And beside, the Word is gone out of his Mouth, that the Sinner shall die.

3. The Priesthood of Christ presupposeth the utter impotency of Man to appease God, and recover his Favour by any thing he could do or suffer. Surely God would not come down to assume a Body to die, and be offered up for us, if at any cheaper rate it could have been accomplished: There was no other way to recover Man, and satisfy God. Those that deny the Satisfaction of Christ, and talk of his dying to confirm the Truth, and give us an Example of Meekness, Patience, and Self-denial, affirming these to be the sole Ends of his Death, do not only therein root up the Foundation of their own Comfort, Peace and Pardon, but most boldly impeach and tax the infinite Wisdom. God could have done all this at a cheaper rate: The sufferings of a meer Creature are able to attain these Ends: The death of the Martyrs did it. But who by dying can satisfy and reconcile God? What Creature can bring him an adequate and proportionable value for Sin? yea, for all the Sin that ever was or shall be transmitted to the Natures, or committed by the Persons of all God's Elect, from Adam to the last that shall be found alive at the Lord's coming? Surely none but Christ can do this.

4. Christ's Priesthood implies the necessity of his being God-man. It was necessary he should be a Man in order to his Passion, Compassion, and Derivation of his Righteousness and Holiness

Concludit argumenta superiora de necessitate redemptionis, a proportionem Typorum, & rerum celestium. Si typica sacra necessitate fuerint purgari sanguine typico; tanto sane praestantiori sanguine mandati operumque typorum, quanto ipsa sunt praestantiora exemplaria terrenis: ratio est aperta, quia qualis inter Typos & res, talis inter Typorum & rerum consecrationis debet esse proportio. Parens in L.

Sacrificia alia sunt Typica, alia significantia: & utraque vel eucharistica, seu propitiatoria; vel uasicalia, seu gratiarum actionum. Lucan. Theol. out. p. 78.

The Reader may find this Case learnedly and solidly handled by Dr. Twisse, Vindiciae, gratiae, Degefr. 8. Nulla alia ratione palam fieri potest odium aduersus peccatum divinum, quam poenae commercium infestatione. Brad. de Justific. p. 51.

Hinc igitur
apparet
quam ne-
cessarium
fuit ut
Christus
mediator
esset &c
Deus &c
homo ;
nisi enim
homo, non
fuisse ido-
neum sa-
crificium ;
& nisi Deus
fuisse, sa-
crificium
illud non
fuisse
sufficiens
virtutis.
James Med.
p. 92.

ness to Men. Had he not been Man, he had had no Sacrifice to offer, no Soul or Body to suffer in. The Godhead is impatient, immortal, and above all those sufferings and miseries Christ felt for us. Besides, his being Man, fills him with bowels of compassion, and tender sense of our miseries : This makes him a merciful and faithful High-Priest, *Heb. 4. 15.* and not only fits him to pity, but to sanctify us also : *for he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are both of one, Heb. 2. 11, 14, 17.* And as necessary it was our High-Priest should be God, since the value and efficacy of his Sacrifice results from thence.

5. The Priesthood of Christ implies the extremity of his sufferings. In Sacrifices, you know, there was a destruction, a kind of annihilation of the Creature to the Glory of God. The shedding of the Creature's Blood, and burning its Flesh with Fire, was but an umbrage, or faint resemblance of what Christ endured when he made his Soul an Offering for Sin.

6. And lastly, It implies the gracious Design of God to reconcile us at a dear rate to himself, in that he called and confirmed Christ in his Priesthood by an Oath, and thereby laid out a Sacrifice of infinite value for the World. Sins for which no Sacrifice is allowed, are desperate Sins; and the case of such Sinners is helpless : But if God allow, yea, and provide a Sacrifice himself, how plainly doth it speak his intentions of Peace and Mercy ? These things are manifestly presupposed or implied in Christ's Priesthood.

This Priesthood of Christ is that Function wherein he comes before God in our Name and Place, to fulfil the Law, and offer up himself to him a Sacrifice of Reconciliation for our Sins; and by his Intercession to continue and apply the purchase of his Blood to them for whom he shed it: All this is contained in that famous Scripture, *Heb. 10. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.* Or more briefly, the Priesthood of Christ is that whereby he expiated the Sins of Men, and obtained the Favour of God for them, *Col. 1. 20, 22. Rom. 5. 10.* But because I shall insist more largely upon the several Parts and Fruits of this Office, it shall here suffice to speak thus much as to its general Nature; which was the first thing proposed for explication.

Sacerdotium Christi
est functio
qua coram
Deo appa-
ret, ut legem ab ip-
so acceptam a nostro
nomine
observet ;
seipsum
victimam
reconcilia-
tionis pro nostris peccatis ipsi offerat ; suam apud Deum intercessione
operam ipsius perennem, ac donationem spiritus sancti nobis impetret,
atque efficaciter applicet. Synopsi purioris Theol. p. 318.

Secondly, The necessity of Christ's Priesthood comes next to be opened : Touching which I affirm, according to the Scriptures, it was necessary in order to our Salvation, that such a Priest should, by such a Sacrifice, appear before God for us.

The truth of this Assertion will be cleared by these two Principles, which are evident in the Scripture, *viz.* That God stood upon full Satisfaction, and would not remit one Sin without it : And that fallen Man is totally incapable of tending him any such Satisfaction; therefore Christ, who only can, must do it, or we perish.

1. God stood upon full Satisfaction, and would not remit one Sin without it. This will

be cleared from the Nature of Sin; and from the Veracity and Wisdom of God.

1. From the Nature of Sin, which deserves that the Sinner should suffer for it. Penal Evil, in a course of Justice, follows moral Evil. Sin and Sorrow ought to go together; betwixt these is a necessary connexion, *Rom. 6. 23. The Wages of Sin is Death.*

(2.) The Veracity of God requires it. The Word was gone out of his Mouth; *Gen. 2. 17. In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* From that time he was instantly and certainly obnoxious and liable to the death of Soul and Body. The Law pronounces him cursed, that continues not in all things that are written therein to do them, *Gal. 3. 9.* Now tho' Man's threatnings are often vain and insignificant things, yet God's shall surely take place; Not one tittle of the Law shall fail, till all be fulfilled, *Mat. 5. 18.* God will be true in his Threatnings, tho' thousands and millions perish.

(3.) The Wisdom of God, by which he governs the rational World, admits not of a dispensation or relaxation of the Threatnings without satisfaction : For as good no King, as no Laws for Government; as good no Law, as no Penalty; and as good no Penalty, as no Execution. To this purpose one well observes; "It's altogether undecent, especially to the Wisdom and Righteousness of God, that that which provoketh the execution, should procure the abrogation of his Law; that that should supplant and undermine the Law, for the alone preventing whereof, the Law was before established. How could it be expected, that Men should fear and tremble before God, when they should find themselves more scared than hurt by his threats against Sin ? So then God stood upon satisfaction, and would admit no Treaty of Peace on any other ground.

Objeſt. Let none here object. That Reconciliation upon this only score of Satisfaction, is derogatory to the Riches of Grace; or that we allow not God what we do Men, *viz.* to forgive an Injury freely, without satisfaction.

Sol. Free forgiveness to us, and full satisfaction made to God by Jesus Christ for us, are not discordant things inconsistent with each other, as in its proper place shall be fully cleared to you. And for denying that to God which we allow to Men; you must know, that Man and Man stands on even ground : Man is not capable of being wronged and injured by Man, as God is by Man; there is no compare between the nature of the Offences.

To conclude, Man only can freely forgive Man in a private capacity, so far as wrong concerns himself; but ought not to do so in a public capacity, as he is a Judge, and bound to execute Justice impartially. God is our Law giver and Judge; he will not dispence with violations of the Law, but strictly stands on complete satisfaction.

2. Man can tender to God no satisfaction of his own for the wrong done by his Sin. He finds no way to compensate and make God amends, either by doing, or by suffering his Will.

Dr. Reynolds on
Eph. 110.
p. 409.

(1.) Not by doing: This way is shut up to all the World: None can satisfie God, or reconcile himself to him this way; for it's evident our best Works are sinful; *All our Righteousness is as filthy rags*, Isa. 64. 6. And it's strange any should imagine, that one Sin should make satisfaction for another. If it be said, Not what is sinful in our Duties, but what is spiritual, pure and good, may ingratiate us with God, it is at hand to reply, That what is good in any of our Duties is a Debt we owe to God; yea, we owe him perfect obedience; and it is not imaginable how we should pay one Debt by another; quit a former, by contracting a new Engagement: If we do any thing that is good, we are beholden to Grace for it, *Joh. 15. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 15. 10*. In a word, those that have had as much to plead on that score as any now living, have quitted, and utterly given up all hopes of appeasing and satisfying the Justice of God that way. It's like holy *Job* feared God, and eschewed Evil as much as any of you, yet he saith, *Job 9. 20, 21. If I justify my self, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Tho' I were perfect, yet would I not know my Soul; I would despise my Life*. It may be *David* was a Man as much after the Heart of God as you; yet he said, *Psal. 143. 2. Enter not into judgment with thy Servant; for in thy sight shall no Man living be justified*. It's like *Paul* lived as holy, heavenly, and fruitful a Life as the best of you, and far, far beyond you; yet he saith, *1 Cor. 4. 4. I know (or am conscious to my self) of nothing, yet am I not thereby justified*: His sincerity might comfort him, but could not justify him. And what need I say more? The Lord hath shut up this way to all the World; and the Scriptures speak it roundly and plainly, *Rom. 3. 20. Therefore by the Deeds of the Law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight*. Compare *Gal. 3. 21. Rom. 8. 3*.

(2.) And as Man can never reconcile himself to God by doing, so neither by suffering. That is equally impossible; for no suffering can satisfie God, but such as are proportionable to the Offence we suffer for. And if so, and infinite Suffering must be born: I say infinite, for so Sin is; an infinite Evil, objectively considered, as it wrongs an infinite God. Now Sufferings may be said to be infinite, either in respect of their weight, exceeding all bounds and limits; the letting out the Wrath and Fury of an infinite God: Or in respect of duration, being endless and everlasting. In the first sense, no Creature can bear an infinite Wrath, it would swallow us up. In the second, it may be born as the damned do; but then, ever to be suffering, is never to have satisfied.

So that no Man can be his own Priest, to reconcile him to God by what he can do or suffer. And therefore, one that is able, by doing and suffering, to reconcile him, must undertake it, or we perish. Thus you see plainly and briefly, the general nature and necessity of Christ's Priesthood.

From both these, several useful Corollaries, or practical Deductions, offer themselves.

Corollary 1. This shews in the first place, the incomparable excellency of the reformed Christian Religion above all other Religions, known to, or professed in the World. What other Religions seek, the Christian Religion only finds, even a solid foundation for true Peace, and settlement of Conscience. While the *Jews* seek it in vain in the Law; the *Mohometian* in his external and ridiculous Observations; the *Papist* in his own Merits; the *Believer* only finds it in the Blood of this great Sacrifice: This, and nothing less than this, can pacifie a distressed Conscience, labouring under the weight of its own Guilt. Conscience demands no less to satisfie it, than God demands to satisfie him. The grand Inquest of Conscience is, is God satisfied? If he be satisfied, I am satisfied. Woful is the state of that Man, that feels the worm of Conscience nibbling on the most tender part of the Soul, and hath no relief against it; that feels the intolerable scalding wrath of God burning within, and hath nothing to cool it. Hear me, you that slight troubles of Conscience, that call them Fancies and melancholy Whimfies; if you ever had had but one sick night for Sin, if you had ever felt that shame, fear, horror, and despair, which are the dismal effects of an accusing and condemning Conscience, you would account it an unspeakable Mercy to hear of a way for the discharge of a poor Sinner from that guilt: You would kiss the feet of that Messenger, that could bring you tidings of Peace: You would call him blessed, that should direct you to an effectual Remedy. Now, whoever thou art, that pinest away in thine Iniquities, that droopst from day to day under the present Wounds, and dismal Prefaces of Conscience, know that thy Soul and Peace can never meet, till thou art perswaded to come to this Blood of Sprinkling.

The Blood of this Sacrifice speaks better things than the Blood of *Abel*. The Blood of this Sacrifice is the Blood of God, *Acts 20. 28*. Invaluable precious Blood, *1 Pet. 1. 18*. One drop of it infinitely excels the Blood of all other Creatures, *Heb. 10. 4, 5, 6*. Such is the Blood that must do thee good. Lord, I must have such Blood (saith Conscience) as is capable of giving thee full satisfaction, or it can give me no peace. The Blood of all the Cattel upon a thousand Hills cannot do this. What is the Blood of Beasts to God? The Blood of all the Men in the World can do nothing in this case. What is our polluted Blood worth? No, no, it's the Blood of God that must satisfie both thee and me.

Yea, Christ's Blood is not only the Blood of God, but it's Blood shed in thy stead, and in thy place and room. *Gal. 3. 12. He was made a curse for us*. And so it becomes Sin-pardoning Blood, *Heb. 9. 22. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14. Rom. 3. 26*; and consequently, Conscience-pacifying, and Soul-quieting Blood, *Col. 1. 20. Eph. 2. 13, 14. Rom. 3. 26*. O bless God, that ever the News of this Blood came to thine Ears. With Hands and Eyes lifted up to Heaven, admire that Grace that cast thy Lot in a place where this joyful sound rings in the Ears
of

of poor Sinners. What had thy Cafe been, if thy Mother had brought thee forth in the Desarts of Arabia, or in the Wastes of America! Or that if thou hadst been nursed up by a Popish Father, who could have told thee no other Remedy when in distress for Sin, but to go such a Pilgrimage, to whip and lash thyself, to satisfie an angry God! Surely the pure Light of the Gospel shining upon this Generation, is a Mercy never to be duly valued, never to be enough prized.

Corollary 2. Hence also be informed of the necessity of Faith, in order to a state and sense of Peace with God: For to what purpose is the Blood of Christ our Sacrifice shed, unless it be actually and personally applied, and appropriated by Faith? You know when the Sacrifices under the Law were brought to be slain, he that brought it, was to put his hand upon the head of his Sacrifice, and so it was accepted from him, to make an atonement, *Lev. 14.* not only to signifie, that now it was no more his, but God's, the propriety being transferred by a kind of manumission; nor yet that he voluntarily gave it to the Lord as his own free act; but principally it noted the putting off his Sins, and the Penalty due to him for them, upon the head of the Sacrifice: And so it implied in it an Execration, as if he had said, Upon thy Head be the Evil. So the Learned observe, the *Ancient Egyptians* were wont expressly to imprecate, when they Sacrificed; *If any evil be coming upon us, or upon Egypt, let it turn and rest upon this head*, laying their hand at these words on the Sacrifice's head. And upon that ground, faith the *Historian*, none of them would eat of the head of any living Creature. You must also lay the Hand of Faith upon Christ your Sacrifice, not to imprecate, but apply and appropriate him to your own Souls, he having been made a Curse for you.

To this the whole Gospel tends, even to persuade Sinners to apply Christ, and his Blood to their own Souls. To this he invited us, *Mat. 11. 28. Come unto me ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.* For this end our Sacrifice was lifted up upon the Altar. *Job. 3. 14, 15. As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* The Effects of the Law, not only upon the Conscience, filling it with Torments, but upon the whole Person, bringing Death upon it, are here shadowed out by the stings of fiery Serpents; and Christ by the brazen Serpent which *Moses* exalted for the *Israelites*, that were stung, to look unto. And as by looking to it, they were healed; so by believing, or looking to Christ in Faith, our Souls are healed. Those that looked not to the Brazen Serpent, died infallibly; so must all that look not to Jesus, our Sacrifice, by Faith. It's true, the Death of Christ is the meritorious Cause of Remission, but Faith is the instrumental applying Cause: and as Christ's Blood is necessary in its place, so is our Faith in

its place also. For to the actual remission of Sin, and peace of Conscience, there must be a co operation of all the Causes of Remission and Peace. As there is the Grace and Love of God for an efficient and impulsive Cause, and the Death of Christ our Sacrifice, the meritorious Cause; so of necessity there must be Faith, the instrumental Cause. And these Concauses do all sweetly meet in their Influences, and Activities, in our Remission, and Tranquility of Conscience; and are all (*suo genere*) in their kind and place absolutely necessary to the procuring and applying of it.

What's the neat that the Blood of Christ is shed, if I have no interest in it, no saving influences from it? O be convinced, this is the end, the business of Life. Faith is the *Phoenix-Grace*, as Christ is the *Phoenix-Mercy*. He is the gift, *John 4. 10.* And this is the work of God, *John 6. 29.* The Death of Christ, the Offers and Tenders of Christ, never saved one Soul in themselves, without believing Application. But wo is me, how do I see Sinners, either not at all toucht with the sense of Sin, and so being whole need not the Physician; or if any be stung and wounded with Guilt, how do they lick themselves whole with their own Duties and Reformation; as Physicians say of Wounds, let them but be kept clean, and Nature will find Balsam of its own to heal them. If it be so in spiritual Wounds, what need Christ to have left the Father's Bosom, and come down to die in the quality and nature of a Sacrifice for us? O if Men can but have Health, Pleasure, Riches, Honours, and any way make a shift to still a brawling Conscience, that it may not check or interrupt them in these Enjoyments, Christ may go where he will for them.

And I am assured, till God shew you the Face of Sin in the Glasse of the Law, make the Scorpions and fiery Serpents, that lurk in the Law, and in your own Consciences, to come hissing about you, and smiting you with their deadly Stings; till you have had some sick Nights, and sorrowful Days for Sin, you will never go up and down seeking an interest in the Blood of his Sacrifice with Tears.

But, Reader, if ever this be thy condition, then wilt thou know the worth of a Christ, then wilt thou have a value for the Blood of Sprinkling. As I remember it's storied of our *Crook-back Richard*, when he was put to a rout in a field Battel, and flying on foot from his pursuing Enemies; he cried out, *O now (saith he) a Kingdom for a Horse.* So wilt thou cry, a Kingdom for a Christ; ten thousand Worlds now if I had them, for the Blood of sprinkling.

Corollary 3. Is Christ your High-priest, and is his Priesthood so indispensibly necessary to your Salvation? Then freely acknowledge your utter impotency to reconcile your selves to God, by any thing you can do, or suffer; and let Christ have the whole glory of your Recovery ascribed to him. It's highly reasonable that he that laid down the whole Price, should have the whole Praise. If any Man think, or say, he could have made an Atonement for himself; he doth therein cast no light reproach upon that profound Wisdom which laid the design of our Redemption in the Death of Christ.

Powetque manum, significans & se sceleris sui, poenamque illi debitam, conspiciere in caput victimæ. Ut Græcis ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ ἁγίου, genus est imprecationis. *Draufus & Menochius.*

Hierod. 2. 39.

It is a rule, that where there is a total and sufficient Cause in all, there the Effect must needs follow. But if they be partial Causes, then the Causes which succeed in order, do not produce their complete Effect, until the last Cause be in all.

But of this I have spoken elsewhere. And therefore;

Corollary 4. In the last place, I rather chuse to perswade you to see your necessity of this Priest, and his most excellent Sacrifice; and accordingly to make use of it. The best of you have polluted Natures, poisoned in the Womb with Sin; those Natures have need of this Sacrifice, they must have the benefit of this Blood to pardon and cleanse them, or be eternally damned. Hear me ye that never spent a Tear for the Sin of Nature; if the Blood of Christ be not sprinkled upon your Natures, it had been better for you, that you had been the Generation of Beasts, the Offspring of Dragons or Toads. They have a contemptible, but not a vitiated sinful Nature as you have.

Your Actual Sins have need of this Priest and his Sacrifice to procure Remission for them. If he take them not away by the Blood of his Cross, they can never be taken away, They will lye down with you in the dust; they will rise with you, and follow you to the Judgment-seat, crying, We are thy Works, and we

will follow thee. All thy Repentance and Tears, shouldst thou weep as many Tears as there be drops in the Ocean, can never take away Sin. Thy Duties, even the best of them, need this Sacrifice. It is in the virtue thereof that they are accepted of God. And were it not God had respect to Christ's Offering, he would not regard, or look towards thee, or any of thy Duties. Thou couldst no more come near to God, than thou couldst approach a devouring Fire, or dwell with everlasting Burnings.

Well then, say, I need such a Priest every way. Love him in all his Offices. See the goodness of God in providing such a Sacrifice for thee. Meat, Drink and Air, are not more necessary to maintain thy natural Life, than the Death of Christ is to give and maintain thy spiritual Life.

O then, let thy Soul grow big whilst meditating of the usefulness and excellency of Christ, which is thus displayed and unfolded in every branch of the Gospel. And with a deep sense upon thy heart, let thy lips say, *Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.*

S E R M O N XII.

H E B. X. 14.

For by one Offering, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Serm.

12.

Opens the excellency of our High-Priest's Oblation, being the first all or part of his Priestly Office.

AFTER this more general view and consideration of the Priesthood of Christ, Method requires that we come to a nearer and more particular consideration of the parts thereof; which are his *Oblation and Intercession*, answerable to the double Office of the High-Priest, offering the Blood of the Sacrifices without the Holy Place, which typet out Christ's Oblation; and then once a Year bringing the Blood before the Lord into the most holy place, presenting it before God, and with it sprinkling the Mercy-seat, wherein the Intercession of Christ (the other Part or Act of his Priesthood) was in a lively manner typified to us.

My present business is to open and apply the Oblation of Christ; the efficacy and excellency whereof is excellently illustrated, by a comparison with all other Oblations, in the precedent Context, and with a singular Encomium commended to us in these words, from the Singularity of it. It is but one Offering, one not only *specifically*, but one *numerically* considered; but once offered, and never more to be repeated: For *Christ dieth no more*, Rom. 6. 9. He also commends it from the Efficacy of it; by it he hath perfected, *i. e.* not only purchased a possibility of Salvation, but all that we need to our full Perfection. It brings in a most intire, complete and perfect Righteousness: All that remains to make us perfectly happy, is but the full application of the benefits procured by this Oblation for us. Moreover, it's here commended from the *Extensiveness* of it; not being restrained to a few, but applicable to all the Saints, in all the Ages and Places of the World:

For this indefinite, *them that are sanctified*, is equivalent to a universal; and is as much as if he had said, to all and every Saint, from the beginning to the end of the World. Lastly, He commends it from its *Perpetuity*, *It perfects for ever*; that is, it is of everlasting Efficacy: It shall abide as fresh, vigorous and powerful to the end of the World, as it was the first moment it was offered up. All runs into this sweet Truth,

Doct. That the Oblation made unto God by Jesus Christ, is of unspeakable value, and everlasting efficacy, to perfect all them that are, or shall be sanctified, to the end of the World.

Out of this Fountain flow all the excellent Blessings that Believers either have, or hope for. Had it not been for this, there had been no such things *in rerum natura*, as Justification, Adoption, Salvation, &c. peace with God, and hopes of Glory, pardon of Sin, and Divine Acceptation: These, and all other our best Mercies, had been but so many *entia rationis*, meer Concepts. A Man (as one faith) might have haply imagined such things as these, as he may Golden Mountains, and Rivers of liquid Gold, and Rocks of Diamonds: But these things could never have had any real existence *extra mentem*, had not Christ offered up himself a Sacrifice to God for us. It is the *Blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered up himself without spot to God, that purges the Conscience from dead works*, Heb. 9. 14. that is, from the Sentence of Condemnation and Death; as it is reflected by Conscience, for our works sake.

His

Oblatio Christi unica est, non tantum specie, sed etiam numero, quia nulla potest esse Oblatio Christi, nisi intercedente morte ipsius; eoque facta est Sacrificii cruenti & incrementi distinctio. Tricar. In Tit. p. 75.

His appearing before God, as our Priest, with such an Offering for us, is that which removes our Guilt and Fear together; *He appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself.* Heb. 9. 29. Now for as much as the point before us is of so great weight in it self, and so fundamental to our Safety and Comfort, I shall endeavour to give you as distinct and clear account of it, as can consist with that brevity which I must necessarily use. And therefore, Reader, apply thy mind attentively to the consideration of this excellent Priest that appears before God, and the Sacrifices he offers, with the Properties and Adjuncts thereof; the Person before whom he brings, and to whom he offers it; the Persons for whom he offers, and the End for which this Oblation is made.

First, The Priest that appears before God with an Oblation for us, is Jesus Christ, God-man: The Dignity of whose Person dignified, and derived an inestimable worth to the Offering he made. There are many Priests before him, but none like unto him, either for the purity of his Person, or the perpetuity of his Priesthood: They were sinful Men, and offered for their own Sins, as well as the Sins of the People, Heb. 5. 3. But *He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners*, Heb. 7. 2. He could stand before God, even in the eye of his Justice, as a Lamb without spot. Tho' he made his Soul an Offering for Sin, yet *He had done no Iniquity, nor was any Guile found in his Mouth*, Isa. 53. 9. And indeed his Offering had done us no good, if the least taint of Sin had been found on him. They were mortal Men, that continued not by reason of Death, Heb. 7. 23. But Christ is a Priest for ever, Psal. 110. 4.

Secondly, The Oblation or Offering he made was not the Blood of Beasts, but his own Blood, Heb. 9. 12. And herein he transcended all other Priests, that he had something of his own to offer; He had a Body given him to be at his own dispose, to this use and purpose, Heb. 10. 10. *He offered his Body*: Yea, not only his Body, but his Soul was made an Offering for Sin. Isa. 53. 10. We had made a forfeiture of our Souls and Bodies by Sin, and it was necessary the Sacrifice of Christ should be answerable to the Debt we owed. And when Christ came to offer his Sacrifice, he stood not only in the capacity of a Priest, but also in that of a Surety; and to his Soul stood in the stead of ours, and his Body in the stead of our Bodies. Now the excellency of this Oblation will appear in the following adjuncts and properties of it: This Oblation being for the matter of it the Soul and Body of Jesus Christ, is therefore,

value to all the Souls and Bodies that were to be redeemed by it. And so it was, and more also: for there was a redundancy of value, an overplus of merit, which went to make a purchase for the Redeemed; as will be opened in its place. So that as one rich Diamond is more worth than a thousand Pebbles; one piece of Gold, than many Counters; so the Soul and Body of one Christ is much more excellent than all the Souls and Bodies in the World.

And yet I dare not affirm, as some do, that by reason of the infinite preciousness of Christ's Blood, one drop thereof had been sufficient to have redeemed the whole World: for if one drop had been enough, why was all the rest even to the last drop, shed? Was God cruel, to exact more from him than was needful and sufficient? Besides, we must remember, that the Passions of Christ, which were inflicted on him as the curse of the Law, these only are the Passions which are sufficient for our Redemption from the Curse of the Law; now it was not a drop of Blood, but Death which was contained in the Curse: This therefore was necessary to be inflicted. But surely as none but God can estimate the weight and evil of Sin, so none but he can comprehend the worth and preciousness of the Blood of Christ, shed to expiate it. And being so infinitely precious a thing which was offered up to God, it must,

2. Needs be a most complete and all-sufficient Oblation, fully to expiate the Sins of all whom it was offered, in all for ages of the World. The virtue of this Sacrifice reacheth backward as far as Adam, and reacheth forward to the last Person of the Elect springing from him. That the efficacy of it thus reached back to Adam is plain; for on the account thereof he is stiled the Lamb slain from the foundation of the World, Rev. 13. 8.

And to the same sense a Judicious Expofitor understands those words of Christ, Job. 8. 58. *Before Abraham was, I am.* And look as the Sun at mid-day extends his light and influence, not only forward towards the West, but also backward towards the East, where he arose: so did this most efficacious Sacrifice reach all the Elect in the virtue of it, who died before Christ came in the Flesh. It is therefore but a vain Cavil that some make against the satisfaction of Christ to render it needless, when they say, many were saved without it, even as many as were saved before the Death of Christ. For they say, the Effect cannot be before the Cause, which is true of Physical, but not of Moral Causes; and such was Christ's satisfaction. As for example, a Captive is freed out of Prison from the time that his Surety undertakes for him, and promises his Ransom; here the Captive is actually delivered, tho' the Ransom that delivered him be not yet actually paid. So it was in this case; Christ had engaged to the Father to satisfy for them, and upon that security they were delivered.

And the virtue of this Oblation not only reaches those Believers that lived and died before Christ's day, but it extends it self forward to the end of the World. Hence Heb. 13. 8.

fix servator in æternum. Camer. myrrhe. p. 337.

Christ

1. Invaluably precious. So the Apostle stiles it, 1 Pet. 1. 19. *Ye were redeemed only aſham, with the precious Blood of the Son of God*: And such it behoved him to offer. For it being offered as an expiatory Sacrifice, it ought to be equivalent in its own intrinsic

Se Oblationes in vale mundum offeruntur, Isa. 66. 20. Rorem.

Ellen and Reverendia offerunt that Christ only offered up his Body, not his Soul, upon this weak ground, that if he had offered both, he had not offered one, but two Sacrifices. Against whom the Learned Parker, in his excellent Book de defensionibus, argueth my Text, and thus frees it from that corrupt Gloss. Pulchre, quasi holocaustum non unum (sicut sacrificium, quia ex pluribus partibus constabat) — Sacrificium Christi unicum dicitur, non in oppositione corporis ad animam, sed in oppositione corporis & animæ semel oblatus, ad multa illa sacrificia quæ non semel, sed multoties, in lege Moysi offerbantur. Parker de defensionibus, lib. 111. p. 146.

Id folium rationem habere potest, quod intelligitur a judice legi convenienter. Non convenit autem legi, quæ mortem penam, ut ob ejus violationem id intelligitur tantum, ex quo gurgulis sanguinis manet. Job. Camer. p. 364.

Virus & gratia Christi, quæ nec mundi redemptionem efficit, omnium ætærum communis sunt. Calv. in loc.

Causa physica præcedit effectum suum tempore, non item causa moralis. Camer. in opus, p. 361.

Nunc servator non est ita ut olim non fuerit; atque ut non

Christ is said to be *the same, yesterday, to day, and for ever*; that is, he is not a Saviour to us that now live, as that he was not their Saviour also, that believed in him before us from the beginning: Nor yet so a Saviour both to them and us, as that he shall not be the same to all that shall believe on him to the World's end.

To the same sense are those words, *Heb. 11. 40.* rightly Paraphrased, *God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect*: q. d. God hath appointed the accomplishment of the promise of sending the Messiah, to be in the last times: That they (*viz.* that lived before Christ) should not be perfected; that is, justified and saved, by any thing done in their time, but by looking to our time, and Christ's satisfaction made therein; whereby they and we are perfected together. No tract of time can wear out the virtue of this eternal Sacrifice. It is as fresh, vigorous, and potent now, as the first hour it was offered. And tho' he *actually* offer it no more, yet he *virtually* continues it by his intercession now in Heaven: for there he is still a Priest. And therefore about sixty years after his Ascension, when he gave the Revelation to *John*, he appears to him in his Priestly Garments, *Rev. 1. 13.* *Clothed in a Garment down to the Feet, and girt about the Paps with a golden Girdle*: in allusion to the Priestly Ephod, and curious Girdle.

And as the virtue of this Oblation reaches backward and forward, to all Ages, and to all Believers, so to all the Sins of all Believers, which are fully purged and expiated by it: This no other Oblation could do. The legal Sacrifices were no real expiations, but rather remembrances of Sins; *Heb. 9. 9, 12. Heb. 10. 2.* And all the virtue they had, consisted in their Typical relation to this Sacrifice; *Gal. 3. 23. Heb. 9. 13.* And separate from it were altogether weak, unprofitable, and insignificant things, *Heb. 7. 18.* But this Blood cleanseth from all Sins, *1 Joh. 1. 7.* all Sin, originating, or originated, or actual, flowing from them both. It expiates all fully, without exception, and finally, without revocation. So that by his being made Sin for us, we are made not only righteous, but *the Righteousness of God in him*, *2 Cor. 5. 21.*

3. And *Lastly*, to name no more; being so precious in it self, and so efficacious to expiate Sin, it must needs be a most grateful Oblation to the Lord, highly pleasing and delightful in his eyes. And so indeed it is said, *Eph. 5. 2.* *He gave himself for us, an Offering, and a Sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling Savour.* Not that God took any delight or content in the bitter Sufferings of Christ simply and in themselves considered; but with relation to the end for which he was offered, even our Redemption and Salvation.

Hence arose the delight and pleasure God had in it; this made him take pleasure in bruising him, *Isa. 53. 10.* God smelt a savour of rest in this Sacrifice. The meaning is, that as

Men are offended with a stench, and their stomachs rise at it, and are on the contrary delighted with sweet Odors and Fragrances: so the blessed God, speaking after the manner of Men, is offended, and filled with loathing and abhorrence by our Sins, but infinitely pleased and delighted in the Offering of Christ for them, which came up as an Odor of a sweet-smelling savour to him, whereof the costly Perfumes under the Law, were Types and Shadows. This was the Oblation.

Thirdly, This Oblation he brings before God, and to him he offers it up: So speaks the Apostle, *Heb. 9. 14.* *Through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God.* As Christ sustained the capacity of a Surety, so God of a Creditor, who expected Satisfaction from him: That is, he required from him, as our Surety, the Penalty due to us for our Sin. And so Christ had to do immediately with God, yea, with a God infinitely wronged, and incensed by Sin against us. To this incensed Majesty, Christ our Priest approacheth, as to a devouring Fire, with his Sacrifice.

Fourthly, The Persons for whom, and in whose stead he offered himself to God, was the whole number of God's Elect, which were given him of the Father, neither more nor less: So speak the Scriptures, He laid down his Life for the *Sheep*, *Jo. 10. 15.* for the *Church*, *Acts 20. 28.* for the *Children of God*, *Joh. 11. 50.* *51, 52.* It is confessed there is sufficiency of Virtue in this Sacrifice to redeem the whole World, and on that account some Divines affirm he is called *the Saviour of the World*, *Joh. 4. 42. & alibi.* We acknowledge also, that he purchased the Service of others besides the Elect, to be useful to them, as they many ways are. In which sense others take those Scriptures that speak so universally of the extent of his Death. We also acknowledge that the Elect being scattered in all Parts, and among all ranks of Men in the World, and unknown to those that are to tender Jesus Christ to Men by the preaching of the Gospel, the title of the Gospel (as it was necessary) is by such indefinite Expressions suited to the general tenders they are to make of him: But that the Efficacy and Saving-Virtue of this all-sufficient Sacrifice is co-extended with God's Election, so that they all, and no others can, or shall reap the special Benefits of it, is too clear in the Scriptures to be denied, *Eph. 5. 23. Joh. 17. 2, 9, 19, 20. Joh. 10. 26, 27, 28. 1 Tim. 4. 10.*

Fifthly, The design and end of this Oblation was to atone, pacify, and reconcile God, by giving him a full and adequate Compensation or Satisfaction for the Sins of these his Elect: So speaks the Apostle, *Col. 1. 20.* *And having made Peace, through the Blood of his Cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven.* So *2 Cor. 5. 19.* *God was in Christ, reconciling the World to himself.* Reconciliation is the making up of that Breach caused by Sin, between us and God, and restoring us again to his Favour and Friendship: For this end Christ offered up himself to God; I say, not for this end only, but more especially: hence it's called *propitiation*; and so the Seventy render

Dixon in
Joc.

Docent
Theologi
Christum
pro omni-
bus suffici-
enter, pro
electis dun-
taxat effi-
caciter
impor-
tare esse. Ca-
mera ubi
supra, p.
535.

Mr. Strong.

Oderatus
Deo tribu-
tur, quo
ritidem
Dei iusti-
tias, com-
placencia,
& gratia
demonstrat.
Sicut o-
dere bono
homo re-
creatur, et
quoque de-
lectatur —
pertinet
huc appellatio
Deo oblati
tribuitur, Exod. 19. 2, 25. Levit. 1. 9.
S. Giff. Philolog. Sava.

dry Tree? *Luk. 23. 31.* That is, if God so deal with me, that am not only innocent, but like a green and fruitful Tree, full of all delectable Fruits of Holiness; yet if the Fire of his Indignation thus seize upon me, what will be your Condition, that are both barren and guilty, void of all good Fruit, and full of all Unrighteousness, and so like dry scary Wood are fitted as Fuel to the Fire? Consider with thy self, Man, how canst thou imagine thou canst support that infinite Wrath that Christ grappled with in the room of God's Elect? He had the strength of a Deity to support him. *Isa. 42. 1. Behold my Servant, whom I uphold.* He had the fulness of his Spirit to prepare him, *Isa. 61. 11.* He had the Ministry of an Angel, who came post from Heaven, to relieve him in his Agony; *Luke 22. 43.* He had the Ear of his Father to hear him, for he cried, *and was heard in that he feared.* *Heb. 5. 7.* He was assured of the Victory, before the Combat he knew he should be justified; *Isa. 50. 8.* and yet for all this was fore amazed, and sorrowful even to death, and his Heart was melted like Wax in the midst of his Bowels. If the case stood thus with Christ, notwithstanding all these advantages he had to bear the Wrath of God for a little time; how dost thou think, a poor Worm as thou art, to dwell with everlasting Burnings, or contend with devouring Fire? *Luther* saw ground enough for what he said, when he cried out, *I will have nothing to do with an absolute God, i.e. with a God out of Christ: for, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* Wo and alas for evermore to that Man that meets a just and righteous God without a Mediator! Whoever thou art that readest these Lines, I beseech thee, by the Mercies of God, by all the regard and lovethou hast to thy own Soul, neglect not time, but make quick and sure work of it. Get an Interest in this Sacrifice quickly, what else will be thy state when vast Eternity opens to swallow thee up? What wilt thou do, Man, when thine Eye-strings and Heart-strings are breaking? O what a fearful Kriech will thy Conscience give when thou art presented before the dreadful God, and no Christ to screen thee from his Indignation! Happy is that Man who can say in a dying hour, as one did, who being desired a little before his Dis-

Nolo De-
um absolute-
tum.

Mr. Will-
iam Lyford.

olution to give his Friends a little taste of his present Hopes, and the grounds of them, cheerfully answered, I will let you know how it is with me; then stretching forth his hand, said,

"Here is the Grave, the Wrath of God, and devouring Flames, the just Punishment of Sin, on the one side; and here am I, a poor sinful Soul! on the other side: But this is my Comfort, the Covenant of Grace, which is established upon so many sure Promises, hath saved all. There is an act of Oblivion passed in Heaven: *I will forgive their Iniquities, and their Sins will I remember no more.* This is the blessed Privilege of all within the Covenant among whom I am one. 'Tis sweeter at all times, especially at such a time, to see the reconciled Face of God through Jesus Christ, and hear the voice of Peace, through the Blood of the Cross!

Inference 7. Hath Christ offered up himself

a Sacrifice to God for us? *Then let us improve in every condition this Sacrifice, and labour to get Hearts duly affected with such a fight as Faith can give us of it.* Whatever the condition or complaint of any Christian is, the beholding the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sin of the World, may give him strong Support, and sweet Relief. Do you complain of the hardness of your Hearts, and want of love to Christ? Behold him as offered up to God for you; and such a fight (if any in the World will do it) will melt your hard Hearts. *Zech. 12. 10. They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn.* It is reported of *Johannes Albius*, that he was never observed to speak of Christ and his Sufferings, but his Eyes would drop. Art thou too little touched and unaffected with the Evil of Sin? Is it thy Complaint, Christian, that thou canst not make Sin bear so hard upon thy Heart as thou wouldst? Consider but what thou hast now read; realize this Sacrifice by Faith, and try what Efficacy there is in it to make Sin for ever bitter as Death to thy Soul. Suppose thy own Father had been stabb'd to the heart with such a Knife, and his Blood were upon it, wouldst thou delight to see, or endure to use that Knife any more? Sin is the Knife that stabb'd Christ to the heart; this shed his Blood. Surely you can never make light of that which lay so heavy upon the Soul and Body of Jesus Christ.

Or is your Heart prest down even to Despondency, under the Guilt of Sin, so that you cry, How can such a Sinner as I be pardoned? My Sin is greater than can be forgiven? Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World. Remember that no Sin can stand before the Efficacy of his Blood. *1 Joh. 1. 7. The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all Sin.* This Sacrifice makes unto God full satisfaction.

Are you at any time staggering through Unbelief? filled with unbelieving suspicions of the Promises? Look hither, and you shall see them all ratified and established in the Blood of the Cross, so that Hills and Mountains shall sooner start from their own Bases and Centers, than one title of the Promise fail: *Heb. 9. 17, 18. 19.*

Do you at any time find your Hearts fretting, disquieted, and impatient under every petty Cross and Trial? See how quietly Christ your Sacrifice came to the Altar, how meekly and patiently he stood under all the Wrath of God and Men together. This will silence, convince and shame you.

In a word, Here you will see so much of the Grace of God, and love of Christ, in providing and becoming a Sacrifice for you: you will see God taking Vengeance upon Sin, but sparing the Sinner; you will see Christ standing as the Body of Sin alone, for he was made Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him: that whatever Corruption burdens, this in the believing Application will support; whatever Grace be defective, this will revive it.

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

SER-

S E R M O N XIII.

H E B. VII. 25.

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Serm.
13.
Opens
the In-
terces-
sion of
Christ
our
High-
Priest,
being the
second
Aid or
Part of
Christ's
Priestly
Office.
Redemp-
tio quam
operatur
et, funda-
mentum
fratelli-
tatis—ac
properea
redempti-
onem, &c.
interces-
sionem, tan-
quam duas
individuas
Christi
Sacerdotii
partes, Scrip-
tura com-
memo-
rate solet.
Reveniet
ad verbum
intercedere.

HAVING dispatcht the first Part or Act of Christ's Priesthood, consisting in his Oblation; we come to the other Branch of it, consisting in his *Intercession*, which is nothing else but the virtual continuation of his Offering once made on Earth; that being *medium reconciliationis*, the means of reconciling; this, *medium applicationis*, the way and means of his applying to us the Benefits purchased by it.

This second Part, or Branch of his Priesthood, was typified by the High-Priest's entering with the Blood of the Sacrifice and sweet Incense into the holy Place: Lev. 16. 12, 13, 14. *and he shall take the Censer full of burning Coals of fire from off the Altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet Incense beaten small, and bring it within the Vail. And he shall put the Incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the Cloud of the Incense may cover the Mercy seat that is upon the Testimony, that he die not. And he shall take the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his own finger upon the Mercy-seat, eastward, &c.* Christ's offering himself on Earth, answered to the killing of the Sacrifice without; and his entering into Heaven, there to intercede, was that which answered to the Priest going with Blood, and his hands full of incense, within the Vail. So that this is a part, yea, a special part of Christ's Priesthood, and so necessary to it, that if he had not done this, all his Work on Earth had signified nothing; nor had he been a Priest, that is, a compleat and perfect Priest, if he had remained on Earth, Heb. 8. 4. because the very design and end of shedding his Blood on Earth had been frustrated, which was to carry it before the Lord into Heaven. So that is the principal perfective part of the Priesthood: He acted the first part on Earth, in a state of deep Abasement in the form of a Servant; but he acts this in Glory, whereto he is taken up, that he may follow on his design in dying, and give the Work of our Salvation its last compleating Act. So much is imported in this Scripture, which tells us, by reason hereof he is able to save to the uttermost, &c.

The words contain an encouragement to Believers, to come to God in the way of Faith, drawn from the Intercession of Christ in Heaven for them: In which you may take notice of these three principal parts.

1. The Quality of the Persons here encouraged, who are described by a direct Act of Faith, as poor Recumbents that are going out of themselves to God by Faith; but conscious of great unworthiness in themselves, and thence apt to be discouraged.

2. The Incouragement propounded to such

Believers, drawn from the Ability of Jesus Christ, in whose Name they go to the Father to save them to the uttermost, *i. e.* fully perfectly, compleatly; for so this emphatical word, *is: non parvum*, signifies, the saving us wholly, thoroughly, compleatly, and altogether; giving our Salvation its last Act and Comple-
ment.

3. The ground or reason of this his saving Ability: *Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession; i. e.* he hath not only offered up his Blood to God upon the Tree, as a full price to purchase Pardon and Grace for the Believers, but lives in Heaven, and that for ever, to apply unto us in the way of intercession, all the Fruits, Blessings and Benefits that that precious Blood of his deserves, and hath procured as a price for them. The words thus opened, that Point I shall fingle out, from among many that lye in them, as most suitable to my design and purpose, is this;

Doct. That Jesus our High-Priest lives for ever, in the capacity of a potent Intercessor, in Heaven for Believers.

Here we will inquire, *First*, What it is for Christ to be an Intercessor. *Secondly*, By what Acts he performs that Work in Heaven. *Thirdly*, Whence the potency and prevalency of his Intercession is. *Fourthly*, and lastly, How he lives for ever to make Intercession for us.

First, What it is for Christ to be an Intercessor for us. To intercede in general, is to go betwixt two Parties, to intreat, argue, and plead with one for the other. And of this there are two sorts; 1. *Ex charitate, ut frater*, that whereby one Christian prays and pleads with God for another, 1 Tim. 2. 1. 2. *Ex officio mediatorio*, that whereby Christ, as an act of Office, presents himself before God to request for us. Betwixt these two is this difference, that the former is performed not in our own, but another's Name; we can tender no request to God immediately, or for our own sake, either for our selves or for others: Joh. 16. 23. *Whatever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you.* But the latter, which is proper to Christ, is an intercession with God for us, in his own Name, and upon the account of his proper Merit; the one is a private act of Charity, the other a publick act of Office: And so he is our Advocate or Court friend, as Saran is our Accuser or Court-adversary. Satan is *advocatus*, one that charges us before God, 1 Pet. 5. 8. and continually endeavours to make Breaches between us and God. Christ is *advocatus* our Attorney, Advocate or Lidger, that pleads for us, and continues peace and friendship between us and God,
1 John

Est non parvum, &c. sic non solumus differunt operum, sed etiam materia non differunt. Nam Jesus non proprie per peccatam temporis significat; non hanc solum, verum etiam omni modum perfectionem. Camera.

1 John 2. 2. *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

And thus to make intercession, is the peculiar and incommunicable Prerogative of Jesus Christ: None but he can go in his own Name to God. And in that sense we are to understand that place. *Ezek. 44. 2, 3. Then said the Lord unto me, This Gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no Man shall enter in by it, because the Lord the God of Israel hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut. It is for the Prince, he shall sit by it, to eat bread before the Lord, &c.* The great broad Gate, called here the *Prince's Gate*, signifies that abundant and direct entrance that Christ had into Heaven by his own Merits, and in his own Name; this, saith the Lord, shall be shut, no Man shall enter in by it; all other Men must come thither as it were, by collateral or side doors, which looked all towards the Altar, viz. by virtue of the Mediator, and through the benefit of his Death imputed to them.

And yet tho' God hath for ever shut up and barr'd this way to all the Children of Men, telling us that no Man shall ever have access to him in his own Name, as Christ the Prince had: How do some notwithstanding, strive to force open the Prince's Gate? So do they that found the intercession of Saints upon their own Works and Merits, thereby robbing Christ of his peculiar Glory; but all that so approach a devouring fire: Christ only in the virtue of his Blood thus comes before him, to make intercession for us.

Secondly, We will inquire wherein the Intercession of Christ in Heaven consists, or by what Acts he performs this glorious Office there, And the Scriptures place it in three things:

See Decad. ti, and our English Apoc. in loc.

Quid vero sibi velit hic quævis pro nobis

proponitur videndum est. Respiciat ad *Isidori* *origenem* pontificis veteris, qui ingressus intra velum, dicebatur apparere in conspectu Dei pro populo, quatenus se cum sanguine hirci particularis presentabat Deo, & precibus suis supplicabat, ut propter sanguinem non illum hircinum, sed illo representatum, Christi Mediatoris iudicandum, propitius esset peccatis suis, & populi. *Dodl. Pareus in loc.*

1. In his presenting himself before the Lord in our Names, and upon our Accounts. So we read in *Heb. 9. 24. Christ is entered into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.* The Apostle manifestly alludes to the High-Priest's appearing in the Holy of Holies, which was the figure of Heaven, presenting to the Lord the Names of the twelve Tribes of Israel, which were on his Breast and Shoulders, *Exod. 28. 9, 12, 28, 29.* To which the Church is supposed to allude in that request, *Cant. 8. 6. Set me as a Seal upon thine Heart, as a Seal upon thine Arm.* Now the very sight of Christ, our High-Priest in Heaven, prevails exceedingly with God, and turns away his displeasure from us. As when God looks upon the Rainbow, which is the Sign of the Covenant, he remembers the Earth in Mercy: So when he looks on Christ, his heart must needs be towards us upon his account; and therefore in *Rev. 4. 3. Christ is compared to a Rainbow encompassing the Throne.*

2. Christ performs his intercession-work in Heaven, not by a naked appearing in the pre-

sence of God only, but also presenting his Blood, and all his Sufferings to God, as a moving Plea on our account. Whether he makes any proper oral Intercession there, as he did on Earth, is not so clear; some incline to it, and think it's countenanced by *Zech. 1. 12, 13.* where Christ our Intercessor presents a proper vocal Request to the Father, in the behalf of his People; saying, *O Lord of Hosts, Have long wait thou not have Mercy on Jerusalem, and on the Cities of Judah, against whom thou hast hid indignation these threescore and ten Years? And the Lord answered him with good and comfortable words.* And so, *Acts 2. 23.* as soon as he came to Heaven, he is said (and that is the first Fruits of his Intercession) to *obtain the Promise of the Holy Ghost.* But sure I am, an interceding Voice is by an usual *Propitius* attributed to his Blood; which in *Heb. 12. 24.* is said to *speak better things than the Blood of Abel.* Now *Abel's Blood*, and so Christ's, do cry unto God, as the Hire of the Labourers unjustly detained, or the whole Creation, which is in bondage through our Sins, is said to cry and groan in the ears of the Lord, *Jam. 5. 4. Rom. 8. 22.* not vocally, but efficaciously. A rare illustration of this efficacious Intercession of Christ in Heaven, we have in that famous story of *Amintar*, who appeared as an Advocate for his Brother *Achylus*, who was strongly accused, and very likely to be condemned to die. Now *Amintar* having performing great services, and merited highly of the Common Wealth, in whose service one of his Hands was cut off in the Field; he comes into the Court in his Brother's behalf, and said nothing, but only lifted up his Arm, and shewed them *cubitus sine manus*, an Arm without a Hand; which so moved them, that (without a word speaking) they freed his Brother immediately.

And thus if you look into *Rev. 5. 6.* you shall see in what posture Christ is represented visionally there, as standing between God and us: *And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the Throne, and four Beasts, and in the midst of the Elders stood a Lamb as it had been slain; i. e. bearing in his glorified Body the marks of his Death and Sacrifice.* Those Wounds he received for our Sins on Earth, are, as it were, still fresh bleeding in Heaven: A moving and prevailing Argument it is with the Father, to give out the Mercies he plead for.

3. And lastly, He presents the Prayers of his Saints to God, with his Merits; and desires that they may for his sake be granted. He causes a Cloud of Incense to ascend before God with them. *Rev. 8. 3.* All these were excellently typed out by the going in of the High-Priest before the Lord, with the Names of the Children of Israel on his Breast, with the Blood of the Sacrifice, and his hands full of Incense, as the Apostle explains them in *Heb. 7. and Heb. 9.*

Thirdly, And that the Intercession of Christ is most potent, successful, and prevalent with God, will be evinced both from the Qualifications of this our Advocate, from his great Interest in the Father, from the Natures of the Place

Voluntate ac desiderio suo arcenti quæmodum in terris amica fecerit, ita & in caelis apud Patrem mortis suæ vim, arg. efficaciam nobis ad salutem agnoscimus. *Synops. par. or. Theol. p. 346.*

Alien. Hist. lib. 5. cap. 19.

Deodati in loc.

common Acts, in all, and over all, infinitely, and immutably for ever.

And so Christ continues to be our Mediator; and yet that affords no Argument that our Hopes shall be incomplete, but rather argues the Perfection of the Church, which thenceforth shall be governed no more as now it is, nor have any farther use of Ordinances, but shall be ruled more immediately, gloriously, triumphantly and inevitably in the World to come: The substance of his Mediatorship is not changed, but the manner of the Administration only.

Use 1. Doth Christ live for ever in Heaven to present his Blood to God in the way of Intercession for Believers? *How sad then is their case, that have no interest in Christ's Blood; but instead of pleading for them, it cries to God against them, as the despisers and abusers of it!* Every Unbeliever despises it: The Apostate treads it under foot. He that is an Intercessor for some, will be an Accuser of others. To be guilty of a Man's Blood, is sad; but to have the Blood of Jesus accusing and crying to God against a Soul, is unspeakably terrible. Surely when he shall make inquisition for Blood, when the day of his Vengeance is come, he will make it appear by the Judgments he will execute, that this is a Sin never to be expiated, but Vengeance shall pursue the Sinner to the bottom of Hell. Ah! What do Men and Women do, in rejecting the gracious Offers of a Christ! What, tread upon a Saviour! And cast Contempt by unbelief and hardness of heart upon their only Remedy! I remember I have read of a Harlot that kill'd her Child, and said that it smiled upon her when she went to stab it. Sinner, doth not Christ smile upon thee, yern upon thee in the Gospel? And wilt thou as it were stab him to the heart by thine Infidelity? Wo and alas for that Man, against whom this Blood cries in Heaven!

Use 2. Doth Christ live for ever to make Intercession? Hence let Believers fetch relief, and draw encouragement against all the causes and grounds of their Fears and Troubles; for surely this answers them all.

1. Hence let them be encouraged from all their sinful Infirmities, and lamented Weaknesses. 'Tis confessed these are sad things; they grieve the Spirit of God, sadden your own Hearts, cloud your Evidences; but having such a High-priest in Heaven, can never be your ruin. 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. *My little Children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not: And if any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.* [My little Children] Children, especially little Children, when first beginning to take the foot, are apt to stumble at every straw; so are raw, young, and unexperienced Christians: But what if they do? Why tho' it must be far from them to take encouragement so to do from Christ and his Intercession, yet if by surprisal they so sin, let them not be utterly discouraged: For we have an Advocate, he stops whatever Plea may be brought in against us by the Devil, or the Law; and answers all by his Satisfaction: He gets out fresh Pardons for new Sins. And this Advocate is with [the Father] he doth not say with his Father, tho' that had

been a singular support in it self, not yet with our Father, which is a sweet encouragement singly considered, but with [the Father] which takes in both, to make the encouragement full. Remember, ye that are cast down under the sense of sin, that Jesus your Friend in the Court above, is able to save to the uttermost. Which is, as one calls it, a reaching VWord, and extends it self so far, that thou canst not look beyond it. "Let thy Soul be set on the highest Mount that any Creature was ever set on, and enlarged to take in view the most spacious prospect both of Sin and Misery, and difficulties of being saved, that ever yet any poor humble Soul did cast within it self; yea, join to these all the Hindrances and Objections that the Heart of Man can invent against it self and Salvation: Lift up thine Eyes, and look to the utmost thou canst see: And Christ by his Intercession is able to save thee beyond the Horizon and utmost Compass of thy Thoughts, even to the utmost."

Goodwin's Triumph, p. 263.

2. Hence draw abundant encouragement against all Heart-strainings, and deadness of Spirit in Prayer. Thou complainest thy Heart is dead, wandering, and contracted in duty. O but remember Christ's Blood speaks, when thou canst not; it can plead for thee, and that powerfully, when thou art not able to speak a word for thy self: To this sense that Scripture speaks, *Cont. 3. 6. Who is this that cometh out of the Wilderness in Pillars of Smoak, perfumed with Myrrh, and Frankincense, all the Powders of the Merchant?* The Duties of Christians go up many times, as Pillars or Clouds of Smoak from them, more Smoak than Fire, Prayers smoaked and sullied with their offensive corruptions: But remember, Christ perfumes them with Myrrh, &c. He by his Intercession gives them a sweet perfume.

3. Christ's Intercession is a singular relief to all that come unto God by him, against all sinful Damps, and slavish Fears for the Justice of God. Nothing more promotes the fear of Reverence; nothing more suppresseth unbelieving Despondencies, and destroys the Spirit of Bondage. So you find it, *Heb. 10. 19, 20, 21. Having therefore, Brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest, by the Blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the Vail, that is to say, his Flesh; and having an High-Priest over the House of God, raised. So let us draw near with a true Heart, in confession long as a slave, in full assurance of Faith: Or let us come unto God, as a Ship comes with full sail into the Harbour. O what a direct and full gale of encouragement doth this Intercession of Christ give to the poor Soul that lay a-ground, or was wind-bound before?*

Debt, he dares come (as you say) and whet his Knife at the Carpenter-door. Christ your Surety hath paid the Debt; you may go with boldness, and look Justice in the face, the Devil and all the Senjunks of Hell in the face. Mr. W. B. in his Treatise of Christ and the Covenant, p. 98.

4. The Intercession of Christ gives admirable satisfaction and encouragement to all that come to God, against the fears of deserting him again by Apostacy. This, my Friends, this is your principal security against these matters of Fear. With this he relieves Peter, Luke 22.

31. *Simon*, (saith he) *Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith fail not, &c.* Satan will fan thee, not to get out thy Chaff, but bould out thy Flower: His temptations are level'd against thy Faith; but fear not, my Prayer shall break his Designs, and secure thy Faith from all attempts upon it. Upon this powerful Intercession of Christ, the Apostle builds his triumph against all that threatens to bring him, or any of the Saints, again into a state of Condemnation. And see how he drives on that Triumph, from the Resurrection, and Session of Christ at the Father's right hand; and especially from the work of Intercession, which he lives there to perform: Rom. 8. 34. 35. *Who is he that condemneth? It's Christ that dieth; yea, rather that's risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ?*

5. It gives sweet relief against the defects and wants that yet are in our Sanctification. We want a great deal of Faith, Love, Heavenly-mindedness, Mortification, Knowledge. We are short and wanting in all. There are the *vestigia*, the Remains, or things wanting, as the Apostle calls them, 1 *Thes.* 3. 10. Well, if Grace be but yet in its weak beginnings, and infancy in thy Soul, this may encourage, that by reason of Christ's Intercession, it shall live, grow, and expatiate it self in thy heart. He is not only the Author, but the Finisher of it, *Heb.* 12. 2. He is ever begging new and fresh Mercies for you in Heaven; and will never be quiet till all your wants be supplied. He saves us *in* *marriage*, to the uttermost, i. e. as I told you before, to the last, perfective, completing act of Salvation. So that this is a Fountain of Relief against all your Fears.

Use 3. Doth Christ live for ever to make Intercession? then let those who reap on Earth the Fruits of that his work in Heaven, draw Instruction thence about the following Duties to which it leads them as by the hand.

1. Do not forget Christ in an exalted state. You see tho' he be in all the Glory above, at

He doth not forget us, tho' he be exalted to his Glory; for he is not like the poor silly Creatures that cannot bear exaltation without being puffed up, and forgetting both themselves, their Friends, and their God. No, his Exaltation is Spiritual and Heavenly, possessing his human Nature to the greatest height it is capable of — he was never more tender of Jerusalem when he wept over it, or of his People when he wept, bled, and died for them, than he is now tender over his in Glory. Mr. Baxter's Treatise of Conversion, p. 184.

God's right Hand, an enthron'd King, he doth not forget you: He like *Joseph* remembers his Brethren in all his Glory. But alas, how oft doth Advancement make us forget him! As the Lord complains in *Hosea* 13. 5, 6. *I did know thee in the Wilderness, in the Land of great Drought: But when they came into Canaan, according to their Pastures, so were they filled; they were filled, and their Heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.* As if he had said, O my People, you and I were better acquainted in the Wilderness, when thou wert in a low condition, left to my immediate Care, living by daily Faith; O then you gave me many a sweet visit; but now you are filled, I hear no more of you. Good had it been for some Saints, if they had never known Prosperity.

2. Let the Intercession of Christ in Heaven for you, encourage you to constancy in the good ways of God. To this duty it sweetly encourages also, *Heb.* 4. 14. *Seeing then that we have a great High-Priest that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our Profession.* Here is encouragement to perseverance on a double account. One is, that Jesus our Head is already in Heaven; and if the Head be above Water, the Body cannot drown. The other is from the business he is there employed about, which is his Priesthood; he is passed into the Heavens, as our great High-priest, to intercede; and therefore we cannot miscarry.

3. Let it encourage you to constancy to Prayer: O do not neglect that excellent Duty, seeing Christ is there to present all your Petitions to God; yea, to perform as well as present them. So the Apostle, *Heb.* 4. 15. infers from Christ's Intercession; *Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in the time of need.*

4. Hence be encouraged to plead for Christ on Earth, who continually pleads for you in Heaven. If any accuse you, he is there to plead for you: And if any dishonour him on Earth, see that you plead his Interest, and defend his Honour. Thus you have heard what his Intercession is, and what Benefits we receive by it.

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

Ser. 14.
Asserts
and vindicates
the satisfaction
of
Christ,
being the
first
principal effect
or fruit
of his
Priest-
hood.

S E R M O N XIV.

G A L. III. 13.

Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us.

YOU have seen the general nature, necessity, and parts of Christ's Priesthood, viz. his Oblation and Intercession. Before you part from this Office, it's necessary you should farther take into consideration the principal fruits and effects of his Priesthood, which are, com-

pleat Satisfaction, and the Acquisition or Purchase of an Eternal Inheritance. The former, viz. The Satisfaction made by his Blood, is manifestly contained in this excellent Scripture before us, wherein the Apostle (having shewn before, at ver. 10. that whosoever continues not

in

to declare, I say, at this time his Righteousness, that God might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Mark the design and end of God in exacting Satisfaction from Christ, it was to declare his Righteousness in the remission of Sin to Believers; and lett we should lose the emphatical word, he doubles it, *to declare, I say, his Righteousness*. Every one can see how his Mercy is declared in Remission: but he would have us take notice that his Justification of Believers is an Act of Justice; and that God, as he is a just God, cannot condemn the Believer, since Christ hath satisfied his Debts. This Attribute seems to be the main barr against Remission; but now it's become the very ground and reason why God remits. O how comfortable a Text is this! Doth Satan or Conscience set forth thy Sin in all its discouraging Circumstances and Aggravations? God hath set forth Christ to be a Propitiation. Must Justice be manifested, satisfied and glorified? So is it in the Death of Christ, ten thousand times more than ever it could in thy Damnation. Thus you have a brief account of the Satisfaction made by Jesus Christ.

Secondly, We shall gather up all that hath been said to establish the truth of Christ's Satisfaction; proving the reality of it, that it is not an improper, catechetical, fictitious Satisfaction, by Divine Acceptation, as some have very diminutively called it; but real, proper, and full, and as much accepted by God. For his Blood is the Blood of a Surety, Rom. 7. 22. who came under the same Oblations of the Law with us, Gal. 4. 4. and tho' he had no Sin of his own, yet standing before God as our Surety, the Iniquities of us all were laid upon him, Isa. 53. 6. and from him did the Lord, with great severity, exact satisfaction for our Sins, Rom. 8. 32. punish them upon his Soul, Mat. 27. 45. and upon his Body, Acts 2. 23. and with this Obedience of his Son is fully pleased and satisfied, Ephes. 5. 2. and hath in token thereof raised him from the Dead, and set him at his own Right-hand, 1 Tim. 3. 16. and for his Righteousness sake acquitted and discharged Believers, who shall never more come into Condemnation, Rom. 8. 1, 34. All this is plain in Scripture; and our Faith in the Satisfaction of Christ, is not built on the Wisdom of Man, but the everlasting sealed Truth of God: Yet such is the perverse Nature of Man, and the Pride of his Heart, that whilst he should be humbly adoring the Grace of God in providing such a Surety for us, he is found accusing the Justice, and diminishing the Mercy of God, and raising all the Objections which Satan and his own Heart can invent, to overturn that blessed Foundation upon which God hath built up his own Honour, and his Peoples Salvation.

Thirdly, In the next place therefore, we shall reject those Doctrines, and remove the principal of those Objections that are found militating against the Satisfaction of Christ.

And in the first place, we reject with deep abhorrence that Doctrine, which ascribes to Man any Power in whole or in part to satisfy God for his own, or other Mens Sins. This no meer Creature can do by active Obedience, were it

so compleat that he could never sin in Thought, Word or Deed, any more, but live the most holy Life that ever any lived: for all this would be no more than his Duty as a Creature, Luke 17. 10. and so can be no Satisfaction for what he is by Nature, or hath done against God as a Sinner. Nor yet by Suffering; for we have offended an infinite God, and can never satisfy him by our finite Sufferings.

We also with like detestation reject that Doctrine which makes the Satisfaction of Christ either impossible, or fictitious, and inconsistent with Grace, in the free pardon of Sin. Many are the Cavils raised against Christ's Satisfaction; the principal are such as these that follow.

Object. *The Doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction is absurd, for Christ (say we) is God; if so, then God satisfies himself, than which what can be more absurd to imagine?*

Sol. I answer, God cannot properly be said to satisfy himself; for that would be the same thing as to pardon simply, without any Satisfaction. But there is a twofold Consideration of Christ; one in respect of his Essence and Divine Nature, in which sense he is the Object both of the Offence, and of the Satisfaction made for it: Another in respect of his Person, and Oeconomy, or Office; in which sense he properly satisfies God, being in respect of his Manhood another, and inferior to God, Job. Triclat. 14. 28. The Blood of the Man Christ Jesus is the Matter of the Satisfaction; the Divine Nature dignifies it, and makes it of infinite value. A certain Family hath committed Treason against the King, and are all under the Condemnation of the Law for it; the King's Son, moved with Pity and Love, resolves to satisfy the Law, and yet save the Family; in order whereunto he marries a Daughter of the Family, whereby her Blood becomes Royal Blood, and worth the Blood of the whole Family whence the sprang; this Princess is by her Husband executed in the room of the rest. In this case the King satisfies not himself for the Wrong, but is satisfied by the Death of another, equivalent in worth to the Blood of them all. This multitude answers not to all the Particulars, as indeed nothing in nature doth or can, but it only shews what it was that satisfied God, and how it became so satisfactory.

Object. *If Christ satisfied by paying our Debt, then he should have endured eternal Torments; for so we should, and the damned shall.*

Sol. We must distinguish betwixt what is essential, and what is accidental in Punishment. The primary intent of the Law is Reparation and Satisfaction; he that can make it at one intire Payment (as Christ could and did) ought to be discharged. He that cannot (as no meer Creature can) ought to lye for ever, as the Damned do, under Sufferings.

Object. *If God will be satisfied for our Sins before he pardon them, how then is pardon an Act of Grace?*

Sol. Pardon could not be an Act of pure Grace, if God received Satisfaction from us; but if he pardon us upon the Satisfaction received from Christ, tho' it be of Debt to him, it is of Grace to us: for it was Grace to admit a

Aliud est de divinitate Christi in se agere secundum naturam ipsius scilicet, aliud quia in supposito.

Christus secundum naturam divinam convenit cum Deo, quia homo nobiscum; ut contra, quia Deus distat à nobis, quia homo, seu Oeconomia voluntaria, à Deo. Idem ibid. vid. Daven. in Col. 103. & Cameiro, p. 361.

Surety

Surety to satisfy, more Grace to provide him, and most of all to apply his Satisfaction to us, by uniting us to Christ, as he hath done.

Object. But God loved us before Christ died for us; for it was the Love of God to the World that moved him to give his only begotten Son. Could God love us, and yet not be reconciled and satisfied?

Sol. God's complacential Love is indeed inconsistent with an unreconciled state: He is reconciled to every one he so loves. But his benevolent Love confining in his purpose of Good, may be before actual Reconciliation and Satisfaction.

Object. Temporal Death, as well as Eternal, is a part of the Curse; if Christ have fully satisfied by bearing the Curse for us, how is it that those for whom he bear it die as well as others?

Sol. As Temporal Death is a penal Evil, and part of the Curse, so God inflicts it not upon Believers; but they must die for other ends, viz. to be made perfectly happy in a more full and immediate Enjoyment of God, than they can have in the Body: and so Death is theirs by way of Privilege, 1 Cor. 3. 22. They are not Death's by way of Punishment. The same may be said of all the Afflictions with which God for gracious ends now exercises his reconciled ones. Thus much may suffice to establish this great Truth.

Inference 1. If the Death of Christ was that which satisfied God for all the Sins of the Elect, then certainly there is an infinite Evil in Sin, since it cannot be expiated, but by an infinite Satisfaction. Fools make a mock at Sin, and there are but few Souls in the World that are duly sensible and affected with its Evil; but certainly, if God should damn thee to all Eternity, thy eternal Sufferings could not satisfy for the Evil that is in one vain Thought. It may be you may think this is harsh and severe, that God should hold his Creatures under everlasting Sufferings for Sin, and never be satisfied with them any more. But when you have well considered that the Object against whom you sin, is the infinite blessed God, which derives an infinite Evil to the Sin committed against him: and when you consider how God dealt with the Angels that fell for one Sin, and that but of the Mind; for having no bodily Organs, they could commit nothing externally against God; you will alter your Minds about it. O the depth of the evil of Sin! If ever you will see how great and horrid an Evil Sin is, measure it in your thoughts, either by the infinite Holiness and Excellency of God, who is wrong'd by it; or by the infinite Sufferings of Christ, who died to satisfy for it; and then you will have deeper apprehensions of the evil of Sin.

Per hanc
meritum
Christi
valde ex-
citemur &
ad cave-
lam, & ad
desolati-
onem pec-
cati. Morti-
ferum
etiam sic
quod aliter
sanari non
posuit,
quoniam mor-
tuus Christi.
Quis igitur
serio cogi-
tans, pec-
cata sua
non esse
aliter ex-
piata quam
sanguine
ipsius filii
Dei, non
perhorrescet indices peccando, hunc pretiosissimum sanguinem quasi con-
calcare? *Daven. in Cal. cap. 1. v. 20.*

Inference 2. If the Death of Christ satisfied God, and thereby redeemed the Elect from the Curse: then the Redemption of Souls is costly. Souls are dear things, and of great value with God. Teknow (saith the Apostle) that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, from your vain Conversation recei-

ved by Tradition; but with the precious Blood of the Son of God, as of a Lamb without spot, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. Only the Blood of God is found an equivalent Price for the Redemption of Souls. Gold and Silver may redeem from Turkish, but not from Hellish Bondage. The whole Creation fold to the utmost worth of it, is not a value for the Redemption of one Soul. Souls are dear Ware; he that paid for them found them so: Yet how cheaply do Sinners sell their Souls, as if they were but low priz'd Commodities! But you that sell your Souls cheap, will buy Repentance dear.

Inference 3. If Christ's Death satisfied God for our Sins, how unparalleled is the Love of Christ to poor Sinners! It's much to pay a pecuniary Debt to free another, but who will pay his own Blood for another? We have a noted instance of Zaleucus, that famous Locean-Valerius Lawgiver, who decreed, that whoever lib. 6. c. 5. was convicted of Adultery, should have both his Eyes put out. It so fell out, that his own Son was brought before him for that Crime; hereupon the People interposing, made suit for his Pardon. At length, the Father partly overcome by their Importunities, and not unwilling to shew what lawful favour he might to his Son, he first put out one of his own Eyes, and then one of his Son's; and so shewed himself both a merciful Father, and a just Lawgiver; so tempering Mercy with Justice, that both the Law was satisfied, and his Son spared. This is written by the Historian as an instance of singular Love in his Father, to pay one half of the Penalty for his Son. But Christ did not divide and share in the Penalty with us, but bare it all. Zaleucus did it for his Son, who was dear to him; Christ did it for Enemies, that were fighting and rebelling against him: Rom. 5. 8. While we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us. "O would to God (said a holy one) I could cause Paper and Ink to speak the Worth and Excellency, the high and loud Praises of our Brother Ransomer! O the Ransomer needs not my Report; but O if he would take it, and make use of it! I should be happy if I had an Errand to this World but for some few Years, to spread Proclamations, and Outcries, and Love-letters of the Highness [the Highness for evermore] of the Ransomer, whose Cloaths were wet, and dyed in Blood; howbeit, that after that my Soul and Body should go back to their Mother nothing.

Inference 4. If Christ by dying hath made full Satisfaction, then God is no loser in pardoning the greatest of Sinners that believe in Jesus; and consequently his Justice can be no barr to their Justification and Salvation. He is just to forgive us our Sins, 1 Joh. 1. 9. What an Argument is here for a poor Believer to plead with God! Lord, if thou save me by Jesus Christ, the Justice will be fully satisfied at one round payment; but if thou damn me, and require satisfaction at my hands, thou canst never receive it: I shall make but a dribbling payment, tho' I lye in Hell to Eternity, and shall still be infinitely behind with thee. Is it not more for thy Glory to receive it from Christ's hand, than to require it at mine? One drop of his Blood is more worth than all my polluted Blood. O how satisfying a thing is

this to the Conscience of a poor Sinner that is objecting the multitude, aggravations, and amazing circumstances of Sins, against the possibility of their being pardoned! Can such a Sinner as I be forgiven? Yes, if thou believest in Jesus, thou mayest; for so God will lose nothing in pardoning the greatest Transgressors: *Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is Mercy, and with him is plenteous Redemption,* Psal. 103. 7. i. e. a large flock of Merit lying by him, in the Blood of Christ, to pay him for all that you have done against him.

Inference 5. Lastly, If Christ hath made such a full Satisfaction as you have heard, *How much is it the concernment of every Soul to abandon all thoughts of satisfying God for his own Sins, and betake himself to the Blood of Christ the ransomer, by Faith, that in that Blood they may be pardoned?* It would grieve one's heart to see how many poor Creatures are drudging and tugging at a task of Repentance, and revenge upon themselves, and Reformation, and Obedience, to satisfy God for what they have done against him: And alas, it cannot be, they do but lose their labour; could they swelter their very hearts out, weep till they can weep no more, cry till their throats be parched, alas, they can never recompense God for one vain thought: For such is the severity of the Law, that when it is once offended, it will never be made amends again by all that we can do; it will not discharge the Sinner for all the sorrow in the World. Indeed if a man be in Christ, sorrow for Sin is something, and renewed Obedience is

something; God looks upon them favourably, and accepts them graciously in Christ: but out of him they signify no more than the intreaties and cries of a condemned Malefactor, to reverse the legal Sentence of the Judge. You may toil all the days of your life, and at night go to bed without a Candle. To that sense that Scripture sounds, *Isa. 50. ult. Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass your selves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that you have kindled: This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lye down in sorrow.* By fire, and the light of it, some understand the sparkling pleasures of this Life, and the sensitive joys of the Creatures: But generally it's taken for our own natural Righteousness, and all acts of Duties, in order to our justification by them before God. And so it stands opposed to that Faith of recumbency spoken of in the Verse before. By their compassing themselves about with these sparks, understand their dependence on these their Duties, and glorying in them. But see that fatal Issue, *Ye shall lye down in sorrow:* That shall be your Recompence from the hand of the Lord; that's all the thanks and reward you must expect from him, for slighting Christ's, and preferring your own Righteousness before his. Reader, be convinced, that one Act of Faith in the Lord Jesus pleases God more than all the Obedience, Repentance, and Strivings to obey the Law through thy whole life can do. And thus you have the first special Fruits of Christ's Priesthood, in the full satisfaction of God for all the Sins of Believers.

Serm.
15. Surveys
the blessed Inheritance
purchased by the
Oblation of Christ,
being the second
Effect or Fruit of
his Priesthood.

S E R M O N XV.

G A L. IV. 4, 5.

But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.

THIS Scripture gives us an account of a double Fruit of Christ's Death, viz. the payment of our Debt, and the purchase of our Inheritance.

1. The payment of our Debt expressed by our Redemption, or buying us out from the Obligation and Curse of the Law, which hath been discoursed in the last Exercise.

2. The purchase of an Inheritance for those redeemed ones, expressed here by their receiving the Adoption of Sons; which is to be our present Subject. *Adoption* is either *Civil*, or *Divine*. Of the first, the Civil Law gives this Definition; that it is,

A lawful Act, in imitation of Nature, invented for the comfort of them that have no Children of their own. Divine Adoption is that special Benefit whereby God, for Christ's sake, accepted us as Sons, and makes us Heirs of Eternal Life with him.

Summa
Angel. ad
verbum. *Ad-*
optio est
actus legi-
timus, imi-
tans natu-
ram, reper-
tus sed eorum solatium, qui liberos non habent. *Adoptio est beneficium, quo nos Deus propter Christum in filios recipit, & tacet nos cum ipso heredes vitæ æternæ. August.*

Between this Civil and Sacred Adoption, there is a twofold Agreement and Disagreement. They agree in this, that both flow from the pleasure and good-will of the Adopter; and in this, that both confer a right to Privileges, which we have not by Nature: But in this they differ, one is an Act imitating Nature, the other transcends Nature; the one was found out for the comfort of them that had no Children; the other for the comfort of them that had no Father. This Divine Adoption is in Scripture either taken properly for that Act or Sentence of God, by which we are made Sons, or for the Privileges with which the Adopted are invested: And so it's taken, *Rom. 8. 23.* and in this Scripture now before us. We lost our Inheritance by the Fall of *Adam*; we receive it, as the Text speaks, by the Death of Christ, which restores it again to us by a new and better Title. The Doctrine hence is,

Doct.

Doct. That the Death of Jesus Christ hath not only satisfied for our Debts, but over and above purchased a rich Inheritance for the Children of God.

For this end, or cause, he is the Mediator of the New Testament: that by means of death, for the redemption of the Transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called, might receive the Promise of the Eternal Inheritance, Heb. 9. 15.

We will here, first, see what Christ paid. Secondly, what he purchased. Thirdly, for whom.

Parker de
l. 3. p. 97.
Dr. Reynolds
in Psal. 110.
Cameri, p.
363, &c.

First, What Christ paid. Our Divines comprize the Virtue and Fruits of the Priesthood of Christ in these two things, viz. *Solutio, debiti, & acquisitio hereditatis*, Payment, and Purchase. Answerably the Obedience of Christ hath a double relation, *relatio legalis Justitiæ*, the relation of a legal Righteousness; an adequate and exactly proportioned Price. And it hath also in it *relatio superlegalis Meriti*, the relation of a Merit over and beyond the Law.

Satisfactio
Christi fuit
plusquam
sufficiens,
non igitur
ex debito,
non ex ob-
ligatio. Re-
verd. Dia-
log. 5. p.
382.

To object (as some do) the Satisfaction of Christ was more than sufficient, according to our Doctrine, and therefore could not be intended for the payment of our Debt, is a senseless cavil. For surely if Christ paid more than was owing, he must needs pay all that was owing to Divine Justice. And truly it is but a bad requital of the Love of Jesus Christ, who beside the payment of what we owed, would manifest his Bounty by the redundancy of his Merit, which he paid to God to purchase a blessed Inheritance for us. This overplus of Satisfaction (which was the price of that Inheritance I am now to open) is not obscurely hinted, but plainly expressed twice in *Rom. 5. 15*. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift: For if through the offence of one, many be dead, πολλὰ πάλαι, much more the Grace of God, and the gift by Grace, which is by one Man, Jesus Christ, ἀειζών, hath abounded, or flowed abundantly unto many. So ver. 17. For if by one Man's offence, death reigned by one, πολλὰ πάλαι, much more they which receive τὴν χάριν, the overflowings, or abundance of Grace, and of the gift of Righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. In both which places Christ and Adam are compared as the two Roots or common Heads of Mankind, both agreeing in this property of communicating their conditions to those that are theirs; yet there is a great deal of difference betwixt them, for in Christ the Power is all divine, and therefore infinitely more active and effectual: He communicates abundantly more to his, than they lost in Adam; so that his Blood is not only sufficient to redeem all those that are actually redeemed by it, but even the whole World also. And were there so many Worlds of Men, as there are Men in the World, it would be sufficient for them also; and yet still there would be an overplus of value: For all those Worlds of Men would rise but to a finite bulk; but this Blood is infinite in its worth and dignity. Since then there is not a whole World, no, not half, but the far less part redeemed by the Blood of Christ,

Dutch An-
not. in loc.
Dendat. in
loc.

which was sufficient for so many; how great must be the superfluous and redundancy of Merit? Here our Divines rightly distinguish betwixt the substance and accidents of Christ's Death and Obedience. Consider Christ's suffering as to the substance of it, it was no more than what the Law required; for neither the Justice, nor Love of the Father, would permit that Christ should suffer more than what was necessary for him to bear, as our Surety: But as to the Circumstances, the Person of the Sufferer, the Cause and Efficacy of his Sufferings, &c. it was much more than sufficient; a *superlegale meritum*, a Merit above and beyond what the Law required: For tho' the Law required the death of the Sinner, who is but a poor contemptible Creature, it did not require that one perfectly innocent should die; it did not require that God should shed his Blood; it did not require Blood of such value and worth as this was: I say, none of this the Law required, tho' God was pleased, for the advancement and manifestation of his Justice and Mercy in the highest, to admit and order this, by way of commutation, admitting him to be our *antiquus*, or ransom, by dying for us. And indeed it was a most gracious relaxation of the Law, that admitted of such a commutation as this; for hereby it comes to pass, that Justice is fully satisfied, and yet we live and are saved; which before was a thing that could not be imagined. Yea, now we are not only redeemed from Wrath, by the adequate compensation made for our Sins by Christ's Blood and Sufferings, substantially considered, but to a most glorious Inheritance purchased by his Blood, considered as the Blood of an *Innocent*, as the Blood of God, and therefore as most excellent and efficacious Blood, above what the Law demanded. And this is the meaning of *Athanasius*, when he saith that Christ recompensed or made amends for small things, with great: He means not, that Sin considered absolutely and in it self, is small; O no, but compared with Christ's Blood, and the infinite excellency and worth of it, it is so. And *Chrysostom* to the same purpose, Christ paid much more (saith he) than we owed, and so much more as the immense Ocean is more than a small drop. So that it was rightly determined by holy *Anselm*, No Man, saith he, can pay to God what he owes him; Christ only paid more than he owed him. By this you see how rich a Treasure lies by Christ, to bestow in a Purchase for us, above what he paid to redeem us; even as much as his Soul and Body were more worth than ours for whom it was sacrificed; which is so great Sum, that all the Angels in Heaven, and Men on Earth, can never compute and sum up, so as to shew us the total of it: And this was that inexhaustible Treasure that Christ expended, to procure and purchase the fair-est Inheritance for Believers. Having seen the Treasure that purchased, let us next enquire into the Inheritance purchased by it.

Secondly, This Inheritance is so large, that it cannot be surveyed by Creatures; nor can the boundaries and limits thereof be described, for it comprehends all things; 1 Cor. 3. 22.

K 2 All

Quod sub-
stantiam
pauze ni-
hil plus
est Christi
quam quod per
legem
debeba-
tur; quo-
ad circum-
stantias
autem, pa-
tiens per-
sonam,
sufficiens
causam,
pauze
efficaciam,
plus quam
sufficiens
Christi
nobis dici-
tur, Park-
er de descen-
s. 1.

Namque qui
de legem
relaxavit,
one scrip-
serunt, cas
esse opti-
mas relaxa-
tiones,
quibus an-
teea est
commuta-
tio. Graui-
us de satisf-
ac. cap. 5.
Christum
parva
magnis
penitentie.
Athanasius, de
passione,
& carne.
Multo
plura
quam de-
bemus
Christus
pro nobis
solvit, tan-
toque plu-
ra, quanto
genuitum
exiguam
pelagum
excellent
immensum.

Fidelibus
est totus
mundus.
Aug.

All is yours, ye are Christ's and Christ is God's. Rev. 21. 7. *He that overcomes shall inherit all things.* And yet I do not think or say that Dominion fundatur in gratia, that temporal Dominion is founded in Grace. No, that's at the cast and dispose of Providence: But Christ by his Death hath restored a right to all things to his People.

But to be more particular, I shall distribute the Saints Inheritance purchased by Christ into three heads: All temporal good things, all spiritual good things, and all eternal good things are theirs.

Christus
meruit co-
bis omnia
bona, fu-
pernatu-
lia, & om-
nia, aux-
ilia, five
præven-
ientia, five
subsequen-
tia; ac
universa
illa bona,
est bona
sine nobis
extrinseca,
quæ rati-
onem in-
ducunt me-
diorum ad
nostram
salutem.
Vincent.
Aulricenf.
de habit.
Christi
grat. præ-
fati. q. 5.
p. 259.

1. *All Temporal good things.* 1 Tim. 6. 7. *He hath given us all things richly to enjoy.* Not that they have the possession, but the comfort and benefit of all things: Others have the sting, gall, wormwood, baits and snares of the Creature; Saints only have the blessing and comfort of it. So that this little that a righteous Man hath, is, (in this, among other respects) better than the treasures of many wicked: Which is the true Key to open that dark saying of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 6. 10. *As having nothing, and yet possessing all things:* They only possess, others are possessed by the World. The Saints do uti Mundo, & frui Deo, use the World, and enjoy God in the use of it. Others are deceived, defiled, and destroyed by the World; but these are refreshed and furnished by it.

2. *All Spiritual good things* are purchased by the Blood of Christ for them, as *Justification*, which comprizes remission of Sins, and acceptance of our Persons by God: Rom. 3. 24. *Being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ.* Sanctification is also purchased for them; yea, both *initial* and *progressive* Sanctification: For of God he is made unto us not only wisdom and righteousness, but sanctification also, 1 Cor. 1. 30. These two, viz. our Justification and Sanctification, are two of the most rich and shining Robes in the Wardrobe of Free-grace. How glorious and lovely do they render the Soul that wears them! These are like the Bracelets and Jewels Isaac sent to Rebecca. Adoption into the Family of God, is purchased for us by his Blood; For ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Jesus Christ, Gal. 3. 26. Christ as he is the Son, is *heres natus*, the Heir by nature; as he is *Mediator*, he is *heres constitutus*, the Heir by appointment, appointed Heir of all things, as it is Heb. 1. 2. By the Sonship of Christ, we being united to him by Faith, become Sons; and if Sons, then Heirs. *O what manner of Love is this, that we should be called the Sons of God!* 1 Joh. 3. 1. That a poor Beggar should be made an Heir, yea, an Heir of God, and a Joint Heir with Christ! Yea, that very Faith, which is the bond of Union, and consequently the ground of all our Communion with Christ, is the purchase of his Blood also: 2 Pet. 1. 1. *To them that have obtained like precious faith with us, through the Righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* This most precious Grace is the dear purchase of our Lord Jesus Christ: Yea, all that peace, joy, and spiritual comfort, which are sweet Fruits of Faith, are with it purchased for us by this Blood.

So speaks the Apostle in Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3. *Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* Moreover the Spirit himself, who is the Author, Fountain, and Spring of all these Graces and Comfort, is procured for us by his Death and Resurrection: Gal. 3. 13, 14. *Christ hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a Tree: That the Blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through Faith.* That Spirit that first sanctified, and since hath so often sealed, comforted, directed, refreshed, guided, and quickened your Souls, had not come to perform any of these blessed Offices upon your hearts, if Christ had not died.

3. *All Eternal good things* are the purchase of his Blood. Heaven, and all the Glory thereof, is purchased for you that are Believers, with this price. Hence that Glory, whatever it be, is called an *Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you:* To the lively hope whereof ye are begotten again, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. Not only present Mercies are purchased for us, but things to come also, as it is 1 Cor. 3. 22. Man is a prudent and prospecting Creature, and is not satisfied that it's well with him for present, unless he have some assurance it shall be well with him for time to come. His mind is taken up about what shall be hereafter; and from the good or evil things to come, he raiseth up to himself vast hopes or fears.

Therefore to compleat our happiness, and fill up the uttermost capacity of our Souls, all the good of Eternity is put into the Account and Inventory of the Saints Estate and Inheritance. This Happiness is ineffable; it's usually distinguished into what is *essential*, and what is *accessory* to it. The *Essentials* of it, as we in our embodied state can conceive, is either the *objective, subjective, or formal* Happiness to be enjoyed in Heaven.

The *Objective* Happiness is God himself: Psal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* If it could be supposed (faith one) that God should withdraw from the Saints in Heaven, and say, Take Heaven and divide it among you; but as for me, I will withdraw from you; the Saints would fall weeping in Heaven, and say, Lord, take Heaven, and give it to whom thou wilt; it's no Heaven to us, except thou be there: Heaven would be a very *Bekim* to the Saints without God. In this our Glory in Heaven consists, to be ever with the Lord, 1 Thess. 4. 17. God himself is the chief part of a Saint's Inheritance; in which sense, as some will understand Rom. 8. 17. they are called *Heirs of God*.

The *Subjective* Glory and Happiness is the attemperation and suiting of the Soul and Body to God. This is begun in Sanctification and perfected in Glorification. It consists in removing from both all that is indecent, and inconsistent with a state of such compleat Glory and Happiness, and in superinducing and cloathing it with all heavenly Qualities. The

The immunities of the Body are its freedom from all natural Infirmities; which as they come in, so they go out with sin. Thenceforth there shall be no diseases, deformities, pains, flaws, monstrosities; their good Physician Death hath cured all this, and their vile Bodies shall be made like unto Christ's glorious Body, *Phil. 3. 21.* and he made a spiritual Body, *1 Cor. 15. 44.* For agility, like the Chariots of *Aminadab*; for beauty, as the top of *Lebanon*; for incorruptibility, as if they were pure Spirits.

The Soul also is discharged and freed from all darkness and ignorance of Mind, being now able to discern all Truths in God, that cristall Ocean of Truth. The leaks of the Memory stop for ever; the roving of its Fancy perfectly cured; the stubbornness and reluctance of the Will for ever subdued, and retained in due and full subjection to God. So that the Saints in glory shall be free from all that now troubles them; they shall never sin more, nor be once tempted so to do, for no Serpent biffes in that Paradise; they shall never grieve or groan more, for God shall wipe all tears from their Eyes: They shall never be troubled more, for God will then recompence Tribulation to their troublers, and to them that are troubled, Rest; they shall never doubt more, for Fruition excludes doubting.

The *Formal* happiness is the fulness of Satisfaction resulting from the blessed sight and enjoyment of God, by a Soul so attemp'd to him. *Psal. 17. 15.* When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness. This sight of God in Glory, called the beatifical Vision, must needs yield ineffable satisfaction to the beholding Soul, in as much as it will be an *intuitive* Vision. The intellectual or mental eye shall see God, *1 Joh. 3. 2.* The corporeal glorified eye shall see Christ, *Joh. 19. 25, 27.* What a ravishing Vision will this be? And how much will it exceed all reports and apprehensions we had here of it! Surely the one half was not told us. It will be a *transformative* Vision, it will change the Beholder into its own Image and Likeness. *We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, 1 Joh. 3. 2.* As Iron put into the Fire, becomes all fiery; so the Soul by conversing with God, is changed into his very Similitude. It will be an *appropriative* Vision; *Whom I shall see for my self, Job 19. 26, 27.* In Heaven Interest is clear and undoubted; Fear is cast out: No need of Marks and Signs there; for what a Man sees and enjoys, how can he doubt of? It will be a *ravishing* Vision; these we have by Faith are so, how much more those in Glory? How was *Paul* transported, when he was in a visional way wrapt up into the third Heaven, and heard the unutterable things, tho' he was not admitted into the blessed Society, but was with them, as the Angels are in our Assemblies, a stander by, a looker on! If a spark do so inflame, what is it to lye down like a *Phoenix* in her bed of Spices; like a *Salamander* to live and move in the Fire of Love! It will also be an *eternal* Vision; *vacabimus, & videbimus, (as Augustin said)* we shall then be at leisure for this Employment, and have no diversions from it for ever. No Evening is mentioned to the seventh day's

Sabbath; no Night in the new Jerusalem. And therefore,

Lastly, it will be a *fully-satisfying* Vision: God will then be all in all, *Etiā ipsa curiositas fatietur*, Curiosity it self will be satisfied. The blessed Soul will feel it self blessed, filled, satisfied in every part. Ah what a Happiness is here! to look and love, to drink and sing, and drink again at the Fountain-head of the highest Glory! And if at any time its Eye be turned from a direct to a reflex light upon what it once was, how it was wrought on, how fitted for this Glory, how wonderfully distinguished by special Grace from them that are howling in Flames, whilst himself is shouting aloud upon his Bed of everlasting Rest; all this will enhance the Glory.

And so also will the *Accessories* of this Blessedness, *The place* where God is enjoyed, the *Empyrean Heaven*, the City of God, whither Christ ascended, where the great Assembly are met. *Paradise* and *Canaan* were but the Types of it; more excelling and transcending the Royal Palaces of earthly Princes, than they do a Pigeon-hole. *The Company* also with whom he is enjoyed, adds to the glory. A blissful Society indeed! store of good Neighbours in that City. There we shall have familiar converse with Angels, whose appearances now are insupportable by poor Mortals: There will be sweet and full closings also betwixt the Saints; *Luther* and *Zuinglius* are there agreed. Here they could not fully close with one another, and no wonder, for they could not fully close with themselves. But there is perfect Harmony and Unity; all meeting and closing in God, as Lines in the Center. This is a blessed glimpse of your Inheritance.

Thirdly, All this is purchased for Believers: Hence it's call'd, *the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, *Col. 1. 12.* *All is yours, for ye are Christ's*, that is the tenure, *1 Cor. 3. 23.* So *Rom. 8. 30.* *Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* Only those that are Sons, are Heirs, *Rom. 8. 17.* The unrighteous shall not inherit, *1 Cor. 6. 9.* *It's the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom to the little flock,* *Luk. 12. 32.*

Inference 1. Hath Christ not only redeemed you from wrath, but purchased such an eternal Inheritance also by the overplus of his Merit for you? *O how well content should Believers then be with their lot of Providence in this Life, be it what it will!* Content did I say? I speak too low, overcome, ravish'd, filled with Praises and Thanksgivings, how low, how poor, how afflicted soever for the present they are. O let not such things as grumbling, repining, fretting at Providence be found, or once named among the Expectants of this Inheritance! Suppose you had taken a Beggar from your door, and adopted him to be your Son, and made him Heir of a large Inheritance, and after this he should contest and quarrel with you for a Trifle, could you bear it? How to work the Spirit of a Saint into Contentment with a low condition here, I have laid down several rules in another Discourse, to which for present I refer the Reader.

A Saint indeed, p. 88, 89, &c.

Inference

Inference 2. With what weaned Affections should the People of God walk up and down the World, content to live, and willing to die? For things present are theirs if they live, and things to come are theirs if they die. Paul expresses himself in a frame of holy indifference, Phil. 1. 22. Which to chuse I know not. Many of them that are now in fruition of their Inheritance above, had vitam in patientia, mortem in desiderio, Life in Patience, and Death in Desire, while they tabernacle with us. "O, cried one) "what would I give to have a Bed made to my "wearied Soul in Christ's Bosom? — I "cannot tell you what sweet Pain, and delightful Torments are in his Love; I often challenge time for holding us afinder; I profess to you, I have no rest till I be over head and ears in Love's Ocean. If Christ's Love (that "Fountain of Delights) were laid open to me "as I would with, O how drunken would this "my Soul be! I half call his Absence cruel; and the mask and veil on his Face a cruel covering, that hideth such a fair, fair Face from a sick Soul. I dare not challenge himself, but his absence is a Mountain of Iron upon my heavy Heart. O when shall we meet! How long is it to the dawning of the marriage-day! "O sweet Lord Jesus, take wide steps! O my "Lord, come over Mountains at one stride! O my Beloved, flee like a Roe, or young Hart, upon the Mountains of Separation! O if he would fold the Heavens together like an old Cloak, and shovell Time and Days out of the way, and make ready in haste the Lamb's Wife for her Husband! Since he looked upon me, my Heart is not mine own.

Who can be blamed for desiring to see that fair Inheritance which is purchased for him? But truly should God hold up the Soul by the power of Faith, from day to day, to such fights as these, who would be content to live a day more on Earth? How should we be ready to pull down the Prison-walls, and not have patience to wait till God open the Door! As the Heathen said,

Vitæque dii colant, ut vivere durant.

And truly the Wisdom of God is in this specially remarkable, in giving the next Creature such an admirable Crasis and even temper, as that Scripture, 2 *Thes.* 3. 5. expresses, *The Lord direct your hearts into the Love of God, and patient waiting for Christ.* Love inflames with desire, Patience allays that fervor. So that fervent Desires (as one happily expresses it) are allayed with meek Submission; mighty Love with strong Patience. And had not God twisted together these two Principles in the Christian's Constitution, he had framed a Creature to be a torment to it self, to live upon a very Rack.

Inference 3. Hence we infer the impossibility of their Salvation that knew not Christ, nor have interest in his Blood. Neither Heathens, nor merely nominal Christians, can inherit Heaven. I know some are very indulgent to the Heathen, and many formal Christians are but too much so to themselves: But Union by Faith with Jesus Christ, is the only way revealed in Scripture by which we hope to come to the heavenly Inheritance. I know it seems

hard, that such brave Men, as some of the Heathens were, should be damned: but the Scripture knows no other way to Glory, but Christ put on and applied by Faith. And it is the common suffrage of modern sound Divines, that no Man by the sole conduct of Nature, without the knowledge of Christ, can be saved. There is but one way to Glory for all the World, *Joh. 14. 6. No man cometh to the Father but by me.* Gal. 3. 14. *The blessing of Abraham comes upon the Gentiles through Faith.* Scripture affects the impossibility of being or doing any thing that is truly evangelically good out of Christ, *Joh. 15. 5. Without me ye can do nothing;* and Heb. 11. 6. *Without Faith it is impossible to please God.*

Scripture every-where connects and chains Salvation with Vocation, *Rom. 8. 30.* and Vocation with the Gospel, *Rom. 10. 14.* To those that plead for the Salvation of Heathens, and profane Christians, we may apply that tart Rebuke of *Barnard*, that while some labour to make *Plato* a Christian, he feared they therein did prove themselves to be Heathens.

Inference 4. How greatly are we all concerned to clear up our Title to the heavenly Inheritance! It's horrible to see how industrious many are for an Inheritance on Earth, and how careless for Heaven. By which we may plainly see how vilely the noble Soul is depressed by Sin, and sunk down into Flesh, minding only the concerns of the Flesh. Hear me ye that labour for the World, as if Heaven were in it; What will ye do when at Death you shall look back over your shoulder, and see what you have spent your time and strength for, shrinking and vanishing away from you? When you shall look forward, and see vast Eternity opening its Mouth to swallow you up; O then what would you give for a well-grounded Assurance of an eternal Inheritance!

O therefore, if you have any concernment for your poor Souls; if it be not indifferent to you what becomes of them, whether they be saved, or whether they be damned, give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure, 2 *Pet. 1. 10. Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure,* Phil. 2. 12. Remember it is Salvation you work for, and that's no trifle. Remember it's your own Salvation, and not another's. It is for thy own poor Soul that thou art striving; and what hast thou more?

Remember, now God offers his helping hand; now the Spirit waits upon you in the means, but of the continuance thereof you have no assurance; for it is of *his own good pleasure*, and not at yours. To your work Souls, to your work. Ah, strive as Men that know what an Inheritance in Heaven is worth.

And that as for you that have solid evidence that it is yours; O that with Hands and Eyes lifted up to Heaven, you would adore that free Grace, that hath entitled a Child of Wrath to a heavenly Inheritance! Walk as becomes Heirs of God, and Joint-heirs with Christ. Be often looking Heaven-ward, when Wants pinch here. O look to that fair Estate you have reserved

referred in Heaven for you, and say, I am hastning home; and when I come thither, all my Wants shall be supplied. Consider what it cost Christ to purchase it for thee; and with a deep sence of what he hath laid out for thee, let thy Soul say,

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

S E R M O N XVI.

2 COR. X. 5.

Calting down Imaginations, and every thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ.

Serm.
16.
Opens
the
Kingly
Office of
Christ,
as ex-
ecuted
spiritu-
ally upon
the Souls
of the re-
deem-
ed.

WE now come to the *Regal Office* by which our Glorious Mediator executes and dischargeth the undertaken design of our Redemption. Had he not as our *Prophet* opened the way of Life and Salvation to the Children of Men, they could never have known it, and should they have clearly known it, except as their *Priest* he had offered up himself, to impetrate and obtain Redemption for them, they could not have been redeemed virtually by his Blood; and if they had been so redeemed, yet had he not lived in the capacity of a *King*, to apply this Purchase of his Blood to them, they could have had no actual personal benefit by his Death: For what he revealed as a *Prophet*, he purchased as a *Priest*; and what he so revealed and purchased as *Prophet* and *Priest*, he applies as *King*; first subduing the Souls of his Elect to his Spiritual Government; then ruling them as his Subjects, and ordering all things in the Kingdom of Providence for their good. So that Christ hath a twofold Kingdom, the own *Spiritual* and *Internal*; by which he subdues and rules the Hearts of his People; the other *Providential* and *External*, whereby he guides, rules, and orders all things in the World in a blessed subordination to their Eternal Salvation. I am to speak from this Text of his Spiritual and Internal Kingdom.

These Words are considerable two ways, either *relatively* or *absolutely*. Considered *relatively*, they are a vindication of the Apostles from the unjust Censures of the *Corinthians*, who very unworthily interpreted his Gentleness, Condescension, and winning Affability, to be no better than a fawning upon them for self-ends; and the Authority he exercised, no better than Pride and Imperiousness. But hereby he lets them know, that as Christ needs not, so he never used such carnal Artifices: *The Weapons of our Warfare* (saith he) *are not carnal, but mighty through God, &c.*

Absolutely considered, they hold forth the Efficacy of the Gospel in the plainness and simplicity of it, for the subduing of rebellious Sinners to Christ: And in them we have these three things to consider.

1. The *Oppositions* made by Sinners against the Assaults of the Gospel, *viz.* *Imaginations*, or Reasonings, as the word *λογισμοι* may be fitly rendred. He means the Subtilties, Sights, Excuses, Subterfuges, and Arguings of fleshly-minded Men; in which they fortifie and en-

trench themselves against the Convictions of the Word: yea, and there are not only such carnal reasonings, but many proud high Conceits with which poor Creatures swell, and scorn to submit to the abasing, humble, self-denying way of the Gospel. These are the Infortifications erected against Christ by the carnal Mind.

concessit verbi sese munitione, efferuntque; qualia sunt carnalis sapientia eruditio, & eloquentia. S. Olyffus.

2. We have here the *Conquest* which the Gospel obtains over Sinners, thus fortified against it: It casts down, and overthrows, and takes in these strong Holds. Thus Christ spoils Satan of his Armour in which he trusted, by shewing the Sinner that all this can be no defence to his Soul against the Wrath of God. But that's not all; in the next place,

3. You have here the *Improvement of the Victory*. Christ doth not only lead away these Enemies spoiled, but brings them into Obedience to himself, *i. e.* makes them after Conversion, Subjects of his own Kingdom, obedient, useful, and serviceable to himself; and so is more than a Conqueror. They do not only lay down their Arms, and fight no more against Christ, with them; but repair to his Camp, and fight for Christ, with those Reasons of theirs that were before employed against him: As it's said of *Jerom*, *Origen* and *Tertullian*, that they came into Canaan laden with Egyptian Gold; that is, they came into the Church full of excellent Learning and Abilities, with which they eminently served Jesus Christ. O ubi victi blessed Victory, where the Conqueror and Conquered both triumph together! And thus Enemies and Rebels are subdued, and made Subjects of the Spiritual Kingdom of Christ. Hence the Doctrinal Note is,

Doct. That Jesus Christ exercises a Kindly Power over the Souls of all whom the Gospel subdues to his Obedience.

No sooner were the *Colossians* delivered out of the power of Darkness, but they were immediately translated into the Kingdom of Christ the Dear Son, *Col. 1. 13.*

This Kingdom of Christ, which is our present Subject, is the internal spiritual Kingdom, which is said to be within the Saints, *Luke 17. 20, 21. The Kingdom of God is within you.* Christ his as an enthroned King in the Hearts, Consciences and Affections of his willing People, *Psal. 110: 3. And his Kingdom consists*

O beata victoria, ubi victi cum victoribus simul triumphant! Meyer. in loc.

laternum regimen est monarchicum & non potest non esse. Nulli enim tribui debet ius regendi hominum conscientiam præterquam ei qui idem est sapientissimus, & potentissimus. Neque in hoc regimine Christus habet vicarium potestatis, atque potestatis suæ.

In the prosecution of this Point, I will speak doctrinally to these three Heads.

First, How Christ obtains the Throne in the Hearts of Men.

Secondly, How he rules in it, and by what Acts he exerciseth his Kingly Authority.

Thirdly, What are the Privileges of those Souls over whom Christ reigns. And then apply it.

First, We will open the way and manner in which Christ obtains a Throne in the Hearts of Men, and that is by *Conquest*: For tho' the Souls of the Elect are his by Donation, and Right of Redemption; the Father gave them to him, and he died for them; yet Satan hath the first possession: And so it fares with Christ, as it did with *Abraham*, to whom God gave the Land of *Canaan* by Promise and Covenant; but the *Canaanites*, *Perizzites*, and Sons of *Amak*, had the actual possession of it, and *Abraham's* Posterity must fight for it, and win it by Inches before they enjoy it. The Houses is conveyed to Christ by him that built it, but the strong Man armed keeps the possession of it, till a stronger than he comes and ejects him, *Luke 11. 20, 21, 22.* Christ must fight his way into the Soul, tho' he have a right to enter as into his dearly purchased Possession. And so he doth; for when the time of recovering them is come, he sends forth his Armies to subdue them; as it is, *Psal. 110. 3. Thy People shall be willing in the day of thy Power.* The Hebrew may as truly be rendered, and so is by some, *in the day of thine Armies*; when the Lord Jesus sent forth his Armies of Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, under the Conduct of his Spirit, armed with that two-edged Sword, the Word of God, which is sharp and powerful, *Heb. 4. 12.* But that's not all: He causeth Armies of Convictions, and spiritual Troubles, to begirt and straiten them on every side, so that they know not what to do. These Convictions, like a shower of Arrows, strike point-blank into their Consciences; *Acts 2. 37. When they heard this, they were pricked to the Heart, and said, Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* Christ's Arrows are llarp in the Hearts of his Enemies, whereby the People fall under him, *Psal. 45. 5, 6.* By these Convictions he batters down all their loose vain Hopes, and levels them with the Earth.

Now all their weak Pleas and Defences, from the general Mercy of God, the Example of others, &c. prove but as Paper-walls to them. These shake their Hearts, even to the Foundation, and overturn every high Thought there, that exalts it self against the Lord. This day in which Christ sits down before the Soul, and summons it by such Messengers as these, is a day of distress within; yea, such a day of trouble that none is like it. But tho' it be so, yet Satan hath so deeply entrencht himself in the Mind and Will, that the Soul

yields not at the first summons, till its Provisions within are spent, and all its Towers of Pride, and Walls of vain Confidence, be undermined by the Gospel, and shaken down about it Ears: And then the Soul desires a Parley with Christ. O now it would be glad of terms, any terms, if it may but save its Life; let all go as a prey to the Conqueror. Now it sends many such Messages as these to Christ, who is come now to the very Gates of the Soul, Mercy, Lord, Mercy; O were I but assured thou would'st receive, spare and pardon me, I would open to thee the next moment! Thus the Soul is *shut up to the Faith of Christ*, as it is, *Gal. 3. 22.* and reduce I now to the greatest strait and loss imaginable; and now the merciful King, whose only design is to conquer Heart, hangs forth the White Flag of Mercy before the Soul, giving it hopes it shall be spared, and pitied, and pardoned, tho' so long in Rebellion against him, if yet it will yield it self to Christ. Many staggerings, hesitations, irresolutions, doubts, fears, scruples, half-resolves, reasonings for and against, there are at the Council-Table of Man's own Heart at this time. Sometimes there is no hope; Christ will slay me if I go forth to him, and then it trembles. But then, whoever found him so that tried him: Other Souls have yielded, and found Mercy beyond all their expectations. O but I have been a desperate Enemy against him. Admit it, yet thou hast the Word of a King for it; *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have Mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon him, Isa. 55. 7.*

But the time of Mercy is past, I have flood out too long: Yet if it were so, How is it that Christ hath not made short work, and cut me off? Set Fire, Hall-fire to my Soul, and withdrawn the Siege? Still he waiteth that he may be gracious, and is exalted that he may have Compassion. A thousand such Debates there are, till at last the Soul considering, if it abide in Rebellion, it must needs perish; if it go forth to Christ, it can but perish; and being somewhat encouraged by the messages of Grace sent into the Soul at this time, such as that, *Heb. 7. 25. Wherefore he is able to save to the utmost all that came unto God by him*; and that, *Joh. 6. 37. He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*; and that, *Mat. 11. 28. Come unto me ye that are weary, and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest*: It is at last resolved to open to Christ; and faith, *Stand open ye everlasting Gates, and be ye opened ye everlasting Doors; the King of Glory shall come in.* Now the Will spontaneously opens to Christ; that Fort-royal submits and yields; all the Affections open to him: The Will brings Christ the Keys of all the Rooms in the Soul. Concerning this triumphant Entrance of Christ into the Soul, we may say, as the *Psalmist* rhetorically speaks concerning the triumphant Entrance of *Israel* into *Canaan*, *Psal. 114. 5, 6. The Mountains skipped like Rams, and the little Hills like Lambs; what ailed thee, O thou Sea, that thou steddest? Thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?* So here, in a like rhetorical

Nam infinita potestas, quantumvis vicarius sit, in hominem nullum cadere potest; etiam est quædam genus unio, quod vicarium omnem excludat, ut Patri & Filii, Marii & Uxoris; nam hic certe vicarius non potest habere locum.

Macone, loc. com. p. 641.

In die exercitus tui, cum scilicet missus Apostolus & alii ecclesiarum doctoribus, voce evangelii inter gentes colliges & construes tibi regnum. *Mat. in loc.*

torical Triumph, we may say, the Mountains and Hills skip like Rams, the fixed and obdurate Will starts from its own Basis and Center; the rocky Hearts rend in twain. A poor Soul comes to the World full of Ignorance, Pride, Self-love, desperate Hardness, and fixed Resolutions to go on in its way; and by an hour's Discourse the Tide turns, Jordan is driven back: What aileth thee thou stout Will, that thou surrenderest to Christ? Thou hard Heart, that thou relentest, and the Waters gush out? And thus the Soul is won to Christ: He writes down his Terms, and the Soul willingly subscribes them. Thus it comes in to Christ by free and hearty Submission, desiring nothing more than to come under the Government of Christ for time to come.

Secondly, Let us see how Christ rules in the Souls of such as submit to him. And there are six things in which he exerts his Kingly Authority over them.

1. He imposes a new Law upon them, and enjoins them to be severe and puntial in their Obedience to it. The Soul was a Belialite before, and could endure no restraint; its Lusts gave it Law: *We our selves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, serving divers Lusts and Pleasures*, Tit. 2. 3. Whatever the Flesh craved, and the sensual Appetite whined after, it must have cost what it would cost: If Damnation were the price of it, it would have it, provided it should not be present pay. Now it must not be any longer *ἀνομία* *ὑπο*, *ἀν* *νόμου* *ὑπο* *νόμου*, without Law to God; but under Law to Christ. Those are the Articles of Peace which the Soul willingly signs in the day of its admission to Mercy, Maj. 11. 29. *Take my Yoke upon you, and learn of me*. This Law of the Spirit of Life, which is in Christ Jesus, makes them free from the Law of Sin and Death, Rom. 8. 2. Here's much strictness, but no bondage; for the Law is not only written in Christ's Statute-book, the Bible, but copied out by his Spirit upon the Hearts of Subjects, in correspondent Principles; which makes Obedience a pleasure, and Self-denial ease. Christ's Yoke is lined with Love, so that it never galls the Necks of his People: 1 Job. 5. 3. *His Commandments are not grievous*. The Soul that comes under Christ's Government, must receive Law from Christ; and under Law every thought of the Heart must come.

2. He rebukes and chastises Souls for the violations and transgressions of his Law. That's another act of Christ's Regal Authority; *whom he loves he rebukes and chastens*, Heb. 12. 6, 7. These Chastisements of Christ are either by the Rod of Providence upon their Bodies and outward comforts, or upon their Spirits and inward comforts. Sometimes his Rebukes are smart upon the outward Man, 1 Cor. 11. 30. *For this cause many among you are weak, and sick, and many sleep*. They had not that due regard to his Body that became them, and he will make their Bodies to smart for it. And he had rather their flesh should smart, than their souls should perish. Sometimes he spares their outward, and afflicts their inner Man, which is a much smart-

Vol. I.

ter-kod. He withdraws Peace, and takes away Joy from the Spirits of his People. The hidings of his Face are sore Rebukes. However, all is for emendation, not for destruction. And it is not the least privilege of Christ's Subjects, to have a reasonable and sanctified Rod to reduce them from the ways of Sin: *Psal. 23. 3. Thy Rod and thy Staff they comfort me*. Others are suffered to go on stubbornly in the way of their own Hearts; Christ will not spend a Rod upon them for their good, will not call them to account for any of their Transgressions, but will reckon with them for all together in Hell.

3. Another Regal Act of Christ, is the restraining and keeping his Servants from Iniquity, and withholding them from those Courses which their own Hearts would incline and lead them to: For even in them there is a Spirit bent to backsliding, but the Lord in tenderness over them, keeps back their Souls from Iniquity, and that when they are upon the very brink of sin; *My feet were almost gone, my steps were well nigh slipped*, Psal. 73. 2. Then doth the Lord prevent Sin, by removing the occasion providentially, or by helping them to resist the Temptation, graciously assisting their Spirits in the trial, so that no Temptation shall befall them, but a way of escape shall be opened that they may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. 10. 13. And thus his People have frequent occasions to bless his Name for his preventing Goodness, when they are almost in the midst of all Evil. And this I take to be the meaning of *Gal. 5. 16. This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh*; tempted by them ye may be, but fulfil them ye shall not: My Spirit shall cause the Temptation to die, and wither away in the Womb, in the Embrio of it, so that it shall not come to a full birth.

4. He protects them in his toings, and suffers Christ and them not to relapse from him into a state of Sin, all his life long, and Bondage to Satan any more. Indeed he is the one under his two wings; to his Obedience; he never leaves tempting and in the and soliciting for their return; and where he finds a false Professor, he prevails; but Christ keeps his, that they depart not again. *Job. 17. 9. I saw, 12. All that thou hast given me I have kept, none that cast of them is lost, but the Son of perdition*. They him and are kept by the mighty power of God, through ground of Faith to Salvation, 1 Pet. 1. 5. Kept as in a the Sea, Garison, according to the importance of that he shall word. None more solicited, none more safe come up a- than the People of God. They are preserved in gain, and Christ Jesus, Jude 1. It is not their own Grace and not lose one. An odd one that secures them, but Christ's care, and con-annoy, tinal watchfulness. Our own Graces left to nor shall not be lost in themselves, would quickly prove but weights the telling, sinking us to our own ruin, as one speaks. This Perfecti- is his Covenant with them, Jer. 32. 4. *I will ones (ibi) put my fear in their inwards, and they shall not relapse, depart from me*. Thus as a King he preserves, sustains, and truces ad- them. *Genf.*

5. As a King he rewards their Obedience, and encourages their sincere Service. Tho' all they do for Christ be duty, yet he hath united their comfort with their duty; *this I had, because I kept thy Precepts*, Psal. 119. 56. They

218

are engaged to take this encouragement with them to every duty, that he whom they seek, is a *beautiful rewarder of such as diligently seek him*, Heb. 11. 6. O what a good Master do the Saints serve! Hear how a King expostulates with his Subjects, Jer. 2. 21. *Have I been a barren Wilderness, or a Land of darkness to you? q. d. Have I been such a hard Master to you? Have you any reason to complain of my Service? To whomsoever I have been strait-handed, surely I have not been so to you. You have not found the ways or wages of Sin like mine.*

Græbutem agit, five Agonothetam inter ceteros affectus; nam ceteris, id significat: cum igitur in cordibus nostris turbidi affectus, iræ, odii, vindictæ, hic pax Dei debet sum officium facere, i. e. instat agone thezæ lites dirimere, Davem, in Cal.

6. *He pacifies all inward Troubles, and commands Peace when their Spirits are tumultuous. This Peace of God rules in their Hearts*, Col. 3. 15. it doth *break* all the part of an Umpire, in appeasing Strife within. When the tumultuous Affections are up, and in a hurry: when Anger, Hatred, and Revenge begin to rise in the Soul, this hushes and stills all. *I will bearken (saith the Church) what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak Peace to his People, and to his Saints*, Psal. 85. 8. He that saith to the raging Sea, Be still. and it obeys him; he only can Pacifie the disquieted Spirit. They say of Frogs, that if they be croaking never so much in the night, bring but a Light among them, and they are all quiet: Such a Light is the Peace of God among our disordered Affections. These are Christ's Regal Acts. And he puts them forth upon the Souls of the People, powerfully, sweetly, suitably.

(1.) Powerfully: whether he restrains from Sin, or impels to Duty, he doth it with a Soul-determining Efficacy; *For his Kingdom is not in Word, but in Power*, 1 Cor. 4. 20. And those whom his Spirit leads, go bound in the Spirit, to the fulfilling and discharge of their Duties, *Acts* 20. 22. And yet,

(2.) He rules not by compulsion, but *meekly sweetly*. His Law is a Law of Love, written upon their Hearts. The Church is the Lamb's Wife, Rev. 19. 7. *A bruised Reed he shall not break, and smoking Flax he shall not quench*, Isa. 42. 2, 3. *I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ*, saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 10. 1. For he delighteth in free, not in forced Obedience. He rules *Children*, not Slaves. And so his *Kingly Power* is mixed with *Fatherly Love*. His Yoke is not made of *Iron*, but *Gold*.

(3.) He rules them suitably to their Natures. in a rational way: *Hof. 11. 4. I drew them with the cords of a Man, with bands of Love, i. e. in a way proper to convince their Reason, and work upon their Ingenuity. And thus his internal Kingdom is administered by his Spirit, who is Prorex, or Vicegerent in our Hearts.*

Thirdly, And Lastly, We will open the Privileges pertaining to all the Subjects of this Spiritual Kingdom. And they are such as follow.

1. *These Souls over whom Christ reigns, are certainly and fully set free from the Curse of the Law. If the Son makes you free, then are you free indeed*. Joh. 8. 36. I say not, they are free from the Law as a Rule of Life; such a Freedom were no Privilege to them at all: but free from the rigorous Exactions, and terrible Maledictions of it; to hear our Liberty pro-

claimed from this Bondage, is the joyful Sound indeed, the blessed Voice that ever our Ears heard. And this all that are in Christ shall hear: *If we be led by the Spirit, we are not under the Law*, Gal. 5. 18. *Blessed are the People that hear this joyful sound*, Psal. 89. 15.

2. Another Privilege of Christ's Subjects, is freedom from the dominion of Sin. *Rom. 6. 14. Sin shall not reign over them; for they are not under the Law, but under Grace*. One Heaven cannot bear two Suns; nor one Soul two Kings: when Christ takes the Throne, Sin quits it. It's true, the Being of Sin is there still; its defiling and troubling Power remains still, but its Dominion is abolished. O joyful tidings! O welcome day!

3. Another Privilege of Christ's Subjects, is Protection in all the Troubles and Dangers to which their Souls or Bodies are exposed. *This Man shall be the Peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our Land, and when he shall tread in our Palaces*, Mic. 5. 5. Kings owe Protection to their Subjects. None so able, so faithful in that work as Christ: *All thou gavest me, I have kept, and none is lost*, Joh. 17. 12.

4. Another Privilege of Christ's Subjects, is a merciful and tender bearing of their Burdens and Infirmities. They have a meek and patient King; *Tell the Daughter of Sion, thy King cometh meek and lowly*. Mat. 21. 5. Mat. 11. 29. *Take my yoke, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly*. The meek *Moses* could not bear the Provocations of the People, *Numb. 11. 12*. but Christ bears them all: *He carries the Lambs in his Arms, and gently leads them that be with young*, Isa. 42. 11. He is one that can have compassion upon the Ignorant, and them that are out of the way.

5. Again, *Sweet Peace, and Tranquillity of Soul, is the Privilege of the Subjects of this Kingdom*: For this Kingdom consisteth in Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, *Rom. 14. 17*. And till Souls come under his Scepter, they shall never find Peace: *Come unto me ye that are weary, I will give you rest*. Yet do not mistake, I say not they have all actual Peace, at all times: No, they often break that Peace by sin; but they have the root of Peace, the ground-work and cause of Peace. If they have not Peace, yet they have that which is convertible into Peace at any time. They also are in a state of Peace, *Rom. 5. 11. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God*. This is a feast every day; a Mercy which they only can duly value, that are in the depths of trouble for Sin.

6. And Lastly, *Everlasting Salvation is the Privilege of all over whom Christ reigns*. Prince and Saviour are joined together, *Acts. 5. 31*. He that can say, *thou shalt guide me with thy Counsels*, may add what follows, and afterwards bring me to Glory, *Psal. 73. 24*. Indeed the Kingdom of Grace doth but breed up Children for the Kingdom of Glory. And to speak as the thing is, it's the Kingdom of Heaven here begun. The difference betwixt them is not *specific*, but only *gradual*; and therefore this as well as that bears the name of the Kingdom of Heaven. The King is the same, and the

the Subjects the same. The Subjects of this are shortly to be translated to that Kingdom. Thus I have named, and indeed but named, some few of those inestimable Privileges of Christ's Subjects. We next apply it.

*Inference 1. How great is their Sin and Misery who continue in bondage to Sin and Satan, and refuse the Government of Christ! Who had rather sit under the shadow of that Bramble, than under the sweet and powerful Government of Christ. Satan writes his Laws in the Blood of his Subjects, grinds them with cruel Oppression, wears them out with bondage to divers Lusts, and rewards their service with everlasting Misery. And yet how few are weary of it, and willing to come over to Christ! 'Behold (said one of Christ's Heralds) Christ 'is in the Field, sent of God to recover his Right 'and your Liberty: His Royal Standard is pitched in the Gospel, and Proclamation made, that it 'any poor Sinners, weary of the Devil's Government, and laden with the miserable Chains of his spiritual Bondage, (so as these Irons of his 'Sins enter into his very Soul, to afflict it with 'the sense of them) shall thus come and repair to Christ, he shall have protection from God's 'Justice, the Devil's Wrath, and Sin's Dominion; 'in a word, he shall have rest, and that glorious, *IJa. 11. 10.**

And yet how few stir a foot towards Christ, but are willing to have their ears bored, and be perpetual slaves to that cruel Tyrant? O when will Sinners be weary of their Bondage, and sigh after Deliverance! If any such poor Soul shall read these Lines, let them know, and I do proclaim it in the Name of my Royal Master, and give him the word of a King for it, he shall not be rejected by Christ, *Joh. 6. 37.* Come, poor Sinners, come, the Lord Jesus is a merciful King, and never did, nor will hang up that poor Penitent, that puts the Rope about his own Neck, and submits to Mercy.

Inference 2. How much doth it concern us to enquire and know whose Government we are under, and who is King over our Souls; whether Christ or Satan be in the Throne, and sways the Scepter over our Souls?

Reader, the Work I would now engage thy Soul in, is the same that Jesus Christ will thoroughly and effectually do in the great day. Then will he gather out of his Kingdom every thing that offends, separate the Tares and Wheat, divide the whole World into two Ranks, or grand Divisions, how many Divisions and Sub-divisions soever there be in it now. It nearly concerns thee therefore to know who is Lord and King in thy Soul. To help thee in this great Work, make use of the following hints, for I cannot fully prosecute these things as I would.

1. *To whom do you yield your Obedience? His Subjects and Servants ye are to whom ye obey, *Rom. 6. 16.* It's but a mockery to give Christ the empty Titles of Lord and King, whilst ye give your real Service to Sin and Satan.*

O how many of us would have Christ divided in two halves, that we might take the half of him only, and take his Office, Jesus, and Salvation? But Lord is a common word, and to obey, and work out our own Salvation, and perfect Holiness, is the common and stony north-side of Christ, and that we choose and shift off.

Vol. I.

What is this but like the Jews, to bow the Knees to him, and say, Hail Master, and crucify him? *Then are ye his Disciples, if ye do whatsoever he commands you, *Joh. 15. 14.* He that is Christ's Servant in jest, shall be damned in earnest.* Christ doth not compliment with you, his Pardons, Promises, Salvation are real; O let your Obedience be so too! Let it be sincere and universal Obedience, this will evidence your unfeigned Subjection to Christ. Do not dare to enterprize any thing, till you know Christ's Pleasure and Will, *Rom. 12. 2.* Enquire of Christ, as *David* did of the Lord, *1 Sam. 23. 9, 10, 11.* Lord, may I do this or that? Or shall I forbear? I beseech thee tell thy Servant.

2. *Have you the power of Godliness, or a form of it only? There be many that do but trifle in Religion, and play about the skirts and borders of it; spending their time about jejune and barren Controversies: but as to the power of Religion, and life of Godliness, which consists in Communion with God in Duties and Ordinances, which promotes Holiness, and mortifies their Lusts, they concern not themselves about these things. But surely, the Kingdom of God is not in Word, but in Power, *1 Cor. 4. 20.* It is not Meats and Drink (that is, dry Disputes about Meats and Drinks) but Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, for he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of Men, *Rom. 14. 17, 18.* O I am afraid when the great Host of Professors shall be tried by these Rules, they will shrink up into a little handful, as *Gideon's* Host did.*

3. *Have ye the special saving Knowledge of Christ? All his Subjects are translated out of the Kingdom of Darkness, *Col. 1. 13.* The Devil that ruleth over you in the days of your Ignorance, is called the Ruler of the Darkness of this World: His Subjects are all blind, else he could never rule them: As soon as their Eyes be opened, they run out of his Kingdom, and there is no retaining them in subjection to him any longer. O enquire then, whether you are brought out of Darkness into this marvellous Light! Do you see your Condition, how sad, miserable, wretched it is by nature? Do you see your Remedy, as it lies only in Christ, and his precious Blood? Do you see the true way of obtaining Interest in that Blood by Faith? Doth this Knowledge run into Practice, and put you upon lamenting heartily your Misery by Sin? thirsting vehemently after Christ and his Righteousness? striving continually for a Heart to believe and close with Christ? This will evidence you indeed to be translated out of the Kingdom of Darkness into the Kingdom of Christ.*

4. *With whom do you delightfully associate your selves? Who are your chosen Companions? You may see to whom you belong by the Company you join your selves to. What do the Subjects of Christ among the Slaves of Satan? If the Subjects of one Kingdom be in another King's Dominion, they love to be together with their own Country-men, rather than the Natives of the place; so do the Servants of Christ. They are a company of themselves, as it is said, *Acts 4. 23.* They went to their own Company.*

L 2

Company. I know the Subjects of both Kingdoms are here mingled, and we cannot avoid the company of Sinners, except we go out of the World. 1 Cor. 5. 10. but yet all your Delights should be in the Saints, and in the Excellent of the Earth, *Psal.* 16. 3.

5. *Do ye live holy and righteous Lives?* If not, you may claim Interest in Christ as your King, but he will never allow your Claim. *The Scepter of his Kingdom is a Scepter of Righteousness,* *Psal.* 45. 6. If ye oppress, go beyond, and cheat your brethren, and yet call your selves Christ's Subjects, what greater Reproach can ye study to cast upon him? What! is Christ the King of Cheats? Doth he patronize such things as these? No, no, pull off your Vizards, and fall into your own places; you belong to another Prince, and not to Christ.

Inf. 3. Doth Christ exercise such a Kingly Power over the Souls of all them that are subdued by the Gospel to him? *O then let all that are under Christ's Government walk as the Subjects of such a King.* Imitate your King; the Examples of Kings are very influential upon their Subjects. Your King hath commanded you

not only to take his Yoke upon you, but also learn of him, *Mat.* 11. 29. Yea, and if any Man say that he is Christ's, let him walk even as Christ walked, 1 John 2. 6. Your King is meek and patient, *Isa.* 42. 7. as a Lamb for Meekness: Shall his Subjects be Lions for Fierceness? Your King was humble and lowly; *Mat.* 21. 5. *Behold the King cometh meek and lowly:* Will you be proud and lofty? Doth this become the Kingdom of Christ? Your King was a self denying King; he could deny his outward Comforts. Ease, Honour, Life, to serve his Father's Design, and accomplish your Salvation, 2 Cor. 8. 9. *Phil.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Shall his Servants be self ended, and self-seeking persons, that will expose his Honour, and hazard their own Souls for the trifles of Time? God forbid. Your King was painful, laborious and diligent in fulfilling his Work, *Joh.* 9. 2. Let not his Servants be lazy and slothful. O imitate your King, follow the Pattern of your King: This will give you Comfort now, and Boldness in the day of Judgment, if as he was, so ye are in this World, 1 *Jeh.* 4. 17.

Regis ad
exemplum
totius compo-
nitur or-
bis.

Ser. 17.
Opens
the
Kingly
Office of
Christ as
it is pro-
videnti-
ally exe-
cuted
upon the
World,
for the
Redeem-
ed.

S E R M O N XVII.

E P H E S. I. 22.

And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church.

THE foregoing Verses are spent in a thankful and humble Adoration of the Grace of God, in bringing these *Ephesians* to believe in Christ. This effect of that Power that raised their Hearts to believe in Christ, is here compared with that other glorious effect of it, even the raising of Christ himself from the dead: Both these owe themselves to the same efficient Cause. It raised Christ from a low Estate, even from the dead, to a high, a very high and glorious state; to be the Head both of the *World*, and of the *Church*; the Head of the World by way of Dominion, the Head of the Church by way of Union, and special Influence, ruling the World for the good of his People in it. *He gave him to be Head over all things to the Church.*

In this Scripture let these four things be seriously heeded.

1. The Dignity and Authority committed to Christ: *He hath put all things under his feet; which implies full, ample, and absolute Dominion* in him, and *Subjection* in them over whom he reigns. This Power is delegated to him by the Father: For besides the *essential, native, ingenerate* Power and Dominion over all, which he hath as God, and is common to every Person in the Godhead, *Psal.* 22. 28. there is a *mediatory dispensed* Authority, which is proper to him as *Mediator*, which he receives as the reward or fruit of his Suffering, *Phil.*

2. 8.

2. The Subject recipient of this Authority, which is Christ, and Christ *primarily, and only:* He is the *agere dominus*, first Recupitator of all Authority and Power. Whatev'er Authority any Creature is clothed with, is but *ministerial and derivative*, whether it be *Political or Ecclesiastical*. Christ is the *only Lord*, *Jude* 4. the Fountain of all Power.

3. The Object of this Authority, the whole Creation: *All things are put under his feet:* He rules from Sea to Sea, even to the utmost bounds of God's Creation, *Thou hast given him power over all flesh*, *John* 17. 2. all Creatures, rational and irrational, animate and inanimate, Angels, Devils, Men, Winds, Seas, all obey him.

4. And especially, take notice of the *finis* In bonum
cur, End for which he governs and rules the
Ecclesie
obinet
hoc impe-
rium. Gro-
rium in loc. universal Empire: It is *to the Church*, i. e. for the Advantage, Comfort, and Salvation of that chosen Remnant he died for. He purchased the Church; and that he might have the highest security that his Blood should not be lost, God the Father hath put all things into his hand, to order and dispose all as he pleaseth. For the furtherance of that his design and end, as he bought the Persons of some, to the Services of all the rest; and that they might effectually serve the End they are designed to, Christ will order them all in a blessed subordination and subervency thereunto. Hence the Point is,

Doct. *That all the Affairs of the Kingdom*
of

of Providence are ordered and determined by Jesus Christ, for the special Advancement, and everlasting Good of his redeemed People.

John 17. 2. *As thou hast given him power over all Flesh, that he should give Eternal Life to as many as thou hast given him.* Hence it comes to pass, that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose, Rom. 8. 28.

That Jesus Christ hath a providential Influence upon all the Affairs of this World, is evident both from *Scripture Assertions*, and *Rational Observations*, made upon the actings of things here below.

The first Chapter of *Ezekiel* contains an admirable Scheme or Draught of Providence. There you see how all the Wheels, that is, the Motions and Revolutions here on Earth, are guided by the Spirit that is in them. And ver. 26. it's all run up into the supream Cause: There you find one like the Son of Man, which is Jesus Christ, sitting upon the Throne, and giving forth Orders from thence for the Government of all: And if it were not so, how is it that there are such strong Combinations, and Predispositions of Persons and Things to such ends and issues, without any communications of Counsels, or holding of Intelligence with one another: As in *Israel's* deliverance out of *Egypt*, and innumerable more instances have appeared. Certainly if ten Men from several places should all meet at one place, and about one business, without any fore-appointment among themselves, it would argue their Motions were secretly over ruled by some invisible Agent. How is it that such marvellous Effects are produced in the VWorld by Causes that carry no proportion to them? *Amos* 5. 9. and *1 Cor.* 1. 27. and as often the most apt and likely means are rendered wholly ineffectual: *Psal.* 33. 16. In a word, if Christ hath no such providential influx, how are his people in all ages preserved in the midst of so many millions of potent and malicious enemies, a mongst whom they live as sheep in the midst of wolves? *Luk.* 10. 3. How is it that the Bush burns, and yet is not consumed? *Exod.* 4. 2.

But my business in this Discourse is not to prove that there is a Providence, which none but Atheists deny. I shall chuse rather to shew by what Acts Jesus Christ administers this Kingdom, and in what manner; and what use may be made thereof.

First, He rules and orders the Kingdom of Providence, by supporting, permitting, restraining, limiting, protecting, punishing, and rewarding those over whom he reigns providentially.

1. He supports the World, and all Creatures in it, by his Power. *My Father works hitherto, and I work,* John 5. 17. *And in him (that is, in Christ) all things consist,* Col. 1. 17. It's a considerable part of Christ's Glory

to have a whole world of Creatures owing their Beings and hourly Conservations to him. The parts of the World are not coupled and sifted together as the parts of a House, whose Beams are pinn'd and nail'd to each other; but rather as several Rings of Iron, which hang together by the virtue of a Loadstone. This goodly Fabrick was rais'd to the Foundation when Sin entred, and had tumbled into everlasting confusion, had not Christ slept in to thore up the reeling World. For the sakes of his Redeemed that inhabit it, he doth and will prop it by his omnipotent Power. And when he hath gathered all his Elect out of it into the Kingdom above, then will he set fire to the four quarters of it, and it shall lye in white Ashes. Mean while, he is given for a Covenant to the People, to establish the Earth, *Isa.* 49. 8.

2. He permits and suffers the worst of Creatures in his Dominion to be and act as they do. *The deceived and the deceiver are his,* Job 12. 16. Even those that fight against Christ and his People, receive both power and permission from him. Say not that it's unbecoming the most Holy to permit such Evils, which he could prevent if he pleased. For as he permits no more than he will over rule to his praise, so that very permission of his is holy and just. Christ's working is not confounded with the Creatures. Pure Sun beams are not tainted by the noisom vapours of the Dunghill on which they shine. His Holiness hath no fellowship with their Iniquities; nor are their Transgressions at all excused by his permissions of them. *He is a Rock, his Work is perfect;* but they have corrupted themselves, *Deut.* 22. 4. 5. This holy permission is but the with-holding of those restraints from their Lusts, and denying those common assistances which he is no way bound to give them. *Acts* 14. 16. *He suffered all Nations to walk in their own ways.* And yet should he permit sinful Creatures to act out all the wickedness that is in their hearts, there would neither remain place nor order in the World. And therefore,

He powerfully restrains Creatures by the bridle of Providence, from the commission of those things to which their hearts are propense enough. *Psal.* 76. 10. *The remainder of wrath thou wilt restrain,* or gird up; leaving forth just so much as shall serve his holy ends, and no more. And truly this is one of the glorious mysteries of Providence, which amazes the serious and considerate Soul; to see the Spirit of a Creature fully set to do mischief; Power enough, as one would think, in his hand to do it, and a door of opportunity standing open for it; and yet the eldest strangely hindered. The strong propensions of the Will are inwardly check'd, as in the case of *Laban*, *Gen.* 21. 24. or a diversion and rub is strangely call'd in their way; as in the case of *Senacherib*, *2 Kings* 19. 7. 8. so that their hands cannot perform their enterprizes. *Julian* had two great designs before him, one was to conquer the *Persians*, the other to root out the *Galileans*; as he by way of contempt called the Christians: But he will begin with the *Persians* first, and then make a Sacrifice of all the Christians

Propter, Ecclesiam in mundo durat mundas, aliquin a- no momento confusaret caelum & terra; quia mundus non est dignus uno grano tritici, siquidem plenus est blasphemis & impietate. Nisi oratione & doctrina sustentaret Ecclesia mundum uno momento periret omnia. Luther in Gen. 30.

הנהגה
אצות.

Christians to his Idols. He doth so, and perishes in the first attempt. O the wisdom of Providence!

4. Jesus Christ *limits* the Creatures in their acting, limiting them their boundaries and lines of liberty; to which they may, but beyond it cannot go. Rev. 2. 10. *Fear none of those things that ye shall suffer; behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, and ye shall have tribulation for ten days.* They would have cast them into their graves, but it shall only be into prisons: They would have stretch'd out their hands upon them all; no, but only some of them shall be exposed: They would have kept them there perpetually; no, it must be but for ten days. Ezek. 22. 6. *Behold, the Princes of Israel were in thee, every one to their power to shed blood.* They went as far as they had power to go, not as far as they had will to go. Four hundred and thirty years were determined upon the people of God in Egypt; and then, *even in that very night*, God brought them forth; for then *the time of the promise was come*, Acts 7. 17.

5. The Lord Jesus providentially *protects* his People amidst a world of enemies and dangers. It was Christ that appeared unto *Moses* in the flaming Bush, and preserved it from being consumed. The Bush signified the People of God in Egypt: The Fire flaming on it, the exquisite Sufferings they there endured: The Safety of the Bush amidst the flames, the Lord's admirable care and protection of his poor suffering ones. None so tenderly careful as Christ. *As birds flying, so he defends Jerusalem, Isa. 31. 5. i. e.* as they fly swiftly towards their nests, crying when their young are in danger, so will the Lord preserve his. They are *preserved in Christ Jesus*, Jude 1. as *Noah* and his family were in the Ark. Hear how a Worthy of our own expresses himself upon this point.

'That we are at peace in our houses, at rest in our beds; that we have any quiet in our enjoyments, is from hence alone. Whose person would not be defiled or destroyed? Whose habitation would not be ruined? Whose blood almost would not be shed, if wicked men had power to perpetrate all their conceived sin? It may be, the ruin of some of us hath been conceived a thousand times. We are beholden to this Providence of obliterating sin, for our lives, our families, our estates, our liberties, and whatsoever is or may be dear to us. For may we not say sometimes with the Psalmist, *Psal. 57. 4. My Soul is among Lions, and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears, and their tongue a sharp sword?* And how is the deliverance of men contrived from such persons? *Psal. 8. 6. God breaks their teeth in their mouths, even the great teeth of the young Lions.* He keeps this fire from burning, — some he cuts off and destroys: Some he cuts short in their power: Some he deprives of the instruments whereby alone they can work: Some he prevents of their desired opportunities, or diverts by other objects for their lusts; and oftentimes causeth them to spend them among themselves, one upon another. We may say therefore with the Psalmist, *Psal.*

104. 24. O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all; the Earth is full of thy Riches.

6. He *punishes* the evil doers, and repays by Providence into their own lap the mischief they do, or but intend to do unto them that fear him. *Pharaoh, Senacherib*, both the *Julians*, and innumerable more, are the lasting monuments of his righteous Retribution. *Tis true, a sinner may do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged;* but oft-times God hangs up some eminent Sinners in chains, as spectacles and warnings to others. Many a heavy blow hath Providence given the enemies of God, which they were never able to claw off. Christ rules, and that with a rod of Iron, in the midst of his enemies, *Psal. 110. 2.*

7. And Lastly, He *rewards* by Providence the services done to him and his people. Out of this treasure of Providence God repays oftentimes those that serve him, and that with a hundredfold reward now in this life, *Mat. 19. 29.* This active vigilant Providence hath its eye upon all the wants, straits and troubles of the Creatures; but especially upon such as Religion brings us unto. What huge volumes of Experiences might the people of God write upon this Subject? And what a pleasant History would it be to read the strange, constant, wonderful, and unexpected actions of Providence for them that have let themselves to its care?

Secondly, We shall next enquire how Jesus Christ administers this providential Kingdom.

And here I must take notice of the *means* by which, and the *manner* in which he doth it. The means or instruments he uses in the governing the providential Kingdom, (for he cannot be personally present with us himself) are either *Angels* or *Men*; the *Angels* are ministering Creatures sent forth by him for the good of them that shall be the heirs of Salvation, Heb. 1. 14. *Luther* tells us they have two offices, *superius canere. & inferius vigilare*, to sing above, and watch beneath. Thie do us many invisible offices of Love. They have dear and tender respects and love for the Saints. To them, God, as it were, puts forth his Children to nurse, and they are tenderly careful of them whilst they live, and bring them home in their arms to their Father when they die. And as *Angels*, so *Men* are the servants of Providence; yea, bad men as well as good. *Cyrus* on that account is called God's Servant: they fulfil his will, whilst they are persecuting their own lusts. *The Earth shall help the Woman*, Rev. 12. 16. But good Men delight to serve Providence: They and the *Angels* are Fellow-servants in one house, and to one master, Rev. 19. 10. Yea, there is not a Creature in Heaven, or Earth, or Hell, but Jesus Christ can providentially use it, and serve his ends, and promote his designs by it. But whatever the Instrument be Christ uses, of this we may be certain, that his providential working is holy, judicious, sovereign, profound, irresistible, harmonious, and to the Saints peculiar.

1. It's holy. Tho' he permits, limits, orders, and over rules many unholy persons and actions, yet he still works like himself, most holily and purely throughout. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.*

works, Psal. 145. 17. it's easier to separate Light from a Sun-beam, than Holiness from the Works of God. The best of Men cannot escape Sin in their most holy actions; they cannot touch, but are defiled. But no Sin cleaves to God, whatever he hath to do about it.

2. Christ's providential working is not only most pure and holy, but also most wise and judicious. Ezek. 1. 20. *The wheels are full of eyes*: They are not moved by a blind Impetus, but in deep Counsel and Wisdom. And indeed the Wisdom of Providence manifests it self principally in the choice of such states for the People of God, as shall most effectually promote their internal happiness. And herein it goes quite beyond our understandings and comprehensions. It makes that medicinal and salutarious, which we judge as destructive to our comfort and good as Poison. I remember it is a note of *Suarez*, speaking of the Felicity of the other World; then (saith he) the blessed shall see in God all things and circumstances pertaining to them excellently accommodated and attempered; then they shall see that the crossing of their desires was the saving of their Souls; and that otherwise they had perished. The most wise Providence looks beyond us. It eyes the end, and suits all things thereto, and not to our fond desires.

3. The Providence of Christ is most supreme and sovereign. *Whatsoever he pleaseth, that he doth in Heaven and Earth, and in all places*, Psal. 135. 6. *He is the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*, Rev. 19. 16. The greatest Monarchs on Earth are but as little bits of Clay, as the Worms of the Earth to him; they all depend on him. Prov. 8. 15, 16. *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice: by me Princes rule, Nobles, even all the Judges of the Earth*.

quo Co-rona sunt; igitur aurum auri perinde valere videtur, atque Rex Regum. *Brightman in Cant.*

4. Providence is profound and inscrutable. The Judgments of Christ are as the great deeps, and his footsteps are not known, Psal. 36. 6. There are hard Texts in the Works as well as in the Words of Christ. The wisest Heads have been at a loss in interpreting some Providences. Jer. 12. 1, 2. Job 21. 7. The Angels had the hands of a Man under their wings, Psal. 1. 8. i. e. they wrought secretly and mysteriously.

5. Providence is irresistible in its design and motions; for all Providences are but the fulfillings and accomplishments of God's immutable Decrees: Eph. 1. 11. *He works all things according to the counsel of his own will*. Hence Zech. 6. 1. the instruments by which God executed his wrath, are called *Chariots coming from betwixt two mountains of Brass*, i. e. the firm and immutable Decrees of God. When the Jews put Christ to death, they did but do what the band and counsel of God hath before determined to be done, Acts 4. 23. so that none can oppose or resist Providence. *I will work, and who shall let it?* Isa. 43. 13.

6. The Providences of Christ are harmonious. There are secret chains, and invisible connections betwixt the works of Christ: We know

not how to reconcile Promises and Providences together, nor yet Providences one with another: but certainly they all *work together*, Rom. 8. 28. as adjuvant causes, or con-causes standing under, and working by the influence of the first Cause. He doth not do, and undo; destroy by one Providence what he built by another. But look, as all Seasons of the year, the nipping Frosts, as well as Halcion days of Summer, do all conspire and conduce to the Harvest; so it is in Providence.

7. And lastly, The Providences of Christ *work in a special and peculiar way, for the good of the Saints*. His providential is subordinate to his spiritual Kingdom. *He is the Saviour of all Men, especially of them that believe*, 1 Tim. 4. 10. These only have the blessing of Providence. Things are so laid and ordered, as that their eternal good shall be promoted and secured by all that Christ doth.

Inference 1. If so, See then in the first place, to whom you are beholden for your lives, liberties, comforts, and all that you enjoy in this world. Is it not Christ that takes order for you? He is indeed in Heaven, out of your sight; but tho' you see him not, he sees you, and takes care of all your concerns. When one told *Silentiarius* of a plot laid to take away his life, he answered, *Si Deus mei curam non habet, quid vivo?* If God take no care of me, how do I live? how have I escaped hitherto? In all thy ways acknowledge him, Prov. 3. 6. It's he that hath criped out that state thou art in, as most proper for thee. It's Christ that doth all for you that is done. He looks down from Heaven upon all that fear him; he sees when you are in danger by Temptation, and cast into a Providence you know not how, to hinder it. He sees when you are sad, and orders reviving Providences to refresh you. He sees when Corruptions prevail, and orders humbling Providences to purge them. Whatever Mercies you have received all along the way you have gone hitherto, are the orderings of Christ for you. And you should carefully observe how the Promises and Providences have kept equal pace with one another, and both gone step by step with you until now.

Inference 2. Hath God left the government of the whole World in the hands of Christ, and trusted him over all? Then do you also leave all your particular concerns in the hands of Christ too, and know that the infinite Wisdom and Love which rules the World, manages every thing that relates to you. It is in a good hand, and infinitely better, than if it were in your own. I remember when *Melanchton* was under some dependencies of spirit about the estate of God's people in Germany, *Luther* chides him thus for it, *Destinat Philippus esse rector mundi*, let *Phillip* cease to rule the World. It's none of our work to steer the course of Providence, or direct its motions, but to submit quietly to him that doth. There is an itch in Men, yea, in the best of Men, to be disputing with God: Let me talk with thee of thy Judgments, saith *Jeremy*, ch. 12. 1, 2. Yea, how apt are we to regret at Providences, as if they had no conducency at all to the glory of God,

Non caeco impetu volvitur rota.

Scates lu-
da videt
res omnes
accommo-
datus ad se
perinena-
tes, & om-
nes cir-
cumstanc-
ias accom-
modatas.
Suarez.

Caput ejus
aurum
aui, quo
significatur
precellens
super om-
nia digni-
tatem regni
Christi.
Aurum enim
in capite est
cuspide regum, ex
quo Co-
rona sunt; igitur aurum auri perinde valere videtur, atque Rex Regum.
Brightman in Cant.

Permontes
intelligit
arcaum
Dei con-
siliium.
Calv.

Firmissima
& insecru-
tabilia Dei
consilia.
Drujuz.

Monendus
est Philip-
pus ut de-
finat esse
rector
mundi:
*Melch.
Adam.*

orto our good, *Exod. 5. 22.* yea, to limit Providence to our way and time? Thus the Israelites tempted God, and limited the Holy One, *Psal. 68. 18, 41.* How often also do we unbelievably distrust Providence, as tho' it could never accomplish what we profess to expect and believe? *Ezek. 37. 11.* *Our bones are dry, our hope is lost; we are cut off for our part.* So *Gen. 18. 13, 14. Isa. 40. 17.* There are but few Abrahams among Believers, who against hope, believed in hope, giving glory to God, *Rom. 4. 20.* And it is but too common for good Men to *repine* and fret at Providence, when their Wills, Lusts, or Humours are crossed by it: This was the great Sin of *Jonah.* Brethren, these things ought not to be so. Did you but seriously consider, either the design of Providence, which is to bring about the gracious Designs and Purposes of God upon you, which were laid before this World was, *Ephes. 1. 11.* or that it is a *lifting up of thy Wisdom* against his, as if thou couldst better order thine Affairs, if thou hadst but the conduct and management of them; or that you have to do herein with a great and dreadful God, in whose hands you are as the Clay in the Potter's hand, that may do what he will with you, and all that is yours, without giving you an account of any of his matters, *Job 33. 13,* or whether Providence hath cast others, as good by Nature as your selves, tumbled them down from the top of Health, Wealth, Honours and Pleasures, to the bottom of Hell: Or, lastly, did you but consider how often it hath formerly baffled and befuddled your selves; made you retract with shame, your rash headlong censures of it; and enforced you, by the sight of its Births and Issues, to confess your folly and ignorance, as *Azaph* did, *Psal. 73. 22.* I say, if such considerations as these could but have place with you in your Troubles and Temptations, they would quickly mould your hearts into a better and more quiet frame.

O that I could but persuade you to resign all to Christ. He is a cunning Workman, as he is called, *Prov. 8. 30.* and can effect what he pleaseth. It's a good Rule; *Da operibus Dei non est judicandum, ante quintum actum.* Let God work out all that he intends, have but patience till he hath put the last hand to his work, and then find fault with it if you can: You have heard of the patience of *Job*, and have seen the end of the Lord, *Jam. 5. 11.*

Inference 3. If Christ be Lord and King over the providential Kingdom and that for the good of his People, let none that are Christ's becauseth stand in a slavish fear of Creatures. It's a good Note that *Grotius* hath upon my Text; it's a marvellous Consolation, (saith he) that Christ hath fo great an Empire, and that he governs it for the good of his People, as a Head consulting the good of the Body. Our Head and Husband is Lord-General of all the Hosts of Heaven and Earth; no Creature can move hand or tongue without his leave or order; the Power they have is given them from above, *Joh. 19. 11, 12.* The serious consideration of this Truth will make the feeblest Spirit cease trembling, and fill a singing; *Psal. 47. 7.* *The Lord is King of all the Earth, sing ye praises with understanding:* That is, (as some well paraphrase it) every one that hath

understanding of this comfortable Truth. Hath he not given you abundant security in many express Promises, that all shall issue well for you that fear him? *Rom. 8. 28.* *All things shall work together for good, to them that love God.* And *Eccles. 8. 12.* *verily it shall be well with them that fear God, even with them that fear before him.* And suppose he had not, yet the very understanding of our relation to such a King, should in it self be sufficient security: For he is the (a) universal, (b) supream, (c) absolute, (d) meek and merciful, (e) victorious, and (f) immortal King.

He sits in glory at the Father's right hand; and to make his Seat the easier, his Enemies are a footstool for him. His love to his People is unspeakably tender and fervent; he that touches them, touches the apple of his Eye, *Zech. 2.* And it's hardly imaginable that Jesus Christ will sit still, and suffer his Enemies to thrust out his eyes. Till this be forgotten, the wrath of Man is not feared; *Isa. 51. 12, 13.* *He that fears a Man that shall die, forgets the Lord his Maker.* He loves you too well to sign any Order to your prejudice, and without his order none can touch you.

Inference 4. If the Government of the World be in the hands of Christ, then our engaging and entitling of Christ to all our Affairs and Business, is the true and ready way to their success and prosperity. If all depend upon his Pleasure, then sure it's your wisdom to take him along with you to every action and business; it's no lost time that's spent in Prayer, wherein we ask his leave, and beg his presence with us: And take it for a clear Truth, that which is not prefaced with Prayer, will be followed with Trouble. How easily can Jesus Christ dash all your designs when they are at the very birth and article of execution, and break off in a moment all the purposes of your hearts? It's a Proverb among the Papists, that *Mase and Meat binder no Man.* The Turks will pray five times a day, how urgent soever their business be. Blush you that enterprize your Affairs without God: I reckon that business as good as done, to which we have gotten Christ's leave, and engaged his Presence to accompany us to it.

Inference 5. Lastly, Eye Christ in all the events of Providence; see his hand in all that befalls you, whether it be evil or good. The Works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have Pleasure therein, *Psal. 111.*

2. How much good might we get, by observation of the good or evil that befalls us throughout our course!

1. In all the Evils of trouble and afflictions that befall you, eye Jesus Christ in all; and set your hearts to the study of these four things in affliction.

(1.) Study his Sovereignty and Dominion; for he creates and forms them: They rise not out of the Dust, nor do they befall you casually; but he raises them up, and gives them their Commission, *Jer. 18. 11.* *Behold, I create evil, and devise device against you.* He elects the Instrument of your trouble; he makes the Rod as afflictive as he pleaseth; he orders the continuance and end of your troubles; and they will not cease to be afflictive to you, till Christ say, *Leave*

Duo habet significat, artificem probatum, & artificem in arte sua excellentem. *Gloss.* Magna consolatio, quod tantum imperium habet is, qui dicitur exercet Ecclesie bono, si cur caput consule corpori. *Grotius.*

See my Sent. in decc. p. 70. &c.

Leave off, it is enough. The Centurion wisely considered this, when he told him, *Luke 7. 8. I have Soldiers under me, and I say to one, Go, and he goeth, to another, Come, and he cometh:* Meaning, that as his Soldiers were at his beck and command, so Diseases were at Christ's beck, to come and go as he ordered them.

(2.) *Study the Wisdom of Christ in the contrivance of your Troubles.* And his Wisdom shines out many ways in them: It's evident in chusing such *kinds* of troubles for you; this, and not that, because this is more apt to work upon, and purge out the corruption that most predominates in you: In the *degrees* of your troubles, suffering them to work to such a height, else not reach their end; but no higher, lest they overwhelm you.

(3.) *Study the tenderness and compassions of Christ over his afflicted.* O think if the Devil had but the mixing of my Cup, how much more bitter would he make it! There would not be one drop of Mercy, no, not of sparing Mercy in it, which is the lowest of all sorts of Mercy: But here is much Mercy mixed with my Troubles; there is Mercy in this, that it is no worse. Am I afflicted: *It's the Lord's Mercy I am not consumed*, Lam. 3. 22. It might have been Hell as well as this; there is Mercy in his supports under it. Others have, and I might have been left to sink and perish under my burdens. *Mercy*, in deliverance out of it; this might have been everlasting darkness, that should never have had a morning. O the tenderness of Christ over his afflicted!

(4.) *Study the Love of Christ to thy Soul in affliction.* Did he not love thee, he would not sanctifie a Rod to humble or reduce thee, but let thee alone to rot and perish in thy Sin. *Rev. 3. 19. Whom I love, I rebuke and chasten.* This is the device of Love, to recover thee to thy God, and prevent thy ruin. O what an advantage would it be thus to study Christ, in all your Evils that befall you!

2. *Eye and study Christ in all the Good you re-*

ceive from the hand of Providence. Turn both sides of your Mercies, and view them in all their lovely Circumstances.

(1.) *Eye them in their suitableness;* how conveniently Providence hath ordered all things for thee. Thou hast a narrow heart, and a small estate suitable to it: Hadst thou more of the World, it would be like a large Sall to a little Boat, which would quickly pull thee under water: Thou hast that which is most suitable to thee of all conditions.

(2.) *Eye the seasonableness of thy Mercies,* how they are timed to an hour. Providence brings forth all its Fruits in due season.

(3.) *Eye the peculiar Nature of thy Mercies.* Others have common, thou special ones; others have but a single, thou a double sweetness in thy enjoyments, one natural from the matter of it, another spiritual from the way in which, and end for which it comes.

(4.) *Observe the Order in which Providence sends your Mercies.* See how one is linked strangely to another, and is a door to let in many. Sometimes one Mercy is introductive to a thousand.

(5.) And Lastly, *Observe the constancy of them, they are new every morning*, Lam. 3. 23. How assiduously doth God visit thy Soul and Body! Think with thy self, if there be but a suspension of the Care of Christ for one hour, that hour would be thy ruin. Thousand of Evils stand round about thee, watching when Christ will but remove his eye from thee, that they may rush in, and devour thee.

Could we thus study the Providence of Christ in all the good and evil that befalls us in the World, then in every state we should be content, *Phil. 4. 11.* Then we should never be stop'd, but furthered in our way by all that falls out; then would our Experiences swell to great Volumes, which we might carry to Heaven with us; and then should we answer all Christ's Ends in every state he brings us into. Do this, and say, *Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.*

S E R M O N XVIII.

P H I L. II. 8.

And being found in fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, and became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross.

Ser. 18.
Opens
the ne-
cessity of
Christ's
Humi-
liation,
in order
to the
executi-
on of all
these his
King, for
the carry-
ing on the
blessed
Design of
our Redem-
ption; the
execution
of these
Offices
necessari-
ly requir-
ed that he
should be
both deep-
ly abased,
and highly
exalted. He
cannot as
our Priest
offer up
himself a
Sacrifice
to God for
us, except
he be hum-
bled, and
humbled to
death. He
cannot as a
King power-
fully apply
the virtue
of that his
Sacrifice,
except he
be exalted,
yea, highly
exalted. Had
he not
stooped to
the low es-
tate of a
Man, he
had not as
a Priest had
a Sacrifice
of his own
to offer; as

YOU have heard how Christ was invested with the Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, for the carrying on the blessed Design of our Redemption; the execution of these Offices necessarily required that he should be both deeply abased, and highly exalted. He cannot as our Priest offer up himself a Sacrifice to God for us, except he be humbled, and humbled to death. He cannot as a King powerfully apply the virtue of that his Sacrifice, except he be exalted, yea, highly exalted. Had he not stooped to the low estate of a Man, he had not as a Priest had a Sacrifice of his own to offer; as

a Prophet, he had not been fit to teach us the Will of God, so as that we should be able to bear it; as a King, he had not been a suitable Head to the Church: And had he not been highly exalted, that Sacrifice had not been carried within the Vail before the Lord. Those discoveries of God could not have been universal, effectual and abiding. The Government of Christ could not have secured, protected and defended the Subjects of his Kingdom.

The infinite Wisdom prospecting all this, ordered that Christ should first be deeply humbled, then highly exalted: Both which states of

Vol. I.

M

Christ

than nothing, and vanity. If indeed this great and incomprehensible Majesty will himself stoop to the state and condition of a Creature, we may easily believe that being once a Creature, he would expose himself to Hunger, Thirst, Shame, Spitting, Death, or any thing but Sin. For that once being Man, he should endure any of these things, is not so wonderful, as that he should become a Man. This was the low stoop, a deep abasement indeed.

2. It was a marvellous Humiliation to the Son of God, not only to become a Creature, but an Inferiour Creature, a Man, and not an Angel. Had he took the Angelical Nature, tho' it had been a wonderful abasement to him, yet he had staid (if I may so speak) nearer his own Home, and been somewhat liker to a God, than now he appeared, when he dwelt with us: For Angels are the highest, and most excellent of all created Beings. For their Nature, they are pure Spirits; for their Wisdom, Intelligencies; for their Dignity, they are called Principalities and Powers; for their Habitations, they are stiled the Heavenly Host; and for their Employment, it is to behold the Face of God in Heaven. The highest pitch, both of our Holiness and Happiness in the coming World, is expressed by this, we shall be *equal to the Angels*, Luk. 20. 36. As Man is nothing to God, so he is much inferior to the Angels; so much below them, that he is not able to bear the sight of an Angel, tho' in a human shape, rendering himself as familiarly as may be to him, *Judg. 13. 22.* When the *Psalmist* had contemplated the Heavens, and viewed the Celestial Bodies, the glorious Luminaries, the Moon and Stars which God had made; he cries out, *Psalm. 8. 5. What is Man, that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man, that thou visitest him!* Take Man at his best, when he came a perfect and pure piece out of his Maker's hand, in the state of Innocency; yet he was inferior to Angels. They always bare the Image of God in a more eminent degree than Man, as being wholly spiritual Substances, and so more lively representing God, than Man could do, whose noble Soul is immerst in Matter, and closed up in Flesh and Blood: Yet Christ chuseth this inferior order and species of Creatures, and passeth by the Angelical Nature; *Heb. 2. 16. He took not to him the nature of Angels, but the seed of Abraham.*

3. Moreover, Jesus Christ did not only neglect the Angelical, and assume the Human Nature; but he also assumed the Human Nature, after Sin had blotted the original Glory of it, and wither'd up the beauty and excellency thereof. For he came not in our Nature before the Fall, whilst as yet its Glory was fresh in it; but he came, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom. 8. 3. In the likeness of sinful Flesh, i. e. in Flesh that had the marks, and miserable effects, and consequences of Sin upon it.* I say not that Christ assumed sinful Flesh, or Flesh really defiled by Sin. That which was born of the Virgin was a holy thing. For by the power of the Highest, (whether by way of Manufacture, as some; or the energetical Command and Ordination of the Holy Ghost, as others; or by his Benediction and Blessing, I here dispute not) that wherof

Vol. I.

the Body of Christ was to be formed, was so sanctified that no taint or spot of original Pollution remained in it. But yet tho' it had not intrinsecal native Uncleaness in it, it had the effects of Sin upon it; yea, it was attended with the whole Troop of human Infirmities, that Sin at first ler into our common nature, such as Hunger, Thirst, Weariness, Pain, Mortality, and all those natural weaknesses and evils that clog our miserable Natures, and make them groan from day to day under them.

By reason wherof, tho' he was not a Sinner, yet he looked like one: And they that saw and conversed with him, took him for a Sinner, seeing all these effects of Sin upon him. In these things he came as near to Sin as his Holiness could admit. O what a stoop was this! to be made in the likeness of Flesh, tho' the innocent Flesh of Adam, had been much; but to be made in the likeness of sinful Flesh, the Flesh of Sinners, Rebels; Flesh, tho' not defiled, yet miserably defaced by Sin; O what is this! and who can declare it! And indeed, if he will be a Mediator of Reconciliation, it was necessary it should be so. It behoved him to assume the same nature that sinned, to make satisfaction in it. Yea, these sinful Infirmities were necessary to be assumed with the Nature, for as much as his bearing them was a part of his Humiliation, and went to make up satisfaction for us. Moreover, by them our High-Priest was qualified from his own experience, and filled with tender compassion to us.

But O the admirable condescensions of a Saviour, to take such a Nature! to put on such a Garment when thread-bare and ragged! Did this become the Son of God to wear? O Grace unsearchable!

4. And yermore, by this his Incarnation he was greatly humbled, in as much as this his Incarnation so veiled, clouded, and disguised him, that during the time he lived here, he looked not like himself, as God; but as a poor, sorry, contemptible Sinner, in the eyes of the World; they scorned him. *This fellow said, Mat. 26. 61. Hereby he made himself of no reputation, Phil. 2. 6.* It blotted his Honour and Reputation. By reason hereof he lost all esteem and honour from those that saw him, *Mat. 13. 55. Is not this the Carpenter's Son?* To see a poor Man travelling up and down the Country, Hunger, Thirst, Weariness, attended with a company of poor Men; one of his company bearing the Bag, and that which was put therein: *Joh. 13. 29.* Who that had seen him, would ever had thought this had been the Creator of the World, the Prince of the Kings of the Earth? *He was despised, and we esteemed him not.* Now which of you is there that would not rather chuse to endure such Misery as a Man, than to be degraded into a contemptible Worm, that every body treads upon, and no Man regards it? Christ looked so unlike a God in this habit, that he was scarce allowed the name of a Man; a Worm rather than a Man.

And think with your selves now, was not this astonishing Self-denial? That he who from Eternity had his Father's Smiles and Honours, he that, from the Creation was adored, and,

M 2

wor-

worshipped by Angels, as their God, must now become a Footstool for every Mitreant to tread on; and not to have the respects due to a Man; sure this was a deep Abasement. It was a black Cloud that for so many years darkened, and shut up his manifestative Glory, that it should not shine out to the World; only some weak Rays of the Godhead shone to some few eyes, through the chinks of his Humanity: As the clouded Sun sometimes opens a little, and casts some faint beams, and is muffled up again. *We saw his glory, as of the only begotten Son*: but the World knew him not, *Joh. 1. 14*. If a Prince walk up and down in a disguise, he must expect no more honour than a mean Subject. This was the case of our Lord Jesus Christ, this Disguise made him contemptible, and an object of Scorn.

5. Again, Christ was greatly humbled by his Incarnation, in as much as thereby he was put at a distance from his Father, and that ineffable Joy and Pleasure he eternally had with him. Think not, Reader, but the Lord Jesus lived at a high and unimitable rate of Communion with God, while he walked here in the Flesh: But yet to live by Faith as Christ here did, is one thing; and to be in the bosom of God, as he was before, is another thing. To have the ineffable Delights of God perpetuated and continued to him, without one moment's interruption from eternity, is one thing; and to have his Soul sometimes filled with the Joy of the Lord, and then all overcast with clouds of Wrath again; to cry, and God not hear, as he complains, *Psal. 22. 2*. nay, to be reduced to such a low ebb of spiritual Comforts, as to be forced to cry out so bitterly, as he did, *Psal. 22. 1*. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* This was a thing Christ was very unacquainted with, till he was found in habit as a Man.

6. And lastly, It was a great stoop and condescension of Christ if he would become a Man, to take his Nature from such obscure Parents, and chuse such a low and contemptible state in this World as he did. He will be born, but not of the Blood of Nobles, but of a poor Woman in *Israel*, espoused to a Carpenter: yea, and that too, under all the disadvantages imaginable; not in his Mother's House, but an Inn; yea, in the Stable too. He suited all to that abased state he was designed for; and came among us under all the humbling Circumstances imaginable: *You know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, (saith the Apostle) *how that tho' he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor*, *2 Cor. 8. 9*. And thus I have shewn you some few particulars of Christ's Humiliation in his Incarnation. Next we shall infer some things from it that are practical.

Inference 1. Hence we gather the fulness and completeness of Christ's Satisfaction, as the sweet first fruits of his Incarnation. Did Man offend and violate the Law of God? Behold, God himself is become Man to repair that breach, and satisfy for the wrong done. The highest Honour that ever the Law of God received, was to have such a Person as the Man Christ Jesus is, to stand before its Bar, and make reparation to it. This is more than if it had

poured out all our Blood, and built up its Honour upon the Ruins of the whole Creation.

It is not so much to see all the Stars in Heaven overcast, as to see one Sun eclipsed. The greater Christ was, the greater was his Humiliation; and the greater his Humiliation was, the more full and complete was his Satisfaction; and the more completeness there is in Christ's Satisfaction, the more perfect and ready is the Believer's Consolation. If he had not stooped so low, our Joy and Comfort could not be exalted so high. The depth of the Foundation, is the strength of the Superstructure.

*Inference 2. Did Christ stoop for our sakes stoop from the Majesty, Glory and Dignity he was possessed of in Heaven, to the mean and contemptible state of a Man? What a Pattern of Self-denial is here presented to Christians? What objection against, or excuse to shirk off this Duty, can remain, after such an Example as is here propounded? Brethren, let me tell you, the Pagan World was never acquainted with such an Argument as this, to press them to Self-denial. Did Christ stoop, and cannot you stoop? Did Christ stoop so much, and cannot you stoop in the least? Was he content to become any thing, a Worm, a Reproach, a Curse; and cannot you digest any Abasements? Do the least slights and neglects rankle your Hearts, and poison them with Discontent, Malice and Revenge? O how unlike Christ are you! Hear, and blush in hearing, what your Lord saith in *Joh. 13. 14*. *If I then your Lord and Master, wash your Feet; ye also ought to wash one another's Feet.* The Example obliges not (as a learned Man well observes) to the same individual act, but it obliges us to follow the reason of the Example; that is, after Christ's Example we must be ready to perform the lowest and meanest Offices of Love and Service to one another. And indeed to this it obliges most forcibly; for it is as if a Master seeing a proud sturdy Servant, that grudges at the work he is employed about, as if it were too mean and base, should come and take it out of his hand; and when he has done it, should say, Doth not your Lord and Master think it beneath him to do it? And is it beneath you? I remember it is*

an excellent Saying that *Bernard* hath upon the Nativity of Christ; saith he, What more detestable, what more unworthy, or that deserves severer punishment, than for a poor Man to magnifie himself, after he hath seen the great endum, and high God so humbled, as to become a little quam ut Child? It is intolerable impudence for a Worm to swell with Pride, after it hath seen Majesty emptying it self; to see one so infinitely above us, to stoop so far beneath us. O how convincing and shaming should it be! Ah how opposite should Pride and Stoutness be to the Spirit of a Christian! I am sure nothing is more detestable, ut so to the Spirit of Christ. Your Saviour was ubi sese lowly, meek, self-denying, and of a most condescending Spirit; he looked not at his own things, but yours, *Phil. 2. 4*. And doth it become you to be proud, selfish and stout? I ur, & remember *Jerom* in his Epistle to *Pamachius*, *Bern. Serm. 1. de Nativitate* a godly young Noble man, advieth him to be Eyes.

Obligat nos ad rationem exempli, magis quam ad individuum actum, Charnier. Tom. 3. l. 19. c. 7.

Quis magis indignum, quid detestandum amplius, quid gravius puniendum, et high God so humbled, as to become a little quam ut Child? It is intolerable impudence for a Worm to swell with Pride, after it hath seen Majesty emptying it self; to see one so infinitely above us, to stoop so far beneath us. O how convincing and shaming should it be! Ah how opposite should Pride and Stoutness be to the Spirit of a Christian! I am sure nothing is more detestable, ut so to the Spirit of Christ. Your Saviour was ubi sese lowly, meek, self-denying, and of a most condescending Spirit; he looked not at his own things, but yours, Phil. 2. 4. And doth it become you to be proud, selfish and stout? I ur, & remember Jerom in his Epistle to Pamachius, Bern. Serm. 1. de Nativitate a godly young Noble man, advieth him to be Eyes.

Eyes to the blind, Feet to the lame; yea, faith he, if need be, I would not have you refuse to cut Wood, and draw Water for the Saints: And what, faith he, is this to buffetting and spitting, to crowning with Thorns, scourging and dying! Christ did undergo all this, and that for the ungodly.

Inference 3. Did Christ stoop so low as to become a Man to save us? Then those that perish under the Gospel must needs perish without apology. What would you have Christ do more to save you? Lo, he hath laid aside the Robes of Majesty and Glory, put on your own Garments of Fleish, came down from his Throne, and brought Salvation home to your own doors. Surely the lower Christ stooped to save us, the lower we shall sink under wrath that neglect so great Salvation. The Lord Jesus is brought low, but the Unbeliever will lay him yet lower, even under his feet; he will tread the Son of God under foot, *Heb. 10. 28.* For such (as the Apostle there speaks) is reserved something worse than dying without Mercy. What Pleas and Excuses others will make at the Judgment-seat, I know not; but once, it's evident, you will be speechless. And as one well observes, the vilest Sinners among the *Gentiles*, nay, the Devils themselves, will have more to say for themselves than you.

vide Mourn-
ing
Exercise at
St. Giles's
in the
Fields, p.
256.

I must be plain with you; I beseech you consider, how *Jews, Pagans and Devils* will rise up in Judgment against you. The *Jew* may say, I had a legal Yoke upon me, which neither I nor my Fathers were able to bear; Christ invited me only into the Garden of Nuts, where I might sooner break my Teeth with the hard Shells of Ceremonies, than get the Kernel of Gospel-promises.—In the best of our Sacrifices, the Smoak filled our Temple; Smoak, only to provoke us to weep for a clearer Manifestation.—We had but the old Edition of the Covenant of Grace, in a Character very darkly intelligible: You have the last Edition, with a Commentary of our *rejection*, and the World's *reception*, and the Spirit's *effusion*. You had all that Heart could wish.—I perish eternally, may the poor *Pagan* say, without all possibility of Reconciliation, and have only sinned against the Covenant of Works; having never heard of a Gospel-Covenant, nor of Reconciliation by a Mediator. O had I heard but one Sermon! Had Christ but once broke in upon my Soul, to convince me of my undone condition, and to have shewn a Righteousness to me! But wo is me, I never had so much as one Offer of Christ. But so have I, must you say that refuse the Gospel: I have, or might have heard thousands of Sermons: I could scarce escape hearing one or other shewing me the danger of my Sin, and my necessity of Christ. But notwithstanding all I heard, I wilfully resolved I would have nothing to do with him. I could not endure to hear Strictness prest upon me: It was all the Hell I had upon Earth, that I could not sin in quiet. Nay, may the *Devil* himself say, it's true, I was ever since my fall maliciously set against God: But alas! As soon I had sinned, God kicked me out of Heaven, and told me he would never have Mercy upon me: And tho' I lived in the time of all manner of gracious Dispensations, I

saw Sacrifices offered, and Christ in the Fleish; and the Gospel preached; yet how could all this chafe but enrage me the more, to have God as it were say, Look here, *Satan*, I have provided a Remedy for Sin, but none for thine? This set me upon revenge against God, as far as I could reach him. But alas! Alas! Had God entered into any Covenant with me at all; had God put me on any terms, tho' never so hard, for the obtaining of Mercy; had Christ been but once offered to me, What do you think would I not have done? &c.

O poor Sinners! Your Damnation is just, if you refuse Grace brought home by Christ himself to your very doors. The Lord grant this may not bethy case who readeth these Lines.

Inference 4. Moreover, hence it follows, that none doth or can love like Christ: His Love to Man is matchless. The freeness, strength, antiquity, and immutability of it, puts a lustre on it beyond all Examples. Surely it was a strong Love indeed, that made him lay aside his Glory, to be found in fashion as a Man, to become any thing, tho' never so much below himself, for our Salvation. We read of *Jonathan's* love to *David*, which passed the love of Women; of *Jacob's* love to *Rachel*, who for her sake endured the heat of Summer, and cold of Winter; of *David's* love to *Absalom*; of the Primitive Christians love to one another, who could die one for another? But neither had they that to deny that Christ had, nor had he those inducements from the Object of his Love that they had. His Love, like himself, is wonderful.

Inference 5. Did the Lord Jesus so deeply abase and humble himself for us? What an engagement hath he thereby put on us, to exalt and honour him, who for our sakes was so abused! It was a good saying of *Bernard*, *By how much the viler he was made for me, by so much the dearer he shall be to me.* And O that all to whom Christ is dear, would study to exalt and honour him these four ways.

Quanto
pro me vi-
rior, tan-
to mihi
carior.
Bern.

1. *By frequent and delightful speaking of him, and for him.* When *Paul* had once mentioned his Name, he knows not how to part with it; but repeats it no less than ten times in the compass of ten Verses, in *1 Cor. 1.* It was *Lambert's* Motto, *None but Christ, none but Christ.* It is said of *Johannes Milius*, that after his Conversion he was seldom or never observed to mention the Name *Jesus*: but his Eyes would drop; so dear was Christ to him. *Mr. Fox* never denied any Beggar that asked an Almshouse in Christ's name, or for Jesus sake. *Julius Palmer*, when all concluded he was dead, being turned as black as a Coal in the fire, at last moved his scorched Lips, and was heard to say, *sweet Jesus*, and fell asleep. *Plutarch* tells us, that when *Titus Flaminius* had freed the poor *Grecians* from the Bondage with which they had been long ground by their Oppressors, and the *Herauld* was to proclaim in their audience the Articles of Peace he hath concluded for them, they so pressed upon him, (not being half of them able to hear) that he was in great danger to have lost his Life in the press; at last, reading them a second time, when they came to understand distinctly how their case stood, they so shouted for Joy, crying, *our Saviour, our Saviour,* a Savi-

Plutarch
in vita
Tit. Flam.

a Saviour, a Saviour, that they made the very Heavens ring again with their Acclamations, and the very Birds fell down astonied. And all that night the poor *Grecians* with Instruments of Musick, and Songs of Praise, danced and sing about his Tent, extolling him as a God that had delivered them. But surely you have more reason to be exalting the Author of your Salvation, who at a dearer rate hath freed you from a more dreadful Bondage. O ye that have escaped the eternal Wrath of God, by the Humiliation of the Son of God, extol your great Redeemer, and for ever celebrate his Praises!

2. By *adging your Faith on him, for whatsoever lies in the Promises yet unaccomplishd*. In this you see the great and most difficult Promise fulfilled, *Gen. 3. 15. The Seed of the Woman shall break the Serpent's Head*; which contained this Mercy of Christ's Incarnation for us in it. I say, you see this fulfilled; and seeing that which was most improbable and difficult is come to pass, even Christ come in the Flesh, methinks our Unbelief should be strangled for ever, and all other Promises the more easily believed. It seemed much more improbable and impossible to Reason, that God should become a Man, and stoop to the condition of a Creature, than being a Man, to perform all that good which his Incarnation and Death procured. Unbelief usually argues from one of these two grounds, Can God do this? Or, will God do that? It's questioning either his Power or his Will; but alter this, let it cease for ever to cavil against either. His Power to save should never be questioned by any, that know what Sufferings and infinite Burdens he supported in our Nature: and surely his willingness to save should never be

put to a question by any that consider how low he was content to stoop for our sakes.

3. By *drawing nigh to God with delight through the Vail of Christ's Flesh*, Heb. 10. 19. God hath made this Flesh of Christ a Vail betwixt the brightness of his Glory and us: It serves to rebate the unsupportable Glory, and also to give admision to it, as the Vail did in the Temple. Through this Body of Flesh which Christ assumed, are all out-lets of Grace from God to us, and through it also must be all our returns to God again. It's made the great medium of our Communion with God.

Decursus
& recurfus
gratiarum.

4. By *applying your selves to him under all Temptations, Wants and Troubles, of what kind soever, as to one that is tenderly sensible of your case, and most willing and ready to relieve you*. O remember this was one of the Inducements that perswaded and invited him to take your Nature, that he might be furnished abundantly with tender Compassion for you, from the sense he should have of your Infirmities in his own Body. Heb. 2. 27. *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest in things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People*. You know by this Argument the Lord pressed the *Israelites* to be kind to Strangers; for (saith he) *you know the Heart of a Stranger*, Exod. 23. 9. Christ by being in our Nature, knows experimentally what our Wants, Fears, Temptations and Distresses are, and so is able to have compassion. O let your Hearts work upon this admirable Condescension of Christ, till they be filled with it, and your Lips say, Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ!

Haud igno-
ra malis,
miseris
succurrere
disco.

Serm.
19.
Treats
of
Christ's
Humili-
ation in
his Life.

S E R M O N XIX.

PHIL. II. 8.

And being found in fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the Cross.

THIS Scripture hath been once already under consideration; and indeed can never be enough considered: It holds forth the humbled state of the Lord Jesus, during the time of his abode on Earth. The sum of it was delivered you before in this Point;

Doct. *That the state of Christ, from his Conception to his Resurrection, was a state of deep Abasement and Humiliation.*

The Humiliation of Christ was proposed to under these three general Heads or Branches; of his Humiliation in his Incarnation, his Humiliation in his Life, and his Humiliation in his Death. How he was humbled by Incarnation, hath been opened above in the 18th Sermon. How he was humbled in his Life, is the design of this Sermon: Yet expect not that I should give you here an exact History of the Life of Christ. The Scriptures speak but little of the private part of his Life, and it is not my design to dilate upon all the memorable

Passages that the Evangelists (those faithful Narrators of the Life of Christ) have preserved for us, but only to observe and improve those more observable Particulars in his Life, wherein especially he was humbled: And such are these that follow.

First, The Lord Jesus was humbled in his very Infancy, by his Circumcision according to the Law. For being of the stock of *Israel*, he was to undergo the Ceremonies, and submit to the Ordinances belonging to that People, and thereby to put an end to them; for so it became him to fulfil all Righteousness. Luke 2. 21. *And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child, his Name was called Jesus*. Hereby the Son of God was greatly humbled, especially in these two respects.

1. In that hereby he obliged himself to keep Circumci-
tus fuit Christus, quia suscipiebat se legi, non xternæ soli, & morali, sed
etiam Ceremoniali & cuilibet divinæ. Ames Med. p. 101.

the

the whole Law, tho' he were the Law maker. Gal. 5. 3. *For I testify again to every Man that is circumcised, that he is a Debtor to do the whole Law.* The Apostle's meaning is, he is a Debtor in regard of Duty, because he that thinks himself bound to keep one part of the Ceremonial Law, doth thereby bind himself to keep it all, for where all the parts are inseparably united, (as they are in the Law of God) we pull all upon us by engaging or meddling with any one. And he that is a Debtor in Duty to keep the whole Law, quickly becomes a Debtor in regard of Penalty, not being able to keep any part of it. Christ therefore coming as our Surety, to pay both those Debts, the Debt of Duty, and the Debt of Penalty to the Law; he by his Circumcision obliges himself to pay the whole Debt of Duty, by fulfilling all Righteousness: And tho' his Obedience to it was so exact and perfect, that he contracted no Debt of Penalty for any Transgression of his own; yet he obliges himself to pay that Debt of Penalty we had contracted, by suffering all the Pains due to Transgressors. This was that intolerable Yoke that none were able to bear but Christ, Acts 17. 10. And it was no small abuse of Christ, to bind himself to the Law as a Subject made under it; for he was the Law giver, above all Law: And herein that Sovereignty of a God (one of the choice Flowers in the Crown of Heaven) was obscured and veiled by his Subjection.

2. Hereby he was represented to the World, not only as a Subject, but also as a Sinner: For tho' he was pure and holy, yet this Ordinance passing upon him, seeming to imply as if Corruption had indeed been in them, which must be cut off by Mortification. For this was the Mystery principally intended by Circumcision: It served to mind and admonish Abraham and his Seed, of the natural guiltiness, uncleanness and corruption of their Hearts and Natures. So Jer. 4. 4. *Circumcise your selves unto the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your Hearts, ye Men of Judah: i. e.* the sinfulness and corruption of them. Hence the rebellious and unmortified are called *stiff-necked and uncircumcised in Heart*, as it is, Acts 7. 51. And as it served to convince of natural Uncleanness, so it signified and sealed the putting off the body of the Sins of the Flesh, as the Apostle phraseth it, Col. 2. 11. Now this being the End of God in the institution of this Ordinance for Abraham and his ordinary Seed, Christ in his Infancy by submitting to it, did not only vail his Sovereignty by Subjection, but was also represented as a Sinner to the World, the most holy and pure in himself.

Secondly, Christ was humbled by Persecution, and that in the very morning of his Life: He was banish'd almost as soon as born. Mat. 2. 13. *Flee into Egypt* (saith the Angel to Joseph) *and be thou there until I bring thee word, for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy him.* Ungrateful Herod! Was this Entertainment for a Saviour? What, raise the Country against him, as if a Destroyer, rather than a Saviour had landed upon the Coast? What, deny him the protection of those Laws under which he was born, and that before he had broken the least Puntillo of them? The Child of a Beggar may claim the benefit and protection of

Law, as his Birth-right; and must the Son of God be denied it! But herein he fulfilled the Scriptures, whilst venting his own Lusts; for so it was foretold, Jer. 31. 13. And this early Persecution was not obscurely hinted in the Title of the 22d Psalm, that Psalm which looks rather like a History of the New, than a Prophecy of the Old Testament: For as it contains a most exact description of Christ's Sufferings, so it's fitted with a most suitable Title; *To the chief Musician upon Ajeleth Shabar*, which signifies the Hind of the Morning, or that Deer which the Hunter rouses betimes in the morning, and singles out to hunt down that day; and so they did by him, as the 16th verse will tell you; for (saith he) *Dogs have compassed me, the Assembly of the wicked have enclosed me.* Upon which *Musical* sweetly and ingeniously defcants: O what sweet Venison (saith he) is the Flesh of Christ! Abundantly sweeter to the believing Soul, than that which the Nobles of this World esteem most delicate: And lest it should want the highest and richest flavour to a delicate Palate, Christ our *Hart* was not only quamed, but hunted to the purpose before he was killed; even as great Men use by hunting and chasing, before they cut the Throat of the Deer, to render its Flesh more sweet, tender and delicate: Thus was Christ hunted betimes out of the Country he was born in. And no doubt but where such Dogs scent and wind the Spirit of Christ in any, they would pursue them also simpliciter to Destruction, did not a gracious Providence rate them off. But to return, how great a Humiliation is this to the Son of God, not only to become an Infant, but in this Infancy to be hurried up and down, and driven out of his own Land as a Vagabond!

magnates, venando & agitando, antequam capiant & occidant, carnem cervinam suaviorem, molliorem, ac delicatorem reddere. Musc. in loc.

Thirdly, Our Lord Jesus Christ was yet more humbled in his Life, by that poverty and outward meanness which all along attended his condition: He lived poor and low all his days, so speaks the Apostle, 2 Cor. 8. 9. *Tho' he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor; so poor, that he was never owner of a House to dwell in, but lived all his days in other Mens Houses, or Messes, as they say, in the open Air.* His outward Condition was more neglected and destitute than that of the Birds of the Air, or Beasts of the Earth; so he told that Scribe, who professed such readiness and resolution to follow him, but was soon cool'd when Christ told him, Mat. 8. 20. *The Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the Air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head.* It was a common saying among the Jews, *When the Messiah comes, he will not find a place to sit down in.* Sometimes he feeds upon Barley-bread, and a broiled Fish; and sometimes he was hungry, and had nothing to eat, Mark 8. 11. 12. As for Money, he was much a stranger to it; when the Tribute-money was demanded of him, he and Peter were not so well furnished to make half a Crown betwixt them to pay it, but must work a Miracle for it, Mat. 17. ult. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, Mat. 20. 28. not to amass Earthly Treasures, but to bestow Heavenly ones. His great and heavenly Soul neglected and despised those things,

Over et certum
viam
Christi
Flesh of Christ!
Abundantly sweeter
to the believing Soul,
than that which the
Nobles of this World
esteem most delicate:
And lest it should want
the highest and richest
flavour to a delicate
Palate, Christ our
Hart was not only
quamed, but hunted
to the purpose before
he was killed; even as
great Men use by
hunting and chasing,
before they cut the
Throat of the Deer,
to render its Flesh
more sweet, tender
and delicate: Thus
was Christ hunted
betimes out of the
Country he was born
in. And no doubt
but where such Dogs
scent and wind the
Spirit of Christ in
any, they would
pursue them also
simpliciter to
Destruction, did not
a gracious Providence
rate them off. But
to return, how great
a Humiliation is this
to the Son of God,
not only to become
an Infant, but in
this Infancy to be
hurried up and
down, and driven
out of his own
Land as a Vagabond!

Locus hic
manifeste
ex ista de-
sumptus
est, atque
accommodatus
videtur, qui de
adventu
Messie etiam
rum in loc.
necesse est
circumferre
bunt ju-
dici; quale
est quod
Gemarilla
dicunt. Si
veniat non
fore locum
epi consti-
deat. in v.
22. m. 70
quibus xpi-
stus in loc.
causam
continetur
duo di-
drachma
& valet
2. i. d.

Ceremonias istius
modi obser-
vati-
ones, co-
sistent fue-
runt pec-
cati con-
fessiones:
Christus
ignis, qui
factus est
peccatum
pro nobis,
congruen-
ter etiam
illis factus
est confor-
mis. Ames
Med. p.
101.

things, that too many of his own too much admire and profecure. He spent not a careful thought about those things, that eat up thousands and ten thousands of our Thoughts. Indeed he came to be humbled, and to reach Men by his Example the Vanity of this World, and pour Contempt upon the ensnaring Glory of it; and therefore went before us in a chosen and voluntary Poverty: Yet he lived not a mendicant Life neither; but was sometimes fed by ordinary, and sometimes by miraculous and extraordinary ways. He had wherewith to support that precious Body of his, till the time was cometooffer it up to God; but would not indulge and pamper that Flesh, which he purposely assumed to be humbled in.

Fourthly, Our dear Jesus was yet further humbled in his Life, by the horrid Temptations wherewith Satan assaulted him, than which nothing could be more grievous to his holy Heart. The *Evangelist* gives us an account of this in *Luke 4.* from the first to the *14th* Verse: In which Context you find how the bold and envious Spirit meets the Captain of our Salvation in the Field, comes up with him in the Wilderness when he was solitary, and had not a Second with him, *ver. 1.* there he keeps him fasting forty days and forty nights, to prepare him to close with his Temptation: All this while Satan was pointing and edging that Temptation, with which at last he resolves to try the breast of Christ by a home thrust, *ver. 2.* By this time he supposes Christ was a hungry (as indeed he was) and now he thought it was time to make his assault, which he doth in a very suitable Temptation at first, and with variety of Temptations, trying several Weapons upon him afterwards. But when he had made a thrust at him with that first Weapon, in which he especially trusted, *Command that these Stones be made Bread*, *ver. 3.* and saw how Christ had put it by, *ver. 4.* then he changes postures, and assaults him with Temptations to Blasphemy, even to *fall down and worship the Devil*. But when he saw he could fasten nothing on him, that he was as pure Fountain Water in a Christal Vial, how much soever agitated and shaked, no Dregs, or filthy Sediment would rise, but he remained pure still: I say, seeing this, he makes a politick Retreat, quits the Field for a season, *ver. 13.* yet leaves it *cum animo revertendi*, with a resolution to return to him again. And thus was our blessed Lord Jesus humbled by the Temptations of Satan; and what can you imagine more burdensome to him that was brought up from Eternity with God, delighting in the holy Father, to be now shut into a Wilderness with a Devil, there to be baited so many days, and have his Ears filled, tho' not defiled, with horrid Blasphemy: O how was the case altered with Christ! from what, to what was he now come? A chaste Woman would account it no common misery to be dogged up and down, and solicited by some vile Ruffian, tho' there were no danger of Defilement.

A Man would account it no small unhappiness to be shut up five or six weeks together with the Devil, tho' appearing in a humane

shape, and to hear no language but that of Hell spoken all that time: And the more holy the Man is, the more would he be afflicted to hear such Blasphemies malignantly spat upon the holy and reverent Name of God; much more to be solicited by the Devil, to join with him in it: This I say would be accounted no small misery for a Man to undergo. How great a Humiliation then must it be to the great God, to be humbled to this! to see a Slave of his House, setting upon himself the Lord! His Jailor coming to take him Prisoner, if he can! A base Apostate Spirit, daring to attempt such things as these upon him! Surely this was a deep abasement to the Son of God.

Fifthly, Our blessed Lord Jesus was yet more humbled in his Life than all this, and that by his own Sympathy with others, under all the burdens that made them groan. For he much more than Paul could say, *Who is afflicted and I burn not?* He lived all his time as it were in an Hospital among the sick and wounded. And so tender was his Heart that every groan for Sin, or under the effects of Sin, pierced him so, that it was truly said, *himself bare our Sicknesses, and took our Infirmities*, *Mat. 8. 16, 17.* It was spoken upon the occasion of some poor Creatures that were possessed by the Devil, and brought to him to be dispossessed. It's said of him, *Jehn 11. 33. That when he saw Mary weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the Spirit, and was troubled.* And *ver. 35. Jesus wept*: yea, his Heart flowed with pity for them that had not one drop of pity for themselves. Witness his tears spent upon *Jerusalem*, *Luke 19. 41, 42.* He foresaw the misery that was coming, tho' they never foresaw, nor feared it. O how it pierced him to think of the Calamities hanging over that great City! Yea, he mourned for them that could not mourn for their own Sins. Therefore it's said, *Mark 3. 5. He was grieved for the hardness of the Peoples Hearts.* So that the commendation of a good Physician, that he doth as it were die with every Patient, was most applicable to our tender-hearted Physician. This was one of those things that made him a *Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Griefs*. For the more holy any is, the more he is grieved and afflicted for the Sins of others; and the more tender any Man is, the more he is pierced with beholding the miseries that lye upon others. And it is sure, never any Heart more holy, or more sensible, tender and compassionate than Christ's.

Sixthly, Lastly, That which yet helped to humble him lower, was the ungrateful, and most base and unworthy entertainment the World gave him. He was not received or treated like a Saviour, but as the vilest of Men. One would think that he who came from Heaven, to give his Life a Ransom for many, *Mat. 20. 28.* He that was not sent to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved, *John 3. 17.* He that came to dissolve the Works of the Devil, *1 John 3. 8.* knock off the Chains, open the Prison doors, proclaim liberty to the Captives, *Isa. 61. 1.* I say, when such a Saviour arrived, O with what acclamations of Joy, and demonstrations of Thankfulness,

Paupertas
Christi
fruitifera
veto lingu-
lari, & fi-
ne mendici-
cate. *A-
mes Med.*
p. 104.

Maxi-
ma &
frequen-
tissima
tentandi
occafio
illi est,
quom re-
rum se-
cularium
appetent-
ie & e-
fuerientie
non videt;
sicut Au-
gustinus
suum
preparat
brumali
potifium
tempore,
quando
non est
quod spes
comedere
Staphyleis
prompt.
p. 418.

Quodcum
invenitur
ab illo?

ness, should he have been received? One would have thought they should even kiss the ground he trod upon: But instead of this, he was hated, *Joh. 25. 18.* He was *despised* by them, *Mat. 13. 55.* So reproached, that he became the *reproach of Men*, as who should say, a Corner for every one to spit in; a Butt for every base Tongue to shoot at, *Psal. 22. 6.* Accused of working his Miracles by the power of the Devil, *Mat. 12. 24.* He was trod upon as a Worm, *Psal. 22. 6.* They buffeted him, *Mat. 25. 67.* Smote him on the Head, *Mat. 27. 30.* array'd him as a Fool, *ver. 29.* spat in his Face, *ver. 30.* despised him as the basest of Men, *This fellow said, Mat. 26. 61.* One of his own Followers sold him, another forswore him, and all forsook him in his greatest Troubles. All this was a great abasement to the Son of God, who was not thus treated for a day, or in one place; but all his days, and in all places. *He endured the contradiction of Sinners against himself.* In these Particulars I have pointed out to you something of the humble Life Christ lived in the World. From all which Particulars some useful Inferences will be noted.

Inference 1. From the first degree of Christ's Humiliation in submitting to be circumcised, and thereby obliging himself to fulfil the whole Law, it follows, *That Justice it self may set both hand and seal to the acquittances and discharges of Believers.* Christ hereby obliged himself to be the Law's Pay-master, to pay its utmost demand; to bear that yoke of Obedience that never any before him could bear. And as his Circumcision obliged him to keep the whole Law; so he was most precise and punctual in the observation of it: So exact, that the sharp eye of Divine Justice cannot espie the least flaw in it; but acknowledges full Payment, and stands ready to sign the Believer a full Acquittance. *Rom. 3. 25.* *That God may be just, and the Justifier of him that believes in Jesus.* Had not Christ been thus obliged, we had never been discharged. Had not his Obedience been an intire, compleat and perfect thing, our Justification could not have been so. He that hath a precious Treasure, will be loth to adventure it in a leaky Vessel: Wo to the holiest Man on Earth, if the safety of his precious Soul were to be adventured to the bottom of the best Duty that ever he performed. But Christ's Obedience and Righteousness is right and sound; a Bottom that we may safely adventure all in.

Inference 2. From the early flight of Christ into Egypt, we infer, *That the greatest Innocency and Piety cannot exempt from Persecution and Injury.* *Who more innocent than Christ? And who more persecuted?* The world is the world still. *I have given them thy Word, and the World hath hated them,* *John 17. 14.* The World lies in wait as a Thief for them that carry this Treasure; they who are empty of it may sing before him, he never stops them: But Persecution follows Piety, as the Shadow doth the Body. *2 Tim. 3. 12.* *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer Persecution.* Whosoever resolves to live *holily*, must never expect to live *quietly*. It's *Godliness*, and *Godliness in Christ Jesus*, i. e. such as is derived from Christ, true Godliness; and it's true God-

Vol. I.

liness as it's manifested in practice. All that will *live godly*, that will exert Holiness in their Lives, which convinces and galls the Consciences of the ungodly. 'Tis this enrages, for there is an Enmity and Antipathy betwixt them: and this Enmity runs in a blood; and it's transmitted with it from generation to generation, *Gal. 4. 29.* *As then, be that was born after the flesh, persecuteth him that was born after the spirit; even so it is now.* Mark, so it was, and so still it is. Cain's Club is still carried up and down redded with the Blood of Abel, *saith Bucheltzer*; but thus it must be, to conform us unto Christ: and O that your *Spirits*, as well as your *Conditions*, may better harmonize with Christ. He suffered meekly, quietly and self-denyingly; be ye like him. Let it not be said of you, as it is of the Hypocrite, whose Lufts are only *bid*, but not *mortified* by his Duties, that he is like a *flint*, which seems cold; but if you strike him he is all fiery. To do well, and suffer ill, is Christ-like.

Inference 3. From the third particular of Christ's Humiliation, I infer, *That such as are full of Grace and Holiness, may be destitute and empty of Creature-comforts.* What an overflowing fulness of Grace was there in Christ! and yet to what a low ebb did his outward Comforts sometimes fall: and as it fared with him, so with many others now in Glory with him, whilst they were in the way to that Glory, *1 Cor. 4. 11.* *Even to this present hour, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place.* Their Souls were richly clothed with Robes of Righteousness, their Bodies naked or meanly clad. Their Souls fed high, even on hidden Manna, their Bodies hungry. Let us be content (saith Luther) with our hard fare; for do we not feast with Angels upon that Bread of Life? Remember when wants pinch hard, that these fix no marks of God's hatred upon you. He hath dealt no worse with you than he did with his own Son. Nay, which of you is not better accommodated than Christ was? If you be hungry or thirsty, you have some Refreshments; you have Beds to lye on: the Son of Man had not where to lay his head; the Heir of all things had sometimes nothing to eat. And remember you are going to a plentiful Country where all your wants will be supplied; *poor in the World, rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom which God hath promised,* *James 2. 5.* The meanness of your present, will add to the lussie of your future Condition.

Inference 4. From the fourth Particular of Christ's Humiliation in his Life, by Satan's Temptations, we infer, *That those in whom Satan hath no interest, may have most trouble from him in this World.* *John 14. 30.* *The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nought in me.* Where he knows he cannot be a Conqueror, he will not cease to be a Troubler. This bold and daring Spirit adventures upon Christ himself; for doubtless he was filled with Envy at the sight of him, and would do what he could, tho' to no purpose, to obstruct the blessed design in his hand. And it was the Wisdom and Love of Christ to admit him to come as near him as might be, and try all his Darts upon him,

Multi ad-
huc sunt,
qui cla-
vam fan-
guine
Abelis ru-
bentem
circum e-
runt. Bu-
cheltz.

Justifica-
do est a-
ctus unus,
individua-
us, perfec-
tus, aquiliter
conspiciens
omnibus.
Wich.

him, that by this experience he might be filled with pity to succour them that are tempted. And as he set on Christ, so much more will he adventure upon us; and but too oft comes off a Conqueror. Sometimes he shoots the fiery Darts of blasphemous Injections. These fall as flames of Lightning on the dry Thatch, which instantly sets all in a combustion. And just so is it attended with an after Thunder-clap of inward Horror, that thivers the very Heart, and strikes all into confusion within.

Divers Rules are prescribed in this case to relieve poor distressed ones. One adviseth to think seriously on that which is darted suddenly, and to do by your Hearts as Men use to do with young Horses, that are apt to start and boggle at every thing in the way; we bring them close to the things they fright at, make them look on them, and smell to them; that time, and better acquaintance with such things, may teach them not to start. Others advise to diversions of the Thoughts as much as may be, to think quite another way. These Rules are contrary to one another, and I think signify but little to the relief of a poor Soul so distressed.

The best Rule doubtless is that of the Apostle, *Eph. 6. 16. Above all taking the shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the wicked.* Aft your Faith, my Friends, upon your tempted Saviour, who passed through Temptations before you: And particularly exercise Faith on three things in Christ's Temptations.

1. Believingly consider how great variety of Temptations were tried upon Christ; and of what a horrid blasphemous nature that was, *Fall down and worship me.*

2. Believingly consider, that Christ came of a perfect Conqueror in the day of his trial, beat Satan out of the field. For he saw what he attempted on Christ was as impossible as to batter the body of the Sun with Snow-balls.

3. Lastly, Believe that the benefits of those his Victories and Conquests are for you; and that for your sakes he permitted the Tempter to come so near him: As you find, *Heb. 2. 18.*

Object. *Heb. 4. 15.* If you say, true, Christ was tempted as well as I; but there's a vast difference betwixt his Temptations and mine: For the Prince of this World came, and found nothing in him, *John 14. 30.* He was not internally defiled, tho' externally assaulted; but I am defiled by them as well as troubled.

Sol. This is a different case. True, it is so, and must be so, or else it had signified nothing to your relief. For had Christ been internally defiled, he had not been a fit Mediator for you; nor could you have had any benefit either by his Temptations or Sufferings for you. But he being tempted, and yet still holy, bearing the Burden, and still escaping the dilemma of Sin, hath not only satisfied for the Sins you commit when tempted, but also got an experimental sense of the misery of your Condition, which is in him (tho' now in Glory) as a spring of Pity and tender Compassion to you. Remember, poor tempted Christian, the God of Peace shall shortly tread Satan under thy feet, *Rom. 16. 20.* Thou shalt set thy foot on the Neck of that Enemy: And as soon as both thy Feet are over

the threshold of Glory, thou shalt cast back a smiling look, and say, Now Satan do thy worst; now I am there where thou canst not come. Mean while, till thou be out of his reach, let me advise thee to go to Jesus Christ, and open the matter to him; tell him how that base Spirit falls upon thee, yea, sets upon thee, even in his presence: Intreat him to rebuke and command him off: Beg him to consider thy case, and say, Lord, dost not thou remember how thy own Heart was once grieved, tho' not defiled by his Assaults? I have Grief and Guilt together upon me. Ah Lord, I expect Pity and Help from thee: thou knowest the Heart of a Stranger, the Heart of a poor tempted one. This is singular Relief in this case. O try it!

Inference 5. Was Christ yet more humbled, by his own sympathy with others in their Distresses? Hence we learn, that a compassionate Spirit towards such as labour under burdens of Sin or Affliction, is Christ-like, and truly excellent: Thus wasthe Spirit of Christ: O be ye like him! Put on as the Elect of God, Bowels of Mercy, *Col. 3. 12. Weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice.* *Rom. 12. 15.* It was Cain that said, *Am I my Brother's Keeper?* Blessed Paul was of a contrary Temper, *2 Cor. 11. 29. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* Three things promote Sympathy in Christians, one is the Lord's pity for them; he doth as it were suffer with them; *In all their Afflictions be that Jesus was afflicted,* *Isa. 63. 9.* Another is, the relation we sustain to God's afflicted People: They are Members with us in one Body, and the Members should have the same care one of another, *1 Cor. 12. 25.* The last is, we know not how soon our selves may need from others, what others now need from us. *Restore him, with the spirit of Meekness, considering thy self, lest thou also be tempted.* *Gal. 6. 1.*

Inference 6. Did the World help on the Humiliation of Christ by their base and vile usage of him? Learn hence, *That the Judgment the World gives of Persons, and their Worth, is little to be regarded.* Surely it dispenses its Smiles and Honours very preposterously and unduly. In this respect, among others, the Saints are stiled such Persons of whom the World is not worthy, *Heb. 11. 38. i.e.* it doth not deserve to have such choice Spirits as these are, left in it. Since it knows not how to use or treat them. It was the Complaint of *Salvian* above eleven hundred years ago; If any of the Nobility (saith he) do but begin to turn to God, presently he loseth the Honour of Nobility: O in how little Honour is Christ among Christian People, when Religion shall make a Man ignoble! So that (as he adds) many are compelled to be evil. Let them should be esteemed vile. And indeed, if the world gives us any help to discover the true worth and excellency of Men by, it is by the rule of Contraries, for the most part. Where it fixes its marks of Hatred, we may usually find that which invites our Respect and Love. It should trouble us the less to be under the

In all the Afflictions, Lesser, and Troubles that Jesus was afflicted, *Isa. 63. 9.* Another is, the relation we sustain to God's afflicted People: They are Members with us in one Body, and the Members should have the same care one of another, *1 Cor. 12. 25.* The last is, we know not how soon our selves may need from others, what others now need from us. *Restore him, with the spirit of Meekness, considering thy self, lest thou also be tempted.* *Gal. 6. 1.*

In his People. Aut sumus, aut sumus, & possimus esse quod hic est. Si quis ex nobilitate converti ad Deum cuperit, statim honorem nobilitatis amittit. O quantum in Christiano populo honor Christi, ubi religio ignobilem facit!

Salv. Lib.

4. de Gub. Dei. Superbus fio, quod video nomen pessimum mihi crescere; gaudeo rebellis duci. *Luth.* Gracias ago Deo meo, quod dignus sum, quem mandus oderit. *Hieron.*

slights

slights and disrespects of a blind World. I could be even proud upon it (saith Luther) that I see I have an ill name from the World. And *ferom* blessed God that counted him worthy to be hated of the World. Labour to stand right in the Judgment of God, and trouble not thy self for the rash and headlong Censures of Men. Let wicked Men, saith one, cut the throat of my Credit, and do as they like best with it; when the wind of their Calumnies hath blown away my good Name from me in the way to Heaven, I know Christ will take my Name out of the mire, and wash it, and restore it to me again.

Inference 7. From the whole of Christ's Humiliation in his Life, learn you to pass

through all the Troubles of your Life with a contented composed Spirit, as Christ your Forerunner did. He was *persecuted*, and bare it meekly; *poor*, and never murmured, *tempted*, and never yielded to the Temptation; *reviled*, and reviled not again. When ye therefore pass through any of these Trials look to Jesus, and consider him. See how he that passed through those things before you, managed himself in like Circumstances; yea, not only beat the way by his Pattern and Example for you, but hath in every one of those conditions left a Blessing behind him for them that follow in his Steps.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

S E R M O N XX.

JOHN XVII. 11.

And now I am no more in the World, but these are in the World; and I come to thee: Holy Father, keep through thine own Name, those whom thou hast given me; that they may be one, as we are.

Ser. 20.
Opens
Christ's
Humiliation
unto
Death,
in his
first
preparative
all
for it.

WE now come to the last and lowest step of Christ's Humiliation, which was in his submitting to Death, even the Death of the Cross. Out of this Death of Christ the Life of our Souls springs up; and in this Blood of the Cross, all our Mercies swim to us. The Blood of Christ runs deep to some eyes: The Judicious Believer sees Multitudes, Multitudes of inestimable Blessings in it. By this Crimson Fountain I resolve to sit down; and concerning the Death of Christ, I shall take distinctly into consideration the Preparations made for it; the *Nature* and *Quality* of it; the *Department* and *Carriage* of dying Jesus; the *Funeral Solemnities* with which he was buried; and lastly, the *Blessed Designs*, and *Glorious Ends* of his Death.

The Preparatives for his Death were six. Three on his own part, and three more by his Enemies. The Preparations made by himself for it, were the solemn recommendation of his Friends to his Father: The institution of a commemorative sign, to perpetuate and refresh the Memory of his Death in the Hearts of his People till he come again. And his pouring out his Soul to God by prayer in the Garden, which was the posture he chose to be found in, when they should apprehend him.

This Scripture contains the first preparative of Christ for Death, whereby he sets his House in order, prays for his People, and blesses them before he dies. The Love of Christ was ever tender and strong to his People; but the greatest Manifestations of it were at parting. And this he manifested two ways especially; *viz.* in leaving singular Supports, and grounds of Comfort with them in his last heavenly Sermon in Chap. 14, 15, 16. and in pouring out his Soul most affectionally to the Father for them in this Heavenly Prayer, Chap. 17. In this Prayer he gives them a Specimen or Sample of that his glorious Intercession-work, which he was just then going to perform in Heaven for them. Here his heart over-

Vol. L

flowed, for he was now leaving them, and going to the Father. The last words of a dying Man are remarkable, how much more of a dying Saviour: I shall not launch out into that blessed Ocean of precious matter contained in this Chapter, but take immediately into consideration the words that I read, wherein I find a weighty Petition, strongly followed and set home with many mighty Arguments.

1. We have here *Christ's Petition*, or Request in behalf of his people; not only those on the place, but all others that then died, or afterwards should believe on him. And the sum of what he here requests for them is, that his Father would keep them through his Name. Where you have both the *Mercy*, and the *Means* of attaining it. The *Mercy* is to be kept. Keeping implies danger. And there is a double Danger obviated in this request; danger in respect of *Sin*, and danger in respect of *Ruin* and Destruction. To both these the People of God lie open in this World.

The *Means* of their preservation from both is the *Name*, *i. e.* the Power of God. This Name of the Lord is that *strong Tower* to which the *Righteous fly*, and are *safe*, Prov. 18. 10. Alas! It is not your own Strength or Wisdom that keeps you, but ye are kept by the mighty Power of God. This protecting Power of God, doth not however exclude our Care and Diligence, but implies it; therefore 'tis added, *Ye are kept by the mighty Power of God through Faith to Salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. God keeps his People, and yet they are to keep themselves in the Love of God, Jude 21. to keep their hearts with all diligence, Prov. 4. 23. This is the sum of the Petition.

2. The Arguments with which he urgeth and presses on this Request, are drawn partly from his own condition, *I am no more in the World*, *i. e.* I am going to die; within very few hours I shall be separated from them, in regard of my

N 2 corporal

corporal presence. Partly from their condition; but these are in the world; i. e. I must leave them in the midst of danger: And partly from the joint interest his Father and himself had in them; *Keep those that thou hast given me:* With several other most prevalent Pleas, which in their proper places shall be anon produced and displayed, to illustrate and confirm this precious Truth which this Scripture affords us.

Doct. That the fatherly Care, and tender Love of our Lord Jesus Christ, was eminently discovered in that pleading Prayer he poured out for his People at his parting with them.

It pertained to the Priest and Father of the Family, to bless the rest, especially when he were to be separated from them by Death. This was a Rite in Israel. When good Jacob was grown old, and the time was come that he should be gathered to his Fathers, then he blessed Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasse, saying, *God, before whom my Fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which sed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the Lads,* Gen. 48. 15, 16. This was * a Prophetical and Patriarchal Blessing: Not that Jacob could bless as God blesses; he could speak the words of Blessing, but he knew the Effect, the real Blessing it self depended upon God. And tho' he blessed authoritatively, yet not potestatively: i. e. he could, as the mouth of God, pronounce Blessings, but could not confer them. Thus he blessed his Children, as his Father Isaac had also blessed him before he died, Gen. 28. 3. and these Blessings were delivered prayerwise.

Now when Jesus Christ comes to die, he will bless his Children also; and therein will discover how much dear and tender Love he had for them: *Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end,* John 13. 1. The last Act of Christ in this World, was an act of Blessing, *Luk. 24. 50, 51.*

To prepare this point for use, I will here open, *First*, The Mercies which Christ requested of the Father for them. *Secondly*, The Arguments used by him to obtain the Mercies. *Thirdly*, Why he thus pleaded for them when he was to die. *Fourthly*, and lastly, How all this gives full evidence of Christ's tender care and love to his People.

First, We will enquire what those Mercies and special Favours were, which Christ begged for his People when he was to die. And we find among others, these five special Mercies desired for them in this Context.

1. The Mercy of preservation both from Sin and Danger: So in the Text; *Keep through thine own Name those whom thou hast given me:* Which is explained, *verf. 15. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the World, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.* We in ours, and the Saints that are gone, in their respective Generations, have reaped the fruit of this Prayer. How else comes it to pass, that our Souls are preserved amidst such a world of Temptations, and these assisted and advantaged by our own Corruptions? How is it else, that our Persons are not ruined and destroyed amidst such multitudes of potent and malicious Enemies,

that are set on fire of Hell? Surely the preservation of the burning Bush, of the three Children amidst the Flames, of Daniel in the Den of Lions, are not greater Wonders, than these our eyes do daily behold. As the fire would have certainly consumed, and the Lions without doubt have rended and devoured, had not God by the interposition of his own hand stoped and hindered the effect; so would the Sin that is in us, and the Malice that is in others, quickly ruin our Souls and Bodies, were it not that the same Hand guards and keeps us every moment. To that Hand into which this Prayer of Christ delivered your Souls and Bodies, do you owe all your Mercies and Salvations, both temporal and spiritual.

2. Another Mercy he prays for, is the blessing of Union among themselves. This he joins immediately with the first Mercy of preservation, and prays for it in the same breath, *verf. 11. That they may be one, as we are.* And well might he join them together in one breath, for this union is not only a choice Mercy in it self, but a special Means of that Preservation he had prayed for before: Their union one with another is a special means to preserve them all.

3. A third desirable Mercy that Christ earnestly prayed for, was that his Joy might be fulfilled in them, *ver. 13.* He would provide for their Joy, even when the hour of his greatest Sorrow was at hand; yea, he would not only obtain Joy for them, but a full Joy: *That my Joy may be fulfilled in them.* It is as if he had said, O my Father, I am to leave these dear ones in a World of Troubles and Perplexities, I know their Hearts will be subject to frequent Despondencies; O let me obtain the Cordials of Divine Joy for them before I go: I would not only have them live, but live joyfully; provide for their fainting hours reviving Cordials.

4. And as a continued Spring to maintain all the forementioned Mercies, he prays *they all may be sanctified through the word of Truth,* *ver. 17. i. e.* more abundantly sanctified than yet they were, by a deeper radication of gracious habits and principles in their Hearts. This is a singular Mercy in it self, to have Holiness spreading it self over and through their Souls, as the Light of the Morning. Nothing is for it self more desirable. And it's also a singular help to their Perseverance, Union and spiritual Joy, which he had prayed for before, and are all advanced by their increasing Sanctification.

4. And lastly, As the complement and perfection of all desirable Mercies, he prays, *that they may be with him, where he is, to behold his Glory,* *ver. 24.* This is the best and ultimate Privilege they are capable of. The end of his coming down from Heaven, and return thither again, all runs into this, to bring many Sons and Daughters unto Glory. You see Christ asks no trifles, no small things for his People; no Mercies, but the best that both Worlds afford, will suffice him on their behalf.

Secondly, Let us see how he follows his Requests, and with what Arguments he pleads with the Father for these things: And among others, I shall single out six choice ones which are urged in this Text, or the immediate Context.

The

* Vole-
bat Jacob
benedice-
re filiis be-
nedictione
non vulga-
ri, sed
Propheti-
ca, & pa-
triarchali:
Noverat se-
ntentiam
verba pos-
se pro-
ferre,
effectum
autem ab
alio pen-
dere. Peti-
ergo bene-
dictionem
ab eo cu-
jus idem
est dicere
& facere,
i. e. a solo
Deo. *Ain-*
with in
loc. Bene-
dicere est
vel potes-
tatis, i. e.
bona tem-
poralia so-
lu nunc
conferre;
vel autho-
ritatis, hoc
est, bona
tempo-
ralia vel
eterna ex
officio pre-
cari de-
nunciare,
conferen-
da a Deo.
Parau.

The first Argument is drawn from the joint Interest that both Himself and Father have in the Persons for whom he prays, *All mine art shine, and thine art mine*, ver. 10. As if he should say, Father, behold and consider the Persons I pray for, they are not Aliens, but Christians; yea, they are thy Children as well as mine: The very same on whom thou hast set thy eternal Love, and in that Love hast given them to me; so that they are both thine, and mine: great is our Interest in them, and Interest draws Care and Tenderness. Every one cares for his own, provides for, and secures his own. Propriety (even amongst Creatures) is fundamental to our Labour, Care and Watchfulness; they would not so much prize Life, Health, Estates or Children, if they were not their own. Lord, these are thine own by many Ties and Titles: O therefore keep, comfort, sanctifie and save them, for they are thine. What a mighty Plea is this? Surely, Christians, your Intercessor is skillful in his work, your Advocate wants no Eloquence or Ability to plead for you.

The second Argument, and that a powerful one, treads as I may say upon the very Heel of the former, in the next words, *And I am glorified in them*: q. d. my Glory and Honour is infinitely dear to thee; I know thy Heart is intently upon the exalting and glorifying of thy Son. Now what Glory have I in the World, but what comes from my People? Others neither can, nor will glorifie me; nay, I am daily blasphemed and dishonoured by them: These are they from whom my active Glory and Praise in the World must rise. 'Tis true, both thou and I have Glory from other Creatures *objectively*; the Works that we have made and impressed our Power, Wisdom and Goodness upon, do so glorifie us: and Honour we have from our very Enemies *accidentally*; their very Wrath shall praise us: But for active and voluntary Praise, whence comes this but from the People that were formed for that very purpose? Should these then miscarry and perish, where shall my manifestive and active Glory be? And from whom shall I expect it? So that here his Propriety and Glory are pleaded with the Father, to prevail for those Mercies; and they are both great and valuable things with God. What dearer, what nearer to the Heart of God?

Arg. 3. And yet to make all fast and sure, he adds in the beginning of this ver. 11. a third Argument, in these words, *And now I am no more in the World*. Where we must consider the sense of it as a Proposition, and the force of it is an Argument. This Proposition, *I am no more in the World*, is not to be taken simply and universally, as if in no sense Christ should be any more in this World: But only *respectively* as to his corporal Presence; this was in a little time to be removed from his People, which had been a sweet Spring of Comfort to them in all their Troubles. But now it might have been said to the pensive Disciples, as the Sons of the Prophets said to *Elisha*, a little before *Elijah's* Translation, *Know ye not that your Master shall be taken from your Heads to day?* This comfortable Enjoyment must be taken from them; this is the Sense. And here lyes the

Argument; Father, consider the Sadness and Trouble I shall leave my poor Children under. Whilst I was with them, I was a sweet relief to their Souls; whatever Troubles they met with: in all Doubts, Fears and Dangers, they could repair to me; in all their Straits and Wants I still supplied them: They had my Counsels to direct them, my Reproofs to reduce them, my Comforts to support them; yea, the very Sight of me was an unspeakable Joy and Refreshment to their Souls: But now the hour is come, and I must be gone. All the Comfort and Benefit they had from my Presence among them is now cut off: And except thou do make up all this to them another way, what will become of these Children, when their Father is gone? What will be the case of the poor Sheep, and tender Lambs, when the Shepherd is smitten? Therefore (O my Father) look thou after them, see to them, for they are thine, as well as mine: I am glorified in them, and now leaving them; and removing out of this World from them.

Arg. 4. And yet to move and engage the Father's Care and Love for them, he subjoins another great Consideration in the very next words, drawn from the Danger he leaves them in; *But these are in the World*. The World is a sinful, infecting, and unquiet place; *it lyes in Wickedness*: and a hard thing it will be for such poor, weak, imperfect Creatures to escape the Pollutions of it; or if they do, yet the Troubles, Persecutions, and strong Oppositions of it they cannot escape. Seeing therefore I must leave thine own dear Children, as well as mine, and those from whom the Glory is to rise, in the midst of a sinful, troublesome, dangerous World, where they can neither move backward nor forward without danger of Sin or Ruin: O since the case stands so, look after them, provide for them, and take special care for them all. Consider how they are, and where I leave them. They are the Children, to be left in a strange Country; thy Soldiers, in the Enemies Quarters; thy Sheep, in the midst of Wolves; thy precious Treasure, among Thieves.

Arg. 5. And yet he hath not done, for he resolves to tug for the Mercies he had asked, and will not come off with a Denial: and therefore adds another Argument in the next words, *And I come to thee*. As his leaving them was an Argument, so his coming to the Father is a mighty Argument also. There is much in these words, *I come to thee*; [*I*] thy beloved Son, in which thy Soul delighteth; I, to whom thou never deniedst any thing. 'Tis not a Stranger, but a Son; not an adopted, but the only begotten Son. 'Tis I that [*come*.] I am now coming to thee again, my Father. I come to thee swimming through a bloody Ocean. I come treading every step of my way to thee in Blood, and unspeakable Sufferings; and all this for the sake of those dear Ones I now pray for: Yea, the design and end of my coming to thee, is for them. I am coming to Heaven in the capacity of an Advocate, to plead with thee for them. And I come to [*Thee*] my Father, and their Father; my God, and their God. Now then, since I that am so dear, come through such bitter Pangs, to thee, so dear, so tender-hearted

hearted a Father; and all this on their score and account: Since I do but now as it were begin, or give them a little taste of that Intercession-work, which I shall live for ever to perform for them in Heaven; Father, hear, Father, grant what I request. O give a comfortable handful of those good things which I am coming to thee for, and which I know thou wilt not deny me.

X Arg. 6. And to close up all, he tells the Father how careful he had been to observe and perform that trust which was committed to him; *While I was with them in the World, I kept them in thy Name; those that thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the Son of Perdition, ver. 12.*

And thus lyes the Argument: Thou committedst to me a certain number of elect Souls, to be redeemed by me; I undertook the Trust, and said, if any of these be lost, at my hand let them be required, I will answer them every one to thee. In pursuance of which Trust, I am now here on the Earth, in a Body of Flesh. I have been faithful to a point. I have redeemed them (for he speaks of that as finished and done which was now ready to be done); I have kept also, and confirmed them hitherto: and now, Father, I commit them to thy Care. Lo, here they are, not one is lost, but the Son of Perdition, who was never given. With how great care have I been careful for them! O let them not fail now; let not one of them perish.

Thus you see what a nervous, argumentative, pleading Prayer Christ poured out to the Father for them at parting.

Thirdly, The next enquiry is, why he thus prayed and pleaded with God for them, when he was to die?

And certainly it was not because the Father was unwilling to grant the Mercies he desired for them: No, they came not with difficulty, nor were they wrested by meer Importunity out of the hand of an unwilling and backward Person. For he tells us in Job. 16. 27. *The Father himself loveth you, i. e.* he is propense enough of his own accord to do you good. But the Reasons of this exceeding Importunity, are,

X 1. He foresaw a great trial then at hand; yea, and all the after-trials of his people as well as that. He knew how much they would be lifted, and put to in that hour, and power of darkness that was coming. He knew their Faith would be shaken, and greatly staggered, by the approaching difficulties, when they should see their Shepherd smitten, and themselves scattered, the Son of Man delivered into the hands of Sinners, and the Lord of Life hang dead upon the Tree, yea, sealed up in the Grave. He foresaw what Straits his poor people would fall into, bewixt a busie Devil, and a bad Heart; therefore he prays and pleads with such importunity and ardency for them, that they might not miscarry.

X 2. He was now entering upon his Intercession-work in Heaven, and he was desirous in this Prayer to give us a *Specimen*, or Sample of that part of his work before he left us; that by this we might understand what he would do for us, when he should be out of our sight. For this

being the last on Earth, it shews us what Affections and Dispositions he carried hence with him, and satisfies us that he who was so earnest with God on our behalf, such a mighty Pleader here, will not forget us, or neglect our concerns in the other world. Yet, Reader, I would have thee always remember, that the Intercession of Christ in Heaven is carried at a much higher rate than this; it's performed in a way more suitable to that State of Honour to which he is now exalted. Here he used Prostrations of Body, Cries and Tears in his Prayers: There it's carried in a more majestic way, and with more State, becoming an exalted Jesus. But yet in this he hath left us a special assistance, to discover much of the frame, temper, and working of his Heart now in Heaven towards us.

3. And lastly, He would leave this as a standing Monument of his father like Care and Love to his People to the end of the World. And for this it is conceived Christ delivered this Prayer so publicly, not withdrawing from the Disciples to be private with God, as he did in the Garden; but he delivers it in their presence, *these things I speak in the World: v. 13.* this ~~indicates~~ with the circumstances of place [in the World] doth plainly speak it to be a publick Prayer. And not only was it publicly delivered, but it was also by a singular Providence recorded at large by *John*, tho' omitted by the other *Evangelists*; that so it might stand to all Generations, for a testimony of Christ's tender Care and Love to his People.

Fourthly, If you ask how this gives evidence of Christ's tender Care and Love to his People? Which is the last Enquiry: I answer in few words, for the thing is plain and obvious; it appears in these two particulars.

X 1. His Love and Care were manifested in the choice of Mercies for them. He doth not pray for Health, Honour, long Life, Riches, &c. but for their preservation from Sin, spiritual Joy in God, Sanctifications, and eternal Glory. No Mercies but the very best in God's treasure will content him. He was resolved to get all the best Mercies for his People; the rest he is content should be dispensed promiscuously by Providence: But these he will settle as a Heritage upon his Children. O see the Love of Christ! Look over all your spiritual Inheritance in Christ, compare it with the richest, fairest, sweetest Inheritance on Earth; and see what poor things these are to yours. O the care of a dear Father! O the love of a Saviour!

X 2. Besides, what an evidence of his tenderness to you, and great care for you, was this, that he should so intently, and so affectionately, mind and plead your concerns with God, at such a time as this was, even when a World of Sorrow was hemming him in on every side; a cup of Wrath mixed, and ready to be delivered into his hand; at that very time when the clouds of Wrath grew black, a Storm coming, and such as he never felt before; when one would have thought, all his Care, Thoughts, and Diligence, should have been employed on his own account, to mind his own Sufferings? No, he doth as it were forget his own Sorrows, to mind our Peace and Comfort. O Love unspeakable!

Corol-

By this, the Observation is original; Memo, peculiaris, proximus, hinc can be long life, that dwells near to Danger: For hereby they are in the midst of danger.

Corollary 1. If this be so, that Christ so eminently discovered his Care and Love for his People in his parting hour: Then hence we conclude, *the Perseverance of the Saints is unquestionable.* Do you hear how he pleads, how he begs, how he fills his mouth with Arguments, how he chufeth his Words, and sets them in order, how he winds up his Spirit to the very highest pin of Zeal and Fervency? And can you doubt of success? Can such a Father deny the Importunity, and strong Reasonings and Pleadings of such a Son? O it can never be. He can not deny him: Christ hath the art and skill of prevailing with God: He hath (as in this appears) the tongue of the Learned. If the heart or hand of God were hard to be opened, yet this would open them; but when the Father himself loves us, and is inclined to do us good, who can doubt of Christ's success? that which is in motion, is the more easily moved. The cause Christ manageth in Heaven for us, is just and righteous. The manner in which he pleads, is powerful, and therefore the success of his Suit is unquestionable.

Quicquid est in modis, facile movetur.

And possumus, quod jure possumus.

The Apostle professeth, 2 Cor. 1. 3. *We can do nothing against the Truth.* He means it in regard of the bent of his Heart, he could not move against Truth and Righteousness. And if a holy Man cannot, much less will a holy God. If Christ undertake to plead the Cause of his People with the Father, and use his Oratory with him, there is no doubt but he carries it. Every word in this Prayer is a chosen Shaft drawn to the head by a strong and skilful hand; you need not question but it goes home to the White, and hits the Mark aimed at. Doth he pray, *Father keep through thine own Name, those thou hast given me?* Sure they shall be kept, if all the Power in Heaven can keep them. O think on this, when Dangers surround your Souls or Bodies, when Fears and Doubts are multiplied within: When thou art ready to say in thy halts, all Men are Liars, I shall one day perish by the hand of Sin or Satan: think on that Incouragement Christ gave to Peter, Luke 22. 31. *I have prayed for thee.*

Subordinata non paganar.

Mr. Cobber of Prager.

Corollary 2. Again, hence we learn, that *argumentative Prayer are excellent Prayers.* The strength of every thing is in its joints; there lyes much of the strength of Prayer also: How strongly jointed, how nervous and argumentative was this Prayer of Christ? Some there are indeed that think we need not argue and plead in Prayer with God, but only present the matter of our Prayers to him, and let Christ alone (whose Office it is) to plead with the Father: As if Christ did not present our Pleas and Arguments, as well as simple Desires to God; as if the choicest part of our Prayers must be kept back, because Christ presents our Prayers to God. No, no, Christ's pleading is one thing, ours another: His and ours are not opposed, but subordinate; his pleading doth not destroy, but makes us successful. God calls us to plead with him, Isa. 1. 18. *Come now let us reason together.* God (as one observeth) reasoneth with us by his Word and Providences outwardly, and by the motions of his Spirit inwardly: But we reason with him, by framing (through the help of his Spirit) certain holy Arguments, grounded upon allowed Principles drawn

his Nature, Name, Word, or Works. And it is condemned as a very sinful defect in Professors, that they did not plead the Church's Cause with God; Jer. 30. 13. *There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up.* What was Jacob's wrestling with the Angel, but his holy pleading and importunity with God? Gen. 32. And how well it pleased God, let the event speak; *As a Prince he prevailed, and had Power with God.* On which Instance a Worthy thus glosseth: Let God frown, smite or wound, Jacob is at a Point, a Blessing he came for, and a Blessing he will have; *I will not let thee go, (saith he) unless thou blest me.* His Limbs, his Life might go, but there is no going for Christ without a Pawn, without a Blessing. This is the Man, now what is his speed? The Lord admires him, and honours him to all Generations. *What is thy Name? Saith he, q. d. I never met with such a Man, Titles of Honour are not worthy of thee: Thou shalt be called, not Jacob a Shepherd with Men, but Jacob a Prince with God.* Nazianzen said of his Sister *Gorgonia*, that she was modestly impudent with God; there was no putting her off with a denial. The Lord on this account hath honoured his Saints with the Title of his *Recorders*, Men fit to plead with him, as that word [μαρτυρ] signifies: Isa. 62. 6. *Tesha make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, give him no rest.* It notes the Office of him that recorded all the memorable Matters of the King, and used to suggest seasonable *Items* and *Memorandums* of things to be done.

By these holy Pleadings, *the King is held in his Galleries*, as it is Cant. 7. 5. I know we are not heard, either for our much speaking, or our excellent speaking; 'tis Christ's pleading in Heaven that makes our pleading on Earth available: But yet surely when the Spirit of the Lord shall suggest proper Arguments in prayer, and help the humble Suppliant to press them home believably and affectionately; when he helps us weep and plead, to groan and plead, God is greatly delighted in such Prayers. *Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, said Jacob, Gen. 32. 12.* It's thine own free Promise; I did not go on mine own head, but thou bidd'st me go, and encouragest me with this Promise. O this is taking with God when by the Spirit of Adoption we can come to God, crying, *Abba, Father*; Father, hear, forgive, pity and help me. Am I not thy Child, thy Son or Daughter? To whom may a Child be bold to go, with whom may a Child have hope to speed, if not with his Father: Father, hear me. The Fathers of our Flesh are full of bowels, and pity their Children, and know how to give good things to them when they ask them: When they ask Bread or Cloaths, will they deny them? And is not the Father of Spirits more full of bowels, more full of pity? Father, hear me. This is that kind of Prayer which is melody in the Ears of God.

Corollary 3. What an excellent Pattern is here, for all that have the charge and government of others committed to them, whether *Magistrates, Ministers, or Parents*, to teach them how to acquit themselves towards their Relations when they come to die?

Look upon dying Jesus, see how his care and love

Rememorantes, vel, qui remissionem facient.

Plus gemitis, quam sermonebus; plus flexu, quam affectu, cor clamant ad Dominum.

Aug. Mr. R. A. vind.

love to his People flamed out when the time of his departure was at hand. Surely as we are bound to remember our Relations every day, and to lay up a stock of Prayers for them in the time of our health, so it becomes us to imitate Christ in our earnestness with God for them when we die. Tho' we die, our Prayers die not with us: They outlive us, and those we leave behind us in the World, may reap the benefit of them when we are turned to dust.

Mr. Richard Flavell, a faithful and laborious Preacher of the Gospel at Haselet in Warwickshire, and afterwards at Willersey in Gloucestershire, now with God.

For my own part I must profess before the World, that I have a high value for this Mercy; and do from the bottom of my heart, bless the Lord, who gave me a religious and tender Father, who often poured out his Soul to God for me: He was one that was inwardly acquainted with God; and being full of bowels to his Children, often carried them before the Lord, prayed and pleaded with God for them, wept and made supplications for them. This stock of Prayers and Blessings left by him before the Lord, I cannot but esteem above the fairest Inheritance on Earth. O it is no small Mercy to have thousands of fervent Prayers lying before the Lord, filed up in Heaven for us. And O that we would all be faithful to this Duty! Surely our love, especially to the Souls of our Relations, should not grow cold when our breath doth. O that we would remember this Duty in our lives; and if God give opportunity and ability, fully discharge it when we die; considering as Christ did, we shall be no more, but they are in this World, in the midst of a defiled, tempting, troublesome World: It's the last office of Love that ever we shall do for them. After a little while we shall be no lon-

ger sensible how it is with them; (for, as the Church speaks, *Isa. 63. 16. Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledgeth us not*) what Temptations and Troubles may befall them, we do not know. O imitate Christ your Pattern.

Corollary 4. To conclude; Hence ye may see what a high esteem and precious value Christ bath of Believers; this was the Treasure which he could not quit, he could not die till he had secured it in a safe hand: I come unto thee; holy Father, keep through thine own Name those whom thou hast given me.

Surely Believers are dear to Jesus Christ; and good reason, for he hath paid dear for them: Let his dying Language, this last farewell speak for him, how he prized them. *The Lord's Portion is his People, Jacob is the Lot of his Inheritance, Deut. 32. 9. They are a peculiar Treasure to him above all the People of the Earth, Exod. 12. 5.* What is much upon our hearts when we die, is dear to us indeed. O how precious, how dear should Jesus Christ be to us, were we first and last upon his heart! Did he mind us, did he pray for us, did he so wrestle with God about us, when the sorrows of Death compassed him about? How much are we engaged, not only to love him, and esteem him whilst we live, but to be in pangs of love for him, when we feel the pangs of Death upon us! To be eying him, when our eye-sightings break! To have hot Affections for Christ, when our hands and feet grow cold! The very last whisper of our departing Soul should be this,

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

Ser. 21. Opens the second preparative All of Christ for his own Death.

S E R M O N XXI.

I C O R. XI. 23, 24, 25.

—The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed, took Bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my Body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the Cup, when he had supped, saying, This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood; this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

CHRIST had no sooner recommended his dear Charge to the Father, (but the time of his Death halting on) he institutes his last Supper to be the lasting Memorial of his Death in all the Churches, until the second coming; therein graciously providing for the comfort of his People, when he should be removed out of their sight. And this was the second preparative All of Christ in order to his Death; he will set his house in order, and then die.

This his second Act manifests no less love than the former: It's like the plucking off the Ring from his Finger, when ready to lay his Neck upon the Block, and delivering it to his dearest Friends, to keep that as a Memorial of him: *Take this, &c. in remembrance of me.*

In the words read, are four things noted by the Apostle about this last and lovely Act of

Christ, viz. the Author, Time, Institution, and End of this holy solemn Ordinance.

1. The Author of it, *The Lord Jesus*: It's Authoritas praeceptis est ratio praecepti. an effect of his Lordly Power, and Royal Authority; *Mat. 28. 18. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All Power is given unto me in Heaven and Earth: Go ye therefore. The Government is upon his shoulder, Isa. 9. 6.* He shall bear the Glory, *Zech. 6. 13.* Who but he that came out of the Bosom of the Father, and is acquainted with all the Counsels that are here, knows what will be acceptable of God? And who but he can give Creatures by his Blessing, their sacramental Efficacy and Virtue? Bread and Wine are naturally fit to refresh and nourish our Bodies; but what fitness have they to nourish Souls? Surely none but what they receive from the Blessing of Christ that institutes them.

2. The

2. The Time when the Lord Jesus appointed this Ordinance: *In the same night in which he was betrayed*: it could not be sooner, because the Passover must first be celebrated; nor later, for that night he was apprehended. It is therefore emphatically expressed *in eam noctem, in that same Night*, that Night for ever to be remembered. He gives that Night a cordial Draught to his Disciples before the Conflict: he settles that Night an Ordinance in the Church, for the confirmation and consolation of his people in all Generations, to the end of the World. By instituting it that Night, he gives abundant evidence of his Care for his People, in spending so much of that little, very little time he had left, on their account.

3. The Institution it self; in which we have the memorative, significative, instructive Signs, and they are Bread and Wine: And the glorious Mysteries represented and shadowed forth by them, *viz.* Jesus Christ crucified; the proper New Testament nourishment of Believers. Bread and Wine are choice Creatures, and do excellently shadow forth the Flesh and Blood of crucified Jesus; and that both in their natural usefulness, and manner of preparation. Their usefulness is very great; Bread is a Creature necessary to uphold and maintain our natural Life; therefore it's called *the Staff of Bread*, Isa. 3. 1. because as a feeble Man depends and leans upon his Staff, so doth our feeble Spirits upon Bread. Wine was made to cheer the heart of Man, *Judg.* 9. 13. They are both useful and excellent Creatures; their preparations to become so useful to us are also remarkable. The Corn must be ground in the Mill; the Grapes torn and squeezed to pieces in the Wine-press, before we can either have Bread or Wine. And when all this is done, they must be received into the Body, or they nourish not. So that these were very fit Creatures to be set apart for this use and end.

If any object, it's true, they are good Creatures, but not precious enough to be the Signs of such profound and glorious Mysteries: It was worth the creating a new Creature, to be the Sign of the new Covenant.

Let him that thus objects, ask himself, whether nothing be precious without Pomp? The preciousness of these Elements is not so much from their own natures, as their use and end: and that makes them precious indeed. A Loadstone at Sea, is much more excellent than a Diamond, because more useful. A pennyworth of Wax applied to the Label of a Deed, and sealed, may in a minute have its value raised to thousands of pounds. These Creatures receive their value and estimation on a like account. Nor should it at all remain a wonder to thee, why Christ should represent himself by such mean and common things, when thou hast well considered, that the excellency of the Picture is in its similitude and conformity to the Original; and that Christ was in a low, sad, and very abased state, when this Picture of him was drawn; he was then a *Man of sorrows*. These then, as lively Signs, shadow forth a crucified Jesus, represent him to us in his red Garments. This precious Ordinance may, much more than Paul, say to us, *I always bear about in my Body, the dying*

Vol. I.

of the Lord Jesus: That's the thing it signifies.

4. Lastly, Take notice of the Use, Design, and End of this Institution. *Est tibi ipse dicens, or, in remembrance*, or for a memorial of me. O there's much in this: Christ knew how apt our base hearts would be to lose him, amidst such a throng of sensible Objects as we here converse with; and how much that forgetfulness of him, and of his Sufferings, would turn to our prejudice and loss; and therefore doth he appoint a Sign to be remembered by: *As oft as ye do this, ye shew forth the Lord's Death till he come.* Hence we observe, suitable to the design of this Discourse.

Doct. That the Sacramental Memorial Christ left with his People, is a special Mark of his Care and Love for them.

What! to order his Picture (as it were) to be drawn when he was dying, to be left with his Spouse! to rend his own Flesh, and set abroad his own Blood to be Meat and Drink for our Souls! O what manner of Love was this! 'Tis true, his Picture in the Sacrament is full of Scars and Wonders; but these are honourable Scars, and highly grace and commend it to his Spouse, for whose dear sake he here received them.

They are Marks of Love and Honour. And he would be so drawn, or rather he so drew himself, that as oft as his People look'd upon that Portraiture of him, they may remember, and be deeply affected with those things he here indured for their sakes. These are the Wounds my dear Husband Jesus received for me. These are the Marks of that Love which passes the Love of Creatures. O see the Love of a Saviour! This is that Heavenly Pelican that feeds his Young with his own Blood. We have read of pitiful and tender Women that hath eaten the Flesh of their own Children, *Lam.* 4. 10. But where is that Woman recorded, that gave her own Flesh and Blood to be Meat and Drink to her Children? Surely the Spouse may say of the Love of Christ, what David in his Lamentations said of the Love of Jonathan, *Thy Love to me was wonderful, passing the Love of Women.* But to prepare the Point to be Meat indeed, and Drink indeed to thy Soul, I shall discuss briefly these Three things, and hasten to the Application.

First, What it is to remember the Lord Jesus in the Sacrament.

Secondly, What Aptitude there is in that Ordinance, so to bring him to our remembrance.

Thirdly, How the Care and Love of Christ is discovered by leaving such a Memorial of himself with us.

First, What it is to remember the Lord Jesus in the Sacrament.

Remembrance properly, is the return of the Mind to an Object, about which it hath been formerly conversant: And it may so return to integrate a thing it hath conversed with before two ways; *speculatively*, and *transiently*; or *affectingly*, and *premanently*. A *speculative Remembrance*, is only to call to mind the History

quidem memorie adhaerent, postea vero evanuerunt: appellatur uno nomine remissio cordis, Kackermar. *Ser. Phys.* l. 4. c. 6. p. (mibi) 534.

Dominus
noster
dum vi-
vens, ejus
Sacrificii
similicu-
dinem ce-
lebrandum
in tu
moris me-
morian
commen-
davit.
Aug.

Hec sunt
in signa
laudis.

Oratio-
moria,
est vs re-
turn to integra-
rix, live
recol-
lectrix Re-
earum
imaginum,
quae antea

of such a Person; and his Sufferings; that Christ was once put to death in the Flesh. An *affectionate Remembrance*, is when we so call Christ and his Death to our Minds, as to feel the powerful Impressions thereof upon our Hearts. Thus, *Mat. 26. 75. Peter remembered the word of the Lord, and went out, and wept bitterly.* His very Heart was melted with that remembrance; his Bowels were pained, he could not hold, but went out and wept abundantly. Thus *Joseph*, when he saw his Brother *Benjamin*, whose sight refreshed the memory of former days and endearments, was greatly affected, *Gen. 43. 29, 30. And he lift up his eyes, and saw his Brother Benjamin, his Mother's Son; and said, Is this your young Brother, of whom you speak to me? and he said, God be gracious unto thee my Son. And Joseph made haste, for his Bowels did yearn upon his Brother, and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his Chamber, and wept there.* Such a Remembrance of Christ is that which is here intended. This is indeed a gracious Remembrance of Christ; the former hath nothing of Grace in it. The time shall come when *Judas* that betrayed him, and the *Jews* that pierced him, shall historically remember what was done: *Rev. 1. 7. Behold he cometh with Clouds, and every eye shall see him; and they also which pierced him: and all Kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of him.* Then, I say, *Judas* shall remember, This is he whom I perfidiously betrayed. *Pilate* shall remember, This is he whom I sentenced to be hanged on the Tree, tho' I was convinced of his Innocency. Then the *Soldiers* shall remember, This is that Face we spit upon, that Head we crowned with Thorns: Lo this is he whose Side we pierced, whose Hands and Feet we once nailed to the Cross. But this Remembrance will be their torment, not their benefit. It is not therefore a bare historical, speculative, but a gracious, affectionate, impressive Remembrance of Christ that is here intended: And such a Remembrance of Christ supposes and includes,

1. The saving Knowledge of him. We cannot be said to remember what we never knew; nor to remember savingly what we never knew savingly. There have been many previous, sweet and gracious transactions, dealings and intimacies betwixt Christ and his People, from the time of their first happy acquaintance with him: much of that sweetness they have had in former Considerations of him, and hours of Communion with him, is lost and gone; and nothing is more volatile, hazardous and inconstant, than our spiritual Comforts: But now at the Table, there our old Acquaintance is renewed, and the remembrance of his Goodness and Love refreshed and revived: *We will remember thy Love more than Wine; the upright love thee, Cant. 1. 4.*

2. Such a Remembrance of Christ includes Faith in it. Without discerning Christ at a Sacrament there is no remembrance of him; and without Faith no discerning Christ there. But when the precious eye of Faith hath spied Christ under that veil, it presently calls up the Affections, saying, *Come see the Lord.* These are the Wounds he received from me. This is

he that loved me, and gave himself for me. This is his Flesh, and that his Blood; *sic equalem, sic ille manus*, &c. so his Arms were stretched down upon the Cross to embrace me: So his blessed Head hung down to kiss me. Awake my Love, rouse up my Hope, flame out my Desires; Come forth O all ye Powers and Affections of my Soul, come see the Lord. No sooner doth Christ by his Spirit call to the Believer, but Faith hears; and discerning the Voice, turns about, like *Mary*, saying, *Rabboni*, my Lord, my Master.

3. This Remembrance of Christ includes suitable Impressions made upon the Affections, by such a Sight and Remembrance of him: And therein lyes the nature of that precious thing which we call Communion with God. Various Representations of Christ are made at the Table. Sometimes the Soul there calls to mind the infinite Wisdom, that so contriv'd and laid the glorious and mysterious design and project of Redemption: The effect of this is *wonder and admiration*. O the manifold Wisdom of God! *Eph. 3. 10.* O the depths, the heights, the length, the breadth of this Wisdom! I can as easily span the Heavens, as take the just dimensions of it. Sometimes a Representation of the Severity of God is made to the Soul at that Ordinance. O how inflexible and severe is the Justice of God! What no abatement! No sparing Mercy! Not to his own Son! This begets a double Impression on the Heart.

(1.) Just and deep *Indignation* against Sin, *Magna amaritudo peccati, quæ tantum amaritudinem perperit. Aug.* Ah cursed Sin! 'Twas thou usedst my dear Lord so; for thy sake he underwent all this. If thy Vileness had not been so great, his Sufferings had not been so many. Cursed Sin! thou wast the Knife that stabb'd him: Thou the Sword that pierced him. Ah what Revenge it works! I remember it's storied of one of the Kings of *France*, that hearing his Bishop (as I remember it was *Remigius*) read the History of Christ's Trial and Execution, and hearing how barbarously they had used him, he was moved with so tragical and patherical a History, to great Indignation against *Pilate*, the *Jews*, and the rude and bloody Soldiers, and could not contain himself; but cried out as the Bishop was reading, O that I had been there with my Frenchmen, I would have cut all their Throats, who so barbarously used my Saviour.

To allude to this: When the Believer considers and remembers that Sin put Christ to all that Shame and Ignominy, that he was wounded for our Transgressions, he is filled with hatred of Sin, and cries out, O Sin, I will revenge the Blood of Christ upon thee! Thou shalt never live a quiet hour in my Heart. And,

(2.) It produces an humble *Adoration* of the Goodness and Mercy of God, to exact satisfaction for our Sins, by such bloody Stripes, from our Surety. Lord, if this Wrath had seized on me, as it did on Christ, what had been my condition then! *If these things were done in the green tree, what had been the case of the dry tree?*

Sometimes Representations (and not common ones) are made of the Love of Christ, who assumed a Body and Soul on purpose to bear

Dum con-
spicis Do-
minum,
et inter
morales
veritas
creas ?
et non po-
tens a ves-
tigio in
coram
transferri ?
Chrysol.
Hom. lth.
3.

bear the Wrath of God for our Sins. And when that surpassing Love breaks out in its glory upon the Soul, how is the Soul transported and ravished with it ! Crying out, What manner of Love is this ! Here's a Love large enough to go round the Heavens, and the Heaven of Heavens. Who ever loved after this rate, to lay down his life for Enemies ! O Love unutterable and unconceivable ! How glorious is my Love in his red Garments ! Sometimes the fruits of his Death are there gloriously displayed ; even his satisfaction for Sin, and the purchase his Blood made of the eternal Inheritance : And this begets *Thankfulness* and *Confidence* in the Soul. Christ is Dead, and his Death hath satisfied for my Sin. Christ is dead, therefore my Soul shall never die. Who shall separate me from the Love of God ? These are the fruits, and and this is the nature of that remembrance of Christ here spoken of.

Secondly, What aptitude or conduency is there in this Ordinance, to bring Christ so to remembrance ?

Quotes
hæc com-
memoratur,
tunc Chris-
tus mori-
tur ; cruce
penden-
tem
Dominum
videmus.
Aug. in
Psal. 21.

Much every way ; for it is a Sign by him appointed to that end, and hath (as Divines well observe) a threefold use and consideration, viz. as it is *memorative*, *significant*, and *instru-ctive*.

1. As it is *memorative*, and so it hath the nature and use of a pledge or token of Love, left by a dying, to a dear surviving Friend. And so the Sacrament, as was said before, is like a Ring plucked off from Christ's Finger, or a Bracelet from his Arm ; or rather his Picture from his Breast, delivered to us with such words as these ; *As oft as you look to this, remember me : Let this help to keep me alive in your remembrance when I am gone, and out of your sight.* It conduces to it also,

2. As it is a *significant* sign, most aptly signifying both his bitter Sufferings for us, and our strict and intimate Union with him : Both which have an excellent usefulness to move the heart, and its deepest Affections are the remembrance of it. The breaking of the Bread, and shedding forth the Wine, signifies the former ; our eating, drinking, and incorporating them, is a lively signification of the other.

3. Moreover this Ordinance hath an excellent use and advantage for this affectionate remembrance of Christ, as it is an *instru-ctive* sign. And it many ways instructs us, and enlightens our mind, particularly in the Truths which are very affecting things.

1. That Christ is the Bread on which our Souls live, proper meat and drink for Believers, the most excellent New Testament-food. It's said, *Psal. 78. 25. Man did eat Angels food :* He means the Manna that fell from Heaven. Which was so excellent, that if *Angels*, who are the noblest Creatures, did live upon material Food, they would chuse this above all to feed on. And yet this was but a Type and weak Shadow of Christ, on whom Believers feed. Christ makes a Royal Feast of his own Flesh and Blood, *1 Jo. 25. 6.* all our Delicates are in him.

2. It instructs us that the New Testament is now in its full force, and no substantial alteration can be made in it, since the Testator is dead, and by his Death hath ratified it. So

that all the excellent Promises and Blessings of it are now fully confirmed to the believing Soul, *Heb. 9. 16, 17.* All these, and many more choice Truths, are we instructed in by this Sign : And all these ways it remembers us of Christ, and helps powerfully to raise, warm, and affect our Hearts with that remembrance of him.

Thirdly, The last Enquiry is, How Christ hath hereby left such a special mark of his Care for, and Love to his People. And that will evidently appear, if you consider these five particulars.

1. This is a special mark of the Care and Love of Christ, in as much as hereby he hath made abundant provision for the confirmation and establishment of his Peoples Faith to the end of the World. For this being an evident proof that the New Testament is in its full force, (*Mat. 26. 28. This is the Cup of the New Testament in my Blood*) it tends as much to our satisfaction, as the legal execution of a Deed, by which we hold and enjoy our Estate. So that when he saith, *Take eat*, it is as much as if God should stand before you at the Table with Christ, and all the Promises in his hand ; and say, *I deliver this to thee as my Deed.* What think you, doth this promote and confirm the Faith of a Believer ? If it doth not, what doth ?

2. This is a special mark of Christ's Care and Love, in as much as by this he hath made like abundant Provision for the enlargement of his peoples Joy and Comfort. Believers are at this Ordinance, as *Mary* was at the Sepulchre, *with Fear, and great Joy, Mat. 28. 8.* Come, Reader, speak thy Heart, if thou be one that heartily loveth Jesus Christ, and hath gone many days, possibly years, mourning and lamenting because of the inevidence and cloudiness of thy Interest in him ; that hath fought him sorrowing, in this Ordinance, and in that ; in one duty, and another, if at last Christ should take off that Mask, that cruel Covering (as one calls it) from his Face, and be known of thee in breaking Bread : Suppose he should by his Spirit whisper thus in thine ear as thou sittest at his Table, *Dost thou indeed so prize, esteem and value me ? Will nothing but Christ and his Love content and satisfy thee ? Then, as sweet, lovely and desirable as I am, know that I am thine ; take thine own Christ into the arms of thy Faith this day :* Would not this breed in thy Soul a Joy transcendent to all the Joys and Pleasures in this World ? What thinkest thou of it ?

3. Here is a signal mark of Christ's Care and Love, in as much as this is one of the highest and best helps for the mortification of the Corruptions of his People. Nothing tends more to the killing of Sin, than this doth. Christ's Blood, as it's food to Faith, so it's poison to our Lusts. O what a Pill is wrapt up in that Bread ! What an excellent Potion is in that Cup to purge the Soul : One calls that Table an Altar, on which our Corruptions are sacrificed and slain before the Lord. For how can they that there see what Christ suffered for Sin, live any longer therein ?

4. Moreover his Care and Love appear in providing such Bellows as these, to excite and blow up his Peoples Love into a lively Flame. When *Joseph* made himself known to his Brethren,

1 2 then,

then, *I am Joseph your Brother, whom ye sold, be not grieved*; O! what a shower of Tears and dear Affections was there? How did they fall upon each other Necks! So that the *Egyptians* wondered at the matter. How doth the Soul (if I may so speak) passionately love Jesus Christ at such a time? O what a Christ is my Christ! *The first among ten thousand*. What hath he done, what hath he suffered for me! What great things hath my Jesus given, and what great things hath he forgiven me! A World, a thousand Worlds cannot shew such another. Here it's melted down by Love at his feet; it's paid with Love.

5. To conclude, Christ's Care and Love are farther manifested to his People in this Ordinance, as it is of the strongest bonds of Union betwixt themselves that can be: *1 Cor. 10. 17. We being many, are one Bread, and one Body: for we are all partakers of that one Bread*. And tho' thro' our Corruptions it falls out, that what was intended for a bond of Union, proves a bond of Contention; yet in as much as by this it appears how dearly Christ loved them; for as much also as here they are sealed up to the same Inheritance, their dividing Corruptions here slain, their Love to Christ, and consequently to each other, here improved; it is certainly one of the strongest Ties in the World, to wrap up gracious Hearts in a bundle of Love.

And thus I have dispatched the doctrinal part of this Point. The improvement of it is in the following Inference.

Inference 1. Did Christ leave this Ordinance with his Church to preserve his remembrance among his People? Then surely Christ foreknew, that notwithstanding what he is, hath done, suffered, and promised yet to do for his People, they will for all this be still apt to forget him.

A Man would think that such a Christ should never be one whole hour together out of his Peoples Thoughts and Affections: That wherever they go, they should carry him up and down with them, in their Thoughts, Desires, and Delights: That they should let their Thoughts work towards Christ as the longing Thoughts of her that is with Child do work after that she longs for: That they should lye down with Christ in their Thoughts at Night, and when they awake be still with him: That their very Dreams in the night should be sweet Visions of Christ, and all their Words favour of Christ.

But O the baseness of these Hearts! Here we live and converse in a World of sensible Objects, which like a Company of Thieves rob us of our Christ, and lay the dead Child in his room. Wo is me, that it should be so with me, who am so obliged to love him! Tho' he be in the highest Glory in Heaven, he doth not forget us; he hath graven us upon the Palms of his Hands; we are continually before him. He thinks on us, when we forget him. The whole Honour and Glory paid him in Heaven by the Angels, cannot divert his Thoughts one moment from us; but every trifle that meets us in the way, is enough to divert our Thoughts from him. Why do we not abhor and loath our selves for this? What! Is it a plain, a burden, to carry Christ in our Thoughts about the World? As much a Burden if thy Heart be spiritual, as a Bird is burdened by carrying his own Wings.

Will such Thoughts intrude unseasonably, and thrust greater things than Christ out of our Minds? For shame, Christian, for shame, let not thy Heart play the wanton, and gad from Christ after every Vanity. In Heaven nothing else takes up the Thoughts of Saints to eternity; and yet there is no tiring, no satiety. O learn to live nearer that heavenly Life. Never leave praying and striving, till thou canst say as it is, *Psal. 63. 5. My Soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fainess, and my Mouth shall praise thee with joyful Lips; whilst I remember thee on my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches.*

Inference 2. Hence also we infer, that *Sacrament-seasons are Heart-melting seasons*; because therein the most affecting and heart-melting Recognitions and Representations of Christ are made. As the Gospel offers him to the ear, in the most sweet affecting sounds of Grace; so the Sacrament to the eye, in the most taking Visions that are on this side Heaven.

There, Hearts that will not yield a Tear under other Ordinances, can pour out Floods: *Zech. 12. 10. They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn.* Yet I dare not affirm, that every one whose Heart is broken by the believing sight of Christ there, can evidence that it is so by a dropping Eye. No, we may say of Tears, as it's said of Love, *Cant. 8. 7.* If some Christians would give all the Treasures of their House for them, they cannot be purchased: Yet they are truly humbled for Sin, and seriously affected with the Grace of Christ. For the support of such, I would distinguish, and have them to do so also, betwixt what is essential to spiritual Sorrow, and what is contingent. Deep displeasure with thy self for Sin, hearty resolutions and desires of the compleat mortification of it, this is essential to all spiritual Sorrow; but Tears are accidental, and in some Constitutions rarely found. If thou have the former, trouble not thy self for want of the latter, tho' 'tis a mercy when they kindly and undissembledly flow from a Heart truly broken.

And surely, to see who it is that thy Sins have pierced, how great, how glorious, how wonderful a Person that was, that was so humbled, abased, and brought to the dust, for such a wretched thing as thou art, cannot but tenderly affect the considering Soul. If it was for a Lamentation in the Captivity, *that Prince were hanged up by the Hands, and the Faces of the Elders not revered*, *Lam. 5. 12.* And if at the death of *Abner, David could lament*, and say, *a Prince, and a great Man is fallen in Israel this day*, *2 Sam. 3. 38.* If he could pathetically lament the death of *Saul and Jonathan*, saying, *Daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in Scarlet; The beauty of Israel is slain upon the high places: Ah how much more should it affect us, to see the Beauty of Heaven fallen, the Prince of Life hang dead upon a Tree! O let the place where you assemble to see this sight of your crucified Jesus, be a Bokin, a place of Lamentation.*

Inference 3. Moreover hence it's evident, that the believing and affectionate remembrance of Christ, is of singular advantage at all times to the People of God. For it's the immediate end

end of one of the greatest Ordinances that ever Christ appointed to the Church.

To have frequent recognitions of Christ will appear to be singularly efficacious and useful to Believers, if you consider,

1. If at any time the Heart be dead and hard, this is the likeliest means in the World to dissolve, melt and quicken it. Look higher hard Heart; hard indeed if this Hammer will not break it. Behold the Blood of Jesus.

2. Art thou easily overcome by Temptations to Sin? This is the most powerful pull-back in the World from Sin; *Rom. 6. 2. How shall we that are dead to Sin, live any longer therein?* We are crucified with Christ, what have we to do with Sin? Have such a thought as this, when thy heart is yielding to Temptation. How can I do this, and crucify the Son of God afresh! Hath he not suffered enough already on earth, shall I yet make him groan as it were for me in Heaven? Look as *David* poured the water brought from the Well of *Bethlehem* on the ground, tho' he was athirst, for he said, it is the Blood of the men; *i. e.* they eminently hazarded their Lives to fetch it; much more should a Christian pour out upon the ground, yea, despise and trample underfoot the greatest profit or pleasure of sin; saying, Nay, I will have nothing to do with it, I will on no terms touch it, for it is the Blood of Christ: It cost Blood, infinite precious Blood, to expiate it. If there were a Knife in your House that had been thrust to the Heart of your Father, you would not take pleasure to see that Knife, much less to use it.

3. Are you afraid your sins are not pardoned, but still stand upon account before the Lord: what more relieving, what more satisfying, than to see the Cup in the New Testament in the blood of Christ, which is shed for many for the remission of Sins? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? it's Christ that died.

4. Are you staggered at your Sufferings, and hard things you must endure for Christ in this World? dorth the Flesh shrink back from these things, and cry, spare thy self: What is there in the World more likely to steel and fortify thy Spirit with resolution and courage, than such a fight as this? Did Christ face the Wrath of Men, and the Wrath of God too? Did he stand as a Pillar of Brass, with unbroken Patience, and steadfast Resolution, un-

der such Troubles as never met in the like height upon any meer Creature, till Death beat the last Breath out of his Nostrils? And shall I shrink for a trifle? Ah, he did not serve me so! I will arm my self with the like mind, 1 *Pet.*

2. 2.

5. Is thy Faith staggered at the Promises? canst thou not rest upon a Promise? Here's that will help thee against hope: to believe in hope, giving glory to God. For this is God's Seal added to his Covenant, which ratifies and binds fast all that God hath spoken.

6. Dost thou idle away precious Time vainly, and live uselessly to Christ in thy Generation? what more apt both to convince and cure thee, than such a remembrance of Christ as this? O when thou considerest thou art not thine own, thy Time, thy Talents are not thine own, but Christ's; when thou shalt see thou art bought with a Price (a great Price indeed) and so art strictly obliged to glorify God, with thy Soul and Body, which are his, 2 *Cor. 5. 14.* This will powerfully awake a dull, sluggish and lazy Spirit. In a word, what Grace is there this remembrance of Christ cannot quicken? What Sin cannot it mortify? What Duty cannot it animate? O it is of singular use in all cases to the People of God!

Inference 4. Lastly, Hence we infer; *The* all other things do, yet Christ neither doth, nor can grow stale. Here's an Ordinance to preserve his remembrance fresh to the end of the World. The Blood of Christ doth never dry up. The beauty of this Rose of *Sharon* is never lost or withered. He is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. As his Body in the Grave saw no Corruption, so neither can his Love, or any of his Excellencies. When the Saints shall have fed their eyes upon him in Heaven thousands and millions of years, he shall be as Fresh, Beautiful, and Orient as at the beginning. Other Beauties have their prime and their fading time; but Christ's abides eternally. Our delight in Creatures is often most at first acquaintance; when we come nearer to them, and see more of them, the edge of our Delight is rebated: But the longer you know Christ, and the nearer you come to him, still the more do you see of his Glory. Every farther prospect of Christ entertains the mind with a fresh Delight. He is as it were a new Christ every day, and yet the same Christ still.

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

S E R M O N XXII.

L U K. XXII. 41, 42, 43, 44.

And he was withdrawn from them about a Stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed; saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me: Nevertheless, not my Will, but thine be done. And there appeared an Angel unto him from Heaven, strengthening him. And being in an Agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his Sweat was as it were great drops of Blood falling down to the Ground.

THE hour is now almost come, even that hour of Sorrow, which Christ had so often spoken of. Yet a little, a very little while, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of

Serm.
22.
Opens
the third
prepara-
tive all
of Christ
for his
own
Death.

of Sinners. He hath affectionately recommended his Children to his Father. He hath set his house in order, and ordained a Memorial of his Death to be left with his People, as you have heard. There is but one thing more to do, and then the Tragedy begins. He recommended us, he must also recommend himself by prayer to the Father; and when that is done, he is ready, let *Judas* with the black Guard come when they will.

This last Act of Christ's preparation for his own Death, is contained in this Scripture: Wherein we have an account, 1. Of his Prayer. 2. Of the Agony attending it. 3. His relief in that Agony, by an Angel that came and comforted him.

1. The Prayer of Christ; in a praying posture he will be found when the Enemy comes; he will be taken upon his Knees: He was pleading hard with God in Prayer, for Strength to carry him through this heavy Trial, when they came to take him. And this Prayer was a very remarkable Prayer, both for the *solitariness* of it; he withdrew about a stone's cast, *verf.* 41. from his dearest intimates; no ear but his Father's shall hear what he had now to say. For the *vehemency* and importunity of it, these were those *intercessions*, *Heb.* 5. 7. strong cries that he poured out to God in the days of his Flesh. And for the *Humility* expressed in it, he fell upon the ground, he rouled himself as it were in the Dust, at his Father's Feet. And in divers others respects it was a very remarkable Prayer, as you will hear anon.

2. This Scripture gives you also an account of the Agony of Christ, as well as of his Prayer, and that a most strange one; such as in all respects never was known before in Nature. It was a Sweat as it had been Blood, which [as] is neither an Hyperbole, as some would make it; nor yet a meer similitude of Blood, as others fancy, but a real bloody Sweat. For so [as] is sometimes taken for the very thing it self, as *Joh.* 1. 14. And as a worthy Divine of our own well notes, that if the Holy Ghost had only intended it for a similitude or resemblance, he would rather have expressed it, as it were drops of Water, than as it were drops of Blood; for Sweat more resembles Water than Blood.

3. You have here his relief in this his Agony, and that by an Angel dispatched Post from Heaven to comfort him. The Lord of Angels now needed the comfort of an Angel. It was time to have a little refreshment, when his Face and Body too stood as full of drops of Blood, as the drops of Dew are upon the Grass. Hence we note,

Doct. That our Lord Jesus Christ was praying to his Father in an extraordinary Agony, when they came to apprehend him in the Garden.

To open and prepare this last Act of preparation on Christ's part for our use, I shall at this time speak to these particulars. *First*, The place where he prayed. *Secondly*, The time when he prayed. *Thirdly*, The matter of his Prayer. And *lastly*, The manner how he prayed.

First, For the circumstance of Place, where was this last and remarkable Prayer poured

out to God? It was in the Garden; St. *Matthew* tells us it was called *Gethsemane*, which signifies (as *Pareus* on the place observes) the Valley of tannets, *viz.* of Olives, which grew in that Valley or Garden most plentifully. This Garden lay very near to the City of *Jerusalem*. The City had twelve Gates, five of which were on the East side of it, among which the most remarkable were the *Mountain-gate*, so called of the Fountain *Siloe*. Through this gate Christ rode into the City in triumph, when he came from *Bethany*. The other was the *Sheep-gate* so called from the multitude of sheep driven in at it for the Sacrifice, for it stood close by the Temple; and close by this gate was the Garden called *Gethsemane*, where they apprehended Christ, and led him through this gate, as a sheep to the Slaughter. Betwixt this Garden and the City, ran the brook *Cedron*, which rose from a Hill upon the South, and ran upon the East part of the City, between *Jerusalem* and the Mount of Olives: and over this Brook Christ passed into the Garden, *Joh.* 18. 1. to which the Psalmist alludes in *Psal.* 110. 7. *He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head.* For this Brook running through the Valley of *Jebosaphat*, that fertile Soil, together with the filth of the City which it washed away, gave the Waters a black tincture, and so fitly resembled those grievous sufferings of Christ, in which he tasted both the Wrath of God and Men.

Now Christ went not into this Garden to hide or shelter himself from his Enemies. No, that was not his end; for if so, it had been the most improper place he could have chosen: it being the accustomed place where he was wont to pray, and a place well known to *Judas*, who was now coming to seek him, as you may see, *Joh.* 18. 2. And *Judas* which betrayed him, knew the place, for *Jesus* oft-times resorted thither with his Disciples. So that he repairs thither, not to shun, but to meet the Enemy, to offer himself as a prey to the Wolves, which there found him, and laid hold upon him. He also resorted thither for an hour or two of privacy before they came, that he might there freely pour out his Soul to God. So much for the Circumstance of Place where he prayed.

Secondly, We shall consider the Time when he entered into this Garden to pray: And it was in the shutting in of the Evening; for it was after the Passover, and the Supper were ended. Then (as *Matthew* hath it, *chap.* 26. 36.) *Jesus* went over the Brook into the Garden, betwixt the hours of nine and ten in the Evening, as it is conjectured, and so he had betwixt two and three hours time to pour out his Soul to God. For it was about Midnight that *Judas* and the Soldiers came and apprehended him there. So that it being immediately before his apprehension, it shews us in what frame and posture Christ desired to be found: and by it he left us an excellent Pattern, what we ought to do, when imminent Dangers are near us, even at the door. It becomes a Soldier to die fighting, and a Minister to die preaching, and a Christian to die praying. If they come, they find Christ upon his Knees, wrestling mightily with God by prayer. He never spent one moment

Mr. Ambrose looking to Jesus.

Tunc, nempe in grante jam nocte, postquam per acta cenae paschalis & eucharistica, gratis acta, hymnum decantasset. *Par.* in Luc. Oportet theologum concommunionem mori.

ment of the time of this Life idly ; but these were the last moments he had to live in the World, and here you may fee how they were filled up and employed.

Thirdly, Next let us consider the *Master* of his Prayer, or the things about which he poured out his Soul to God in the Garden that Evening. And *vers.* 42. informs us what that was : He prayed, saying, *Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me ; nevertheless not my will, but thine be done.* These words are involved in many difficulties, as Christ himself was when he uttered them. By the Cup, understand that portion of Sorrows then to be distributed to him by his Father. Great Afflictions and bitter Trials are frequently expressed in Scripture under the Metaphor of a Cup. So that dreadful Storm of Wrath upon the Wicked in Psal. 11. 6. *upon the Wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest ; this shall be the portion of their Cup, i. e.* the Punishment allotted to them by God for their Wickedness. And an exceeding great Misery, by a large or deep Cup. So Ezek. 23. 32, 33. *Thou shalt drink of thy Sister's Cup deep and large, thou shalt be laughed to scorn, and had in derision ; it containeth much. Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, with the Cup of astonishment and desolation ; with the Cup of thy Sister Samaria.* And when an Affliction is compounded of many bitter Ingredients, stinging and aggravating Considerations and Circumstances, then it's said to be mixed. *In the hand of the Lord there is a Cup, and the Wine is red,* (noting a bloody trial) *It is full of mixture, and he poureth out the same, but the dregs thereof all the Wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them : i. e.* they shall have the worst part of the Judgment for their share. Thus Afflictions and Calamities are express'd by the Metaphor of a Cup ; great Calamities, by a deep and large Cup ; Afflictions compounded of many aggravating circumstances, by a mixed Cup. And from the effect it hath on them that must drink it, it's called a Cup of trembling, Isa. 57. 17. *Thou hast drunken at the hand of the Lord, the Cup of his fury, the dregs of the Cup of trembling.* Such a Cup now was Christ's Cup ; a Cup of Wrath, a large and deep Cup, that contained more Wrath than ever was drunk by any Creature, even the Wrath of an infinite God. A mixed Cup ; mixed with God's Wrath and Man's in the extremity. And all the bitter aggravating circumstances that ever could be imagined ; great conternation and amazement, this was the portion of his Cup.

By the *passing of the Cup* from him, understand his exemption from suffering that dreadful and horrid Wrath of God, which he foresaw to be now at hand. For as the coming of the Cup to a Man, doth in Scripture-phrase note his bearing and suffering of Evil, as you find it, Lam. 4. 21. *Rejoice, and be glad, O Daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the Land of Uz ; the Cup also shall pass through unto thee ; thou shalt be drunken, and make thy self naked ;* which is an ironical reproof of the *Idumeans*, the Jews deadly Enemies, who wickedly insulted over them, when the cup was at their mouths : As if the

Lord had said, *You have laugh'd and jeer'd at my People, when my hand was on them ; you rejoiced to see their Calamities : Well, make yourselves merry still if you can, the Cup shall pass through unto thee ; thy turn is coming, then laugh if thou canst.* So on the contrary, the passing away of the Cup, notes freedom from, or our escaping of those Miseries. And so Christ's meaning in this conditional request is, Father, if it be thy will, excuse me from this dreadful Wrath, my Soul is amazed at it. Is there no way to shun it : Cannot I be excused ? O if it be possible, spare me. This is the meaning of it. But then here's the difficulty, how Christ who knew God had from everlasting determined he should drink it, who had compacted and agreed with him in the Covenant of Redemption so to do, who came as (himself acknowledges) for that end into the World, John 18. 37. who foresaw this Hour all along, and professed when he spake of this Blood Baptism with which he was to be baptized, that he was *strained still it was accomplish'd*, Luk. 12. 50. How (I say) to reconcile all this with such a Petition, that now when the Cup was delivered to him, it might pass, or he be excused from suffering ; this is the Knot, this is the Difficulty.

What ! Did he now repent of the Bargain ? Was all he said before but a flourish, before he saw the Enemy ? Doth he now begin to wish his Bargain dry, and that he had never undertaken such a work ? Is that the meaning of it ? Nothing less : No, no, Christ never repented of his Engagement to the Father, never was willing to let the Burden lye on us, rather than on himself ; there was not such a thought in his holy and faithful Heart : But the resolution of this Doubt depends upon another distinction, which will clear his meaning in it.

1st. You must distinguish of Prayers. Some are *absolute* and peremptory ; and so to have prayed that the Cup might pass, would have been chargeable with such absurdities as were but now mentioned : Others are *conditional* and submissive Prayers, *If it may be, if the Lord please.* And such was this, if thou be willing, if not I'll drink it. But you will say, Christ knew what was the Mind of God in that case ; he knew what Transactions had of old been betwixt his Father and him ; and therefore tho' he did not pray absolutely, yet it's strange he would pray conditionally it might pass. Therefore in the

2^d. Place, you must distinguish of the *Natures* according to which Christ acted. He acted sometimes as God, and sometimes as Man. Here he acted according to his human Nature, simply expressing, and manifesting in this Request the reluctancy it had at such sufferings : Wherein he shewed himself a true Man, in (shunning that which is destructive to his Nature.

As Christ had two distinct Natures, so two distinct Wills. And (as one well observes) in the Life of Christ there was an intermixture of Power and Weakness, of the Divine Glory, and human Frailty. At his Birth a Scar shone, but he was laid in a Manger. The Devil tempted him in the Wilderness, but there Angels ministered to him. As Man he was deceived in the Fig-tree, but as God he blasted it. He was caught

caught by the Soldiers in the Garden, but first made them fall back. So here, as Man he feared and shunned Death; but as God man he willingly submitted to it.

Deodati : "It was (as Deodati well expresses it) a purely natural desire, meer Man, by which for a short moment he apprehended and shunned "Death and Torments; but quickly recalled "himself to Obedience, by a deliberate Will, "to submit himself to God. And besides that, "this desire was but conditional, under the "Will of God, accepted by Christ; but from "the contemplation of which he was a while "diverted by the extremity of Horrors: There- "fore there was no Sin in it, but only a short "conflict of Nature, presently overcome by Reason, and a firm Will; or a small Suspension, "quickly overcome by a most strong Resolution. "Finally, this sacred deliberation in Jesus was "not made simply, or in an instant, but "with a short time, and with a counter- "poise, which is the natural property of the "Soul in its Motions and voluntary Actions.

In a word, as there was nothing of Sin in it, it being a pure and sinless affection of Nature: so there was much good in it, and that both as it was a part of his Satisfaction for our Sin, to suffer inwardly such Fears, Tremblings, and Conternations: And as it was a clear evidence that he was in all things made like unto his Brethren, except Sin. And lastly, as it serves no- rably to express the grievousness and extremity of Christ's Sufferings, whose very prospect and appearance at some distance was so dreadful to him.

If the Learned Reader desire to see what is farther said on this Point, let him read what the judicious and learned Parker, in his excellent Book *de dejectione*, hath collected upon that case.

Fourthly, Let us consider the Manner how he prayed, and that was,

1. *Solitarily*. He doth not here pray in the audience of his Disciples, as he had done before, but went at a distance from them. He had now private business to transact with God. He left some of them at the entering into the Garden; and for Peter, James and John, that went farther with him than the rest, he bids them remain there while he went and prayed. He did not desire them to pray with him, or for him; no, he must tread the Wine-press alone. Nor will he have them with him, possibly lest it should discourage them to see and hear how he groaned, sweat, trembled, and cried, as one in an Agony, to his Father.

Reader, there are Times and Cases, when a Christian would not be willing the dearest and most intimate Friend he hath in the World, should be privy to what passes betwixt him and his God.

2. It was an *humble* Prayer, that's evident by the postures into which he cast himself: Sometimes kneeling, and sometimes prostrate upon his Face. He creeps in the very Dust, lower he cannot fall; and his Heart was as low as his Body. He is meek and lowly indeed.

3. It was a *reiterated* Prayer; he prays, and then returns to the Disciples, as a Man in extremity turns every way for comfort: So Christ prays Father, let this Cup pass, but in that the Father hears him not; tho' as to support he was

heard. Being denied deliverance by his Father, he goes and bemoans himself to his penive Friends; and complains bitterly to them, *My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death*. He would ease himself a little, by opening his condition to them; but alas, they rather encrease than ease his burden. For he finds them asleep, which occasioned that gentle reprehension from him, Mat. 26. 40. *What could you not watch with me one hour?* What, not watch with me? Who may expect it from you more than I? Could you not watch? I am going to die for you, and cannot you watch with me? What! Cannot you watch with me one hour? Alas! What if I had required great matters from you? What! Not an hour, and that the parting hour too! Christ finds no ease from them, and back again he goes to that sad place, which he had stained and purpled with a bloody sweat, and prays to the same purpose again. O how he returns upon God over and over, as if he resolved to take no denial! But however, considering it must be so, he sweetly falls in with his Father's will, *Thy will be done*.

4. And lastly, It was a Prayer accompanied with a strange and wonderful Agony: So saith vers. 44. *And being in an Agony he prayed more earnestly; and his Sweat was as it were great drops of Blood falling down to the ground*. Now he was red indeed in his apparel as one that trod the Wine-press: It was not a faint thin dew, but a clotted Sweat *despectu æquæ*, clodders of blood falling upon the ground. It is disputed whether this Sweat were natural, or preternatural. That some in extremity have sweat a kind of bloody thin dew, is affirmed. I remember *Thuanus* gives us two instances that come nearest to this, of any thing I ever observed or heard of. The one was a *Captain*, who by a cowardly and unworthy fear of death, was so overwhelm'd with anguish, that a kind of bloody Dew or Sweat stood on all his Body. The other is of a young Man, condemned for a small matter to die by *Sixtus* the 5th, who poured out Tears of Blood from his Eyes, and sweat Blood from his whole Body.

These are strange and rare Instances, and the truth of them depends upon the Credit of the Relator: But certainly for Christ, whose Body had the most excellent crasis and temperament, to sweat clotted Blood, or globs of Blood, as some render it; and that in a cold night, when others needed a Fire within doors to keep them warm, *Joh. 18. 18*. I say, for him to sweat such streams through his Garments, falling to the ground on which he lay, must be concluded a preternatural thing. And indeed, it was not wonderful that such a preternatural Sweat should stream from all parts of his Body, if you do but consider what an extraordinary Load pressed his Soul at that time, even such as no meer Man ever felt, or was able to stand under; even the Wrath of a great and terrible God, in the extremity of it. *Who* (saith the Prophet *Nabum*, ch. 1. 6.) *can stand before his Indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of his Anger? His Fury is poured out like fire, and the Rocks are thrown down by him*.

The effects of this Wrath, as it fell at this time upon the Soul of Christ in the Garden, are

Deodati :
Annot. in
Matth. 26.
39.

Parker de
dejectione,
lib. 3. p.
192, &c.

Tristitia
medicem
quærit
in precibus;
quibus ut
liberius va-
care possit,
medicium
fecedit.

Non fuit
sudor di-
aphoreticus,
sed cras-
sus & gra-
vissimus, dux
quidem
indigno
moris
merito adeo
concessus
in animo
fuit, ut
sanguine-
um sudo-
rem toto
corpore
fudit. *Thuan.*
an. Lib. 11.

Juvenis
ob levem
causam,
a Sixto 5.
ad mortem
damnatus,
pro dolor
vehementia,
lacr-
mat cruen-
tas sudor-
is, & san-
guinem
pro sudore
a toto cor-
pore mittere visus
est. *Thuan.*
Lib. 80.

are largely and very emphatically exprest by the several Evangelists who wrote this Tragedy. *Matthew* tells us his Soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death, *Math. 26. 38.* The word signifies beset with Grief round about. And it's well exprest by that phrase of the Psalmist, *Psal. 116. 3. The sorrows of Death compassed me about, the pains of Hell got hold upon me.* Mark varies the Expression, and gives it us in another word no less significant and full, *Mark 14. 33. He began to be sore amazed, and very heavy.* Sore amazed, it imports so high a degree of Confirmation and Amazement, as when the Hair of the Head stands up through fear. *Luke* hath another Expression for it in the Text; he was in an Agony. An Agony is the labouring and striving of Nature in extremity. And *John* gives it us in another Expression, *Joh. 12. 27. Now is my Soul troubled.* The original word is a very full word. And it is conceived the Latins derive that word which signifies Hell, from this by which Christ's troubles is here exprest. This was the Load which oppressed his Soul, and so strained it with Fear, and Grief, that his Eyes could not vent or ease it sufficiently by Tears; but the innumerable pores of his Body are set open, to give vent by letting out streams of Blood. And yet all this while, no Hand of Man was upon him. This was but a Prelude, as it were, to the Conflict that was at hand. This bloody Sweat in which he prayed, was but as the giving or sweating of the Stones before a great Rain. Now he stood, as it were, arraigned at God's Bar, and had to do immediately with him. And you know it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. The uses of this follow in this order.

Inference 1. Did Christ pour out his Soul to God so ardently in the Garden, when the hour of his Trouble was at hand? Hence we infer, That Prayer is a singular preparative for, and relief under the greatest Troubles.

'Tis sweet, when Troubles find us in the way of our Duty. The best posture we can wrestle with Afflictions in, is to engage them upon our Knees. The Naturalist tells us, if a Lion find a Man prostrate, he will do him no harm. Christ hastned to the Garden to pray, when Judas and the Soldiers were hastning thither to apprehend him. O when we are nigh to Danger, it's good for us to draw nigh to our God. Then should we be urging that seasonable request to God, *Psal. 22. 11. Be not far from me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help.* We be to him, whom Death or Trouble finds afar off from God. And as Prayer is the best preparative for Troubles, so the choicest relief under them. Griefs are eased by Groans. The Heart is cooled and disburdened by spiritual evaporations. You know it is some relief if a Man can pour out his Complaint into the Bosom of a faithful Friend, tho' he can but pity him: how much more to pour out our Complaints into the Bosom of a faithful God, who can both pity and help us! *Luther* was wont to call Prayers the Leeches of his Cares and Sorrows; they suck out the bad Blood. It's the Title of *Psal. 102. A prayer for the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and pover-*

Vol. I.

out his complaint before the Lord. It's no small ease to open our Hearts to God. When we are as full of grief, as *Elihu* was of matter, let us say as he did, *Job 32. 19. Behold, Lord, my heart is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst at new bottles. I will speak that I may be refreshed.*

To go to God when thou art full of sorrow, when thy Heart is ready to burst within thee, as it was with Christ in this day of his trouble; and say, Father, thus and thus the case stands with thy poor Child; and so and so it's with me; I will not go up and down whining from one Creature to another, it's to no purpose to do so; nor yet will I leave my Complaint upon my self: But I will tell thee, Father, how the case stands with me; for to whom should Children make their moan, but to their Father? Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me. What thinkest thou, Reader, of this? Is it relieving to a sad Soul? Yes, yes, if thou be a Christian that hast had any experience this way, thou wilt say, there is nothing like it. Thou wilt bless God for appointing such an Ordinance as Prayer, and say, Blessed be God for Prayer: I know not what I should have done, nor how in all the World I should have waded through the Troubles I have past, if it had not been for the help of Prayer.

Inference 2. Did Christ withdraw from the Disciples to seek God by Prayer? Thence it follows, That the company of the best Men is not always seasonable. *Peter, James and John,* were three excellent Men, and yet Christ faith to them, Tarry ye here, while I go and pray yonder. The Society of Men is beautiful in its season, and no better than a burden out of season. I have read of a good Man, that when his stated time for Closet-prayer was come, he would say to the Company that were with him, whatever they were, *Friends, I must beg your excuse for a while, there is a Friend waits to speak with me.* The Company of a good Man is good, but it ceases to be so when it hinders the enjoyment of better Company. One hour with God is to be preferred to a thousand days enjoyment of the best Man on Earth. If thy dearest Friends in the World intrude unseasonably betwixt thee and thy God, it's neither rude nor unmannerly to bid them give place to better Company; I mean, to withdraw from them as Christ did from the Disciples, to enjoy an hour with God alone. In publick and private Duties we may admit of the Company of others to join with us; and if they be such as fear God, the more the better: But in secret Duties, Christ and thee must whisper it over betwixt your selves; and then the company of the Wife of thy Bosom, or thy Friend, that is as thine own Soul, would not be welcome. When thou prayest, enter into thy Closet; and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, *Mat. 6. 6.* It is as much as if Christ had said, See all clear; be sure to retire in as great privacy as may be; let no ear but God's hear what thou hast to say to him. This is at once a good note of Sincerity, and a great help to spiritual Liberty and Freedom with God.

P

L^{fe}.

Inference 3. Did Christ go to God thrice upon the same account? thence learn, *That Christians should not be discouraged, tho' they have sought God once and again, and no answer of Peace comes.* Christ was not heard the first time, and he goes a second; he was not answered the second, he goes the third and last time, yet was not answered in the thing he desired, viz. that the Cup might pass from him; and yet he hath no hard thoughts of God, but resolves his will into his Father's. If God deny you in the things you ask, he deals no otherwise with you than he did with Christ. *O my God, (saith he) I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not; and in the night, and am not silent.* Yet he justifies God, *but thou art holy, Psal. 22. 2.* Christ was not heard in the thing he desired, and yet heard in that he feared, *Heb. 5. 7.* The Cup did not pass as he desired, but God upheld him, and enabled him to drink it. He was heard as to *support*, he was not heard as to *exemption* from suffering: His Will was exprest conditionally; and therefore tho' he had not the thing he so desired, yet his Will was not crossed by the denial. But now when we have a suit depending before the Throne of Grace, and cry to God once and again, and no answer comes, How do our hands hang down, and our Spirits wax feeble!

Then we complain with the Church, *Lam. 3. 8. When I cry and shout, he shutteth out my Prayer; thou coverest thy self with a Cloud, that our Prayers cannot pass through.* Then with *Jonah* we conclude we are cast out of his sight. Alas! we judge by sense according to what we see and feel; and cannot live by Faith on God, when he seems to hide himself, put us off, and refuse our requests. It calls for an *Abraham's Faith*, to believe against hope, giving glory to God. If we cry, and no answer comes presently, our carnal Reason draws a headlong, hasty Conclusion. Sure I must expect no answer: God is angry with my Prayers: The Seed of Prayer hath lain so long under the clods, and it appears not; surely it's lost, I shall hear no more of it.

Our Prayers may be heard, tho' their answer be for the present suspended. As *David* acknowledged when he coolly considered the matter, *Psal. 21. 22. I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine Eyes; nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplication, when I cried unto thee.* No, no, Christian; a Prayer sent up in Faith, according to the will of God, cannot be lost, tho' it be delay'd. We may say of it as *David* said of *Paul's Sword*, and *Jonathan's Bow*, that they never return empty.

Inference 4. Was Christ so earnest in Prayer, that he prayed himself into a very Agony? Let the People of God blush to think how unlike their Spirits are to Christ, as to their prayer-frames.

O what lively, sensible, quick, deep, and tender apprehensions and sense of those things about which he prayed, had Christ? Tho' he saw his very Blood starting out from his hands, and his cloaths dyed in it; yet being in an Agony, he prayed the more earnestly. I do not say Christ is imitable in this, No, but his fervour in

Prayer is a pattern for us, and serves severely to rebuke the Laziness, Dulness, Torpor, Formality, and Stupidity that is in our prayers. How often do we bring the Sacrifice of the dead before the Lord! How often do our Lips move, and our Heart stand still! O how unlike Christ are we! his Prayers were pleading Prayers, full of mighty arguments, and fervent affections. O that his People were in this more like him!

Inference 5. Was Christ in such an Agony before any hand of Man was upon him, merely from the apprehensions of the Wrath of God, with which he now contended: Then surely it's a dreadful thing to fall into the Hands of the living God, for our God is a consuming fire.

Ah what is Divine Wrath! that Christ so staggered when the Cup came to him. Could not he bear, and dost thou think to bear it. Did Christ sweat clods of Blood at it, and dost thou make light of it? Poor wretch. If it staggered him, it will confound thee. If it made him groan, it will make thee howl, and that eternally. Come Sinner, come, dost thou make light of the threatnings of the Wrath of God against Sin? Dost thou think there's no such matter in it, as these zealous Preachers make of? Come look here upon my Text, which shews thee the Face of the Son of God standing as full of purple drops, under the sense and apprehension of it, as the drops of dew that hang upon the grass. Hark how he cries, *Father, if it be possible let this Cup pass.* O any thing of punishment rather than this. Hear what he tells the Disciples; *My Soul, saith he, is sorrowful, even to death: Amazed, very heavy.* Fools make a mock of Sin, and the Threatnings that lye against it.

Inference 6. Did Christ meet Death with such a heavy heart? Let the hearts of Christians be the lighter for this when they come to die. The bitterness of Death was all squeezed into Christ's Cup. He was made to drink up the very dregs of it, that so our death might be the sweeter to us. Alas! there's nothing now left in Death that's frightful or troublesome, beside the pain of dissolution, that natural Evil of it. I remember it's storied of one of the Martyrs, that being observed to be exceeding jocund and merry when he came to the Stake, one asked him, what was the reason his heart was so light when Death (and that in such a terrible form too) was before him? O, said he, my Heart is so light at my death, because Christ's Heart was so heavy at his Death.

Inference 7. To conclude, what Cause have all the Saints to love their dear Lord Jesus with an abounding Love? Christian, open the Eyes of thy Faith, and fix them upon Christ, in the posture he lay in the Garden, drenched in his own Blood: and see whether he be not lovely in these his dyed Garments. He that suffered for us more than any Creature could or did, may well challenge more Love than all the Creatures in the World. O what hath he suffered, and suffered upon thy account! it was thy Pride, Earthliness, Sensuality, Unbelief, Hardness of Heart, that laid on more weight in that day that he sweat Blood.

S E R M O N XXIII.

M A T. XXVI. 47, 48, 49.

Ser. 23.
Disco-
vers the
first pre-
paration
for

Christ's death on his Enemies part, by the Treason of Judas. And while he yet spake, lo Judas one of the twelve came, and with him a great multitude with Swords and Staves, from the Chief-Priests, and Elders of the People. Now he that betrayed him, gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, the same is he, hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail Master, and kissed him.

THE former Sermons gives you an account how Christ improved every moment of his time, with busie diligence, to make himself ready for his Death. He hath commended his charge to the Father, instituted the blessed Memorial of his death, poured out his Soul to God in the Garden, with respect to the grievous sufferings he should undergo. And now he is ready, and waits for the coming of the Enemies, being first in the field.

And think you that they were idle on their parts? No, no, their Malice made them restless. They had agreed with Judas to betray him. Under his conduct a band of Soldiers are sent to apprehend him. The Hour so long expected is come. For while he yet spake, saith the Text, lo Judas one of the twelve came, and with him a great multitude, with Swords and Staves.

These words contain the first preparative act on their part for the death of Christ, even to betray him, and that by one of his own Disciples. Now they execute what they had plotted, *vers. 14, 15.* And in this Paragraph you have an account, 1. Of the Traitor, who he was. 2. Of the Treason, what he did. 3. Of the Manner of its execution, how it was contrived and effected. Lastly, Of the Time, when they put this Hellish Plot in execution.

1. We have here a description of the Traitor: And it is remarkable how carefully the several Evangelists have described him, both by his Name, Surname and Office, Judas, Judas Iscariot, Judas Iscariot one of the twelve; that he might not be mistaken for Jude or Judas the Apostle. God is tender of the Names and Reputations of his upright-hearted Servants. His Office one of the twelve, is added to aggravate the Fact, and shew how that Prophecy was accomplished in him; *Psal. 41. 9. Yea, mine own familiar Friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my Bread, hath lift up his heel against me.* Lo, this was the Traitor, and this was his Name and Office.

2. You have a description of the Treason, or an account what this Man did. He led an armed multitude to the place where Christ was, gave them a signal to discover him, and encouraged them to lay hands on him, and hold him fast. This was that Hellish Design which the Devil put into his heart, working upon that principle or lust of Covetousness which was predominant there. What will not a carnal Heart attempt, if the Devil suit a temptation to the predominant Lust, and God withhold restraining Grace!

Vol. I.

3. You have here the way and manner in which this Hellish Plot was executed. It was managed both with force and with fraud. He comes with a multitude, armed with Swords and Staves, in case he should meet with any resistance. And he comes to him with a kiss, which was their signal, lest they should mistake the Man. For they aimed neither at small nor great, save only at the King of Israel, the King of Glory. Here was much ado, you see, to take a harmless Lamb, that did not once start from them, but freely offered himself to them.

4. And Lastly, When was this treasonable Design executed upon Christ? And it was executed upon him while he stood among his Disciples, exhorting them to Prayer and Watchfulness, dropping heavenly and most seasonable Counsels upon them. While he yet spake, lo Judas, and with him a multitude came with Swords and Staves. Surely 'tis no better than a Judas's trick, to disturb and afflict the Servants of God in the discharge of their Duties. This was the Traitor, and his Treason; thus it was executed, and at this Time. Hence we observe,

Doct. That it was the Lot of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be betrayed into the hands of his mortal Enemies, by the assistance of a false and dissembling Friend.

Look as Joseph was betrayed and sold by his Brethren; David by Achitophel, his old Friend; Sampson by Dalilah, that lay in his Bosom: So Christ by Judas, one of the twelve; a Man, his Friend, his Familiar, that had been so long conversant with him: He that by profession had lifted up his hand to Christ, now by Treason lifts up his heel against him; he bids the Soldiers bind those blessed Hands, that not long before had walke the Traitor's feet.

In the Point before us, we will First, Consider Judas, according to that eminent station and place he had under Christ.

Secondly, We will consider his Treason, according to the several aggravations of it.

Thirdly, We will inquire into the Cause or motives that put him upon such a dreadful Hellish design as this was.

Fourthly and Lastly, We will view the Issue, and see the Event of this Treason, both as to Christ, and as to himself. And then apply it.

First, As for the Person that did this, he was very eminent by reason of that dignity Christ had raised him to. For,

1. He was one of the twelve, one retained not in a more general, and common, but the nearest

P 2

and most intimate and honourable relation and service to Jesus Christ. There were in Christ's time several sorts and ranks of Persons that had relation to him. There were *secret Disciples*. Men that believed, but kept their stations, and abode with their Relations in their callings. There were the Seventy also whom Christ sent forth: But none of these were so much with Christ, or so eminent in respect of their place, as the Twelve; they were Christ's Family, day and night conversant with him: It was the highest Dignity that was conferred upon any: And of this number was *Judas*. The Ancients have much extolled the Apostolical Dignity. Some stiled these twelve, *pedes Christi*, the feet of Christ, because they as it were carried Christ up and down the World. Others *oculi Dei*, the very eyes of God; they were his Watchmen, that took care for the concerns of his Name and Gospel in the World. Others *mamma Ecclesie*, the Breasts of the Church; they fed and nourish the Children of God by their Doctrine. Now to be one of this number, one of the Twelve, what a Dignity was this?

2. Yea, he being one of the Twelve, was daily conversant with Christ; often joined with him in Prayer, often sat at his feet hearing the gracious Words that came forth of his mouth. It was one of *Austin's* three wishes, that he had seen Christ in the Flesh: *Judas* not only saw him, but dwelt with him, travelled with him, eat and drank with him. And during the whole time of his abode with him, all Christ's carriages towards him were very obliging and winning; yea, such was the condescension of Christ to this wretched Man, that he washed his feet, and that but a little before he betrayed him.

3. He was a Man of unsuspected integrity among the Apostles. When Christ told them, one of you shall betray me; none thought on him, but every one rather suspected himself; Lord, is it I? Saith one, and so said they all: But none pointed at *Judas*, saying, thou art he.

4. To conclude, in some respect he was preferred to the rest. For he had not only a Joint-Commission with them to preach the Gospel to others, (tho' poor unhappy Wretch, himself became a cast-away) but he had a peculiar Office, he bare the Bag, *i. e.* he was *Almoner*, or the Steward of the Family, to take care to provide for the necessary Accommodations of Christ and them. Now who could ever have suspected, that such a Man as this should have sold the Blood of Christ for a little Money? That ever he should have proved a peridious Traitor to his Lord, who had called him, honoured him, and carried himself so tenderly towards him? And yet so it was, *Lo Judas one of the twelve came, and with him a multitude: O whither will not a buse Devil, and a bad Heart, carry a Man!*

Secondly, But what did this Man do? And what are the just aggravations of his Fact? Why, he most basely and unworthily sold and delivered Christ into his Enemies hands to be butchered and destroyed; and all this for thirty pieces of Silver.

Blush, O Heavens, and be astonished, O Earth, at this! In this Fact, most black and horrid Aggravations appear.

1. *Judas* had seen the Majesty of a God on him whom he betrayed. He had seen the Miracles that Christ wrought, which none but Christ could do. He knew that by the finger of God he had raised the Dead, cast out Devils, healed the Sick. He could not chuse but observe and see the Rays and awful Beams of divine Majesty shining in his very Face, in his Doctrine, and in his Life; to betray a Man, to sell the Blood of the poorest Innocent in the World, is horrid; but to sell the Blood of God, O what's this! Here's a Wickedness that no Epithet can match! Yea,

2. This Wickedness he committed after personal warnings and premonitions given him by Christ. He had often told them in general, that one of them should betray him, *Mark* 14. 20. He had also denounced a dreadful Woe upon him that should do it, *vers.* 21. *The Son of Man goeth indeed, as it is written of him; but Woe to that Man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed; good had it been for that Man if he had never been born.* This was spoken in *Judas* his presence. And one would have thought so dreadful a Doom as Christ passed upon the Man that should attempt this, should have affrighted him far enough from the thoughts of such a Wickedness. Nay, Christ comes nearest to him than this, and told him he was the Man: For when *Judas* (who was the last that put the question to Christ) asked him, *Master, is it I?* Christ's answer imports as much as a plain affirmation, *Thou hast said*, *Mat.* 26. 25. Moreover,

3. He doth it not out of a blind Zeal against Christ, as many of his other Enemies did; of whom it's said, *1 Cor.* 2. 8. *That had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory:* But he did it for Money, to make his market of Christ. He told Christ as a Man would sell an Ox or a Sheep to the Butcher, for profit: He was fully of the mind of the Pope, whose Motto was; *The smell of savour of Gain is sweet, let it rise out of what it will.* If he can get any thing by Christ's Blood, it shall be a vendible commodity with him. *What will ye give me (saith he) and I will betray him?* *Mat.* 26. 15.

4. He sells him, and he sells him at a low rate too; which shewed how vile an esteem he had of Christ. He is content to part with him for thirty pieces of Silver. If these Pieces of Shocks were the Sheekles of the Sanctuary, they amounted but to three Pounds fifteen Shillings. But it's supposed they were the common Sheekles, which were mostly used in buying and selling; and then his Price that he put upon the Saviour of the World was but one Pound seventeen Shillings and six Pence. A goodly Price (as the Prophet calls it) that he was valued at! *Zech.* 11. 12, 13. I confess it's a wonder he asked no more, knowing how much they longed for his Blood; and that they offered no more for him: But how then should the Scriptures have been fulfilled? O what a Sale was this! To sell that Blood, which all the Gold and Silver in the World is not worth one drop of; for a trifle! Still the Wickedness of this Fact rises higher and higher.

5. He

Suavis odor lucris ex re quælibet.

Godw. Aniq. lib. 6. p. 295.

Hand du- 5. He left Christ in most Heavenly and Ex-
 cité & Be- cellent Employment, when he went to make
 chanis ab- this Soul-undoing Bargain. For if he went a-
 ut ubi Do- way from the Table, as some think, then he left
 minum Christ instituting and administering those heavenly
 nunc mo- Signs of his Body and Blood: There he saw, or
 rabitur; & vel clam might have seen, the bloody work he was going
 se alin sub- about, acted as in a figure before him. If he
 duxit in ur- late out that Ordinance, as others suppose he
 bem, vel did, then he left Christ singing a Heavenly
 sub pre- Hymn, and preparing to go where Judas was
 terea cu- preparing to meet him. When the Lord Jesus
 randi ne- was in the most serious and Heavenly Exercise,
 cessaria. the Wretch flinked away from him into the Ci-
 Pa. ty; or else went under pretence to buy some
 necessities. But his design was not to buy, but
 to sell; whatever his pretences were. Nay,

6. What he did was not done by the perswa-
 sions of any. The High-Priest sent not for him,
 and without doubt was surprized when he
 came to him on such an errand. For it could
 never enter into any of their Hearts, that any of
 his own Disciples could ever be drawn into a
 confederacy against him. No, he went as a
 Volunteer, offering himself to this work: Which
 still heightens the Sin, and makes it out of
 measure sinful.

7. The manner in which he executes his trea-
 sonable Design adds further malignity to the
 Fact. He comes to Christ with fawning words
 and caresses, *Hail Master, and kiss him.*
 Here's Honey in the Tongue, and Poison in the
 Heart. Here's Hatred hid under lying Lips.
 This was the Man, and this was his Fact. Let
 us inquire,

Thirdly, The cause and motives of this Wicked-
 ness, how he came to attempt and perpetrate
 such a Villany. *Maldonate the Jesuit* criminalizes
 the Protestant Divines, for affirming that God
 had a hand in ordering and over-ruling this
 Fact. But we say, that Satan and his own Lust
 was the impulsive cause of it: That God, as it
 was a wicked Treason, permitted it; and as it
 was a delivering Christ to Death, was not only
 the Permitter, but the wife and holy Director
 or Orderer of it, and by the Wisdom of his
 Providence over-ruled it, to the great good and
 advantage of the Church; in respect of which
 happy issue, Judas his Treason is called *felix*
scelus; a happy Wickedness. Satan inspired
 the Motion, Luk. 22. 3, 4. *Then entered Satan*
into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, and he went his
way. &c. his own Lusts like dry Tinder kindled
 presently; his Heart was covetous; there was
 predisposed matter enough for the Devil to
 work on; so that it was but touch and take.
Verf. 25. They covenanted to give him Money;
 and he promised, &c.

The Holy God disposed and ordered all this
 to the singular benefit and good of his People;
Acts. 28. they did *whatsoever his Hand and*
Counsel had before determined to be done. And
 by this determinate Counsel of God was he ra-
 ken and slain, *Acts. 2. 23.* Yet this no way
 excuses the wickedness of the Instruments: For
 what they did, was done from the power of
 their own Lusts, most wickedly; what he did,
 was done in the unsearchable depth of his own
 Wisdom, most holy. God knows how to serve
 his own Ends by the very Sins of Men; and yet

have no Communion at all in the Sin he so over-
 rules. If a Man let go a Dog out of his hand in
 pursuit of a Hare, the Dog hunts merely for a
 Prey; but he that let him go, uses the sagaci-
 ty and nimbleness of the Dog to serve his own
 ends by it. *Judas* minded nothing but his own
 advantage to get Money: God permitted that
 Lust to work, but over-ruled the issue to his
 own eternal Glory, and the Salvation of our
 Souls.

Fourthly, and Lastly, But what was the end
 and issue of this Fact? As to Christ it was
 his Death; for the Hour being come, he doth
 not meditate an escape, nor put forth the power
 of his Godhead to deliver himself out of their
 Hands. Indeed he shewed what he could do,
 when he made them go back and stagger with
 a Word. He could obtain more than *twelve*
Legions of Angels to have been his Life-guard;
 one of whom had been sufficient to have coped
 with all the *Roman Legions*: but how then
 should the Scriptures be fulfilled, or our Salva-
 tion accomplished? No, he resists not, but
Judas delivering him into their hands at that
 time, was his Death.

And what got he as a Reward of his Wicked-
 ness? It ended in the ruin both of his Soul
 and Body. For immediately a Death-pang of
 Despair seized his Conscience; which was so
 intolerable, that he ran to the Halter for a
 Remedy; and so falling headlong he burst
 asunder, and all his bowels gulhed out, *Acts.*
1. 18. And now he that had no Bowels for
 Christ, hath none for himself: As for his
 Soul, it went to its own place, *verf. 25.* even
 the place appointed for the Son of perdition,
 as Christ calls him, *John. 17. 12.* His Name
 retains an odious stench to this day, and shall to
 all Generations: It's a By word, a Proverb of
 Reproach: This was his End. We will next
 improve it.

Corollary 1. Hence in the first place we learn,
 That the greatest Professors had need be jea-
 lous of their own Hearts, and look well to the
 grounds and principles of their Professions.
 One of the Ancients would have had this
 Epitaph engraven upon *Judas* his Tombstone,
hic quis ne deceat, coram se ipso, i. e. Let every one
 that beholds me, learn to be godly indeed,
 to be sincere in his profession, and love
 Christ more unfeignedly than I did. O
 Professors, look to your Foundation, and build
 not upon the Sand, as this poor Creature did.
 That's sound advice indeed which the Apostle
 gives, *1 Cor. 10. 12.* *Let him that thinks he*
stands, take heed lest he fall. O beware of
 a loose Foundation. If you begin your pro-
 fession as *Judas* did, no wonder if it shall end
 as his did.

1. Beware therefore you hold not the Truth
 in Unrighteousness: *Judas* did so; he knew
 much, but lived not up to what he knew, for
 he was still of a worldly Spirit in the height of
 his Profession. His Knowledge never had any
 saving influence upon his Heart. He preached to
 others, but he himself was a Cast-away: He
 had much Light, but still walked in Dark-
 ness. He had no knowledge to do himself
 good.

2. Beware you live not in a course of secret
 Sin.

In quan-
 tum fuit
 reprobis,
 proditione,
 fecit Judas,
 Satanâ im-
 pulsore.
 In quan-
 tum fuit
 reprobis,
 tradidit,
 illa fuit oc-
 casum
 Dei judi-
 cium, ad
 redempti-
 onem Ec-
 clesie spec-
 tans. Uti-
 que totum
 illud opus
 Deum non
 odiofium
 per-
 missorem,
 sed & fa-
 venciissi-
 mum au-
 thorem
 atque di-
 rectorem
 habuit.
 Pa.

Debile
 funda-
 mentum

Sin. *Judas* did so, and that was his ruin. He made a Profession indeed, and carried it smoothly, but he was a Thief, *Joh. 12. 6.* He made no conscience of committing the Sin, so he could but cover and hide it from Men. This helped on his ruin, and so it will thine, Reader, if thou be guilty herein. A secret way of sinning, under a covert of Profession, will either break out at last to the Observation of Men, or else slide thee down infernally to Hell, and leave thee only this comfort, that no body shall know thou art there.

3. Beware of hypocritical pretences of Religion to accommodate self-ends. *Judas* was a Man that had notable skill this way. He had a mind to fill his own Purse by the sale of that costly Ointment which *Mary* bestowed upon her Saviour's feet. And what a neat cover had he fitted for it, to do his business clearly; Why, saith he, *this might have been sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor.* Here was Charity to the poor, or rather poor Charity; for this was only a blind to his base self-ends. O Christian, be plain hearted, take heed of craft and cunning in matters of Religion: This spoiled *Judas*.

4. Beware of self-confidence. *Judas* was a very confident man of himself. *Last of all Judas said, Master, is it I?* *Matth. 26. 25.* But he that was *last* in the Suspicion was *first* in the Transgression. He that trusteth his own Heart is a Fool, saith *Solomon. Prov. 28. 26.* such a Fool was this great Professor. It will be your wisdom to keep a jealous Eye upon your own Hearts, and still suspect their fairest Pretences.

5. If you will not do as *Judas* did, nor come to such an End as he did, take heed you live not unprofitably under the means of Grace. *Judas* had the best means of Grace that ever Man enjoyed. He heard Christ himself preach, he joined often with him in Prayer, but he was never the better for it all; it was but as the watering of a dead Stick, which will never make it grow, but rot it the sooner. Never was there a rotten Branch so richly watered as he was. O 'tis a sad Sin, and a sad Sign too, when Men and Women live under the Gospel from year to year, and never the better. I warn you to beware of these evils, all ye that profess Religion. Let these Footsteps by which *Judas* went down to his own place, terrifie you from following him in them.

Corollary 2. Learn hence also, That eminent Knowledge and Profession puts a special and eminent Aggravation upon Sin. *Judas* Iscariot, one of the twelve. Poor wretch! better had it been for him if he had never been numbered with them, nor enlightened with so much Knowledge as he was endued with: For this rent his Conscience to pieces, when he reflected on what he had done, and presently run him into the gulf of Despair. To sin against clear Light, is to sin with a high hand. It's that which makes a sad waste of the Conscience. That without doubt which now torments this poor Soul in Hell, is that he should go against his Light, against his Profession, to gratifie a base Lust to his eternal ruin. Had he known no better, it had been more excusable. Those that had a hand in the Death of Christ through Mistake

and Ignorance, were capable to receive the Pardon of their Sin by that Blood they so shed, *Act. 3. 17, 19.* compared. Take heed therefore of abusing Knowledge, and putting a force upon Conscience.

Corollary 3. Learn hence in the third place, That unprincipled Professors will sooner or later become shameful Apostates. *Judas* was an unprincipled Professor, and see what he came to; Ambition invited *Simon Magus* to the profession of Christ, he would be *eternus*, some great one, and how quickly did the rottenness of his Principles discover themselves in the ruin of his Profession? That which wants a Root, must needs wither, as Christ speaks, *Matth. 13. 20.* that which is the predominant Interest, will prevail, and tway with us in the day of our trial. Hear me, all you that profess Religion, and have given your Names to Christ; if that Profession be not built upon a solid and real work of Grace upon your Hearts, you shall never honour Religion, nor save your Souls by it. O 'tis your Union with Christ, that like a Spring maintains your Profession. So much as you are united to Christ, so much constancy, steadiness, and evenness, you will manifest in the Duties of Religion, and no more.

O Brethren, when he that professes Christ for Company, shall be left alone as *Paul* was: When he that made Religion a stirrup to help him into the Saddle of Preferment and Honour, shall see that he is so advanced to be drawn forth into Christ's Camp, and endure the heat of the day, and not to take his pleasure: In a word, when he shall see all things about him discouraging and threatening, his dearest Interest on Earth exposed for Religion sake, and he hath no Faith to balance his present Losses with his future Hopes: I say, when it comes to this, you shall then see the rottenness of many Hearts discovered. And *Judas* may have many Fellows, who will part with Christ for the World as he did. O therefore look well to your Foundation.

Corollary 4. Moreover in this Example of *Judas* you may read this Truth; That Men and Women are never in more eminent danger, than when they meet with Temptations exactly suited to their Master-lusts, to their own Iniquity. O pray, pray, that ye may be kept from a violent suitable Temptation. Satan knows that when a Man is tried here, he falls by the Root. The love of this World was all along *Judas* his Master-sin; and some conjecture he was a married man, and had a great charge; but that is conjectural, it was his predominant Lust. The Devil found out this, and suited it with a Temptation which fully hit his Humour, and it carries him immediately. This is the dangerous Crisis of the Soul. Now you shall see what it is, and what it will do. Put Money before *Judas*, and presently you shall see what the Man is.

Corollary 5. Hence in like manner we are instructed, That no man knows where he shall stop when he first engages himself in a way of Sin.

Wickedness, as well as Holiness, is not born in its full strength, but grows up to it by insensible degrees. So did the Wickedness of *Judas*. I believe, he himself never thought he should have

Maxima
violatio
Conscien-
tie est
maximum
peccatum.
Ansel.

Munimus
quatenus
unimus.

Nemo re-
pentē fit
corruptus
simus.

have done what he did: And if any should have told him in the first beginning of his Profession, Thou shalt sell the Blood of Christ for Money, thou shalt deliver him most perfidiously into their hands that seek his Life; He would have answered as *Hazael* did to *Elisha*, But what is thy Servant a Dog that he should do this great thing? 2 King. 8. 13. His Wickedness first discovered it self in murmuring and discontent, taking a pique at some small matters against Christ, as you may find by comparing *John* 6. from ver. 60, to 70. with *John* 12. from ver. 3, to 9. but see to what it grows at last. That Lust or Temptation that at first is but a little Cloud as big as a Man's hand, may quickly overspread the whole Heaven. It is in our engaging in Sin, as in the motion of a Stone down the Hill. *Vires acquirit eundo*, it strengthens it self by going; and the longer it runs, the more violent. Beware of the smallest beginnings of Temptations. No wife Man will neglect or slight the smallest spark of fire, especially if he see it among many Barrels of Gunpowder. You carry Gunpowder about you, O take heed of sparks.

Corollary 6. Did *Judas* sell Christ for Money? What a potent Conqueror is the love of this World! How many hath it cast down wounded? What great Professors have been dragg'd at its Chariot-wheels as its Captives? *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, *Demas* and *Judas*, with thousands and ten thousands since their days, led away in triumph. It drowns Men in perdition, 1 Tim. 6. 9. In that Pit of perdition, this Son of perdition fell, and never rose more. O you that so court and prosecute it, that so love and admire it, make a stand here; pause a little upon this Example; consider to what it brought this poor Wretch whom I have presented to you dead, eternally dead, by the mortal wound that the love of this World gave him; it destroyed both Soul and Body. *Pliny* tells us, that the *Mermaids* delight to be in green Meadows, into which they draw Men by their enchanting Voices; but, faith he, there always lye heaps of dead Mens bones by them. A lively Emblem of a bewitching World! Good had it been for many Professors of Religion, if they had never known what the Riches, and Honours, and Pleasures of this World meant.

Corollary 7. Did *Judas* fancy so much Happiness in a little Money, that he would sell Christ to get it? Learn then, That which Men promise themselves much pleasure and contentment in, in the way of Sin, may prove the greatest Curse and Misery to them that ever beset them in the World. *Judas* thought it was a brave thing to get Money! He fancied much happiness in it: But how sick was his Conscience as soon as he had swallowed it! O take it again, faith he! It grip'd him to the Heart. He knows not what to do to rid himself of that Money. Give me Children, (faith *Rachel*) or I die: She hath Children, and they prove her death. O mortifie your Fancies to the World; put no necessity upon Riches. They that will be rich, fall into Temptations, and many hurtful Lusts, which drowns Men in perdition, 1 Tim. 6. 9. You may have your desires with a curse. He that brings home a pack of fine Cloaths infected with

the Plague, has no such great Bargain of it, how cheap soever he bought them.

Corollary 8. Was there one, and but one of the twelve, that proved a *Judas*, a Traitor to Christ? Learn thence, That it is a most unreasonable thing to be prejudiced at Religion, and the sincere Professors of it, because some that profess it prove naughty and vile.

Should the Eleven suffer for one *Judas*? Alas, they abhor'd both the Traitor and his Treason. As well might the High priest and his Servants have condemn'd *Peter*, *John*, and all the rest, whose Souls abhorred the Wickedness. If *Judas* proved a vile Wretch, yet there was eleven to one that remained upright: If *Judas* proved naughty, it was not his Profession made him so, but his Hypocrisy; he never learnt it from Christ. If Religion must be charged with all the miscarriages of its Professors, then there is no pure Religion in the World. Name that Religion among the Professors whereof there is not one *Judas*. Take heed, Reader, of prejudices against Godliness on this account. The design of the Devil, without doubt, is to undo thee eternally by them. *Woe to the World because of offences*, Mat. 18. 7. And what if God do permit these things to fall out, that thou may'st be hardened in iniquity, confirmed in sin by such occasions, and so thy destruction brought about this way? Blessed is he that is not offended at Christ.

Corollary 9. Did *Judas*, one of the twelve, do so? Learn thence, That a Drop of Grace is better than a Sea of Gifts. Gifts have some excellency in them, but the way of Grace is the more excellent way, 1 Cor. 12. 31. Gifts (as one faith) are dead Graces, but Graces are living Gifts. There's many a learned Head in Hell. There are not the things that accompany Salvation. Gifts are the Gold that beautifies the Temple; but Grace is as the Temple which sanctifies the Gold. One Tear, one Groan, one Breathing of an upright Heart, is more than the Tongues of Angels.

Poor Christian, thou art troubled that thou canst not speak and pray sonantly, so handsomely, as some others can; but canst thou go into a corner, and there pour out thy Soul affectionately, tho' not rhetorically, to thy Father? Trouble not thy self. It's better for thee to feel one divine Impression from God upon thy Heart, than to have ten thousand fine Notions floating in thy Head: *Judas* was a Man of Parts; but what good did they do him?

Corollary 10. Did the Devil win the consent of *Judas* to such a Design as this? Could he get no other but the Hand of an Apostle to assist him? Learn hence, That the Policy of Satan lyes much in the choice of his Instruments he works. No Bird (faith one) like a living Bird to tempt others into the Net. *Palagius*, *Socius*, &c. were fit for that Work the Devil put them upon. *Austin* told an ingenious young Scholar, The Devil coveted him for an Ornament. He knows he hath a foul Cause to manage, and therefore will get the fairest Hand he can to manage it with the less suspicion.

Corollary 11. Did *Judas*, one of the twelve, do this? Then certainly Christians may approve and join with such Men on Earth, whose Eyes they

Capit abs
re ornari
Diaboli.

they shall never see in Heaven. The Apostles held Communion a long time with this Man, and did not suspect him. O please not your selves therefore, that you have Communion with the Saints here, and that they think and speak charitable of you. *All the Churches shall know (saith the Lord) that I am he that searcheth the Heart and Reins, and will give to every Man as his Work shall be.* In Heaven we shall meet many that we never thought to meet there, and miss many we were confident we should see there.

Rev. 2. 23. *know (saith the Lord) that I am he that searcheth the Heart and Reins, and will give to every Man as his Work shall be.* In Heaven we shall meet many that we never thought to meet there, and miss many we were confident we should see there.

Corollary 12. *Lastly, Did Judas, one of the twelve, a Man so obliged, raised and honoured by Christ, do this? Cease then from Men, be not too confident, but beware of Men. Trust*

ye not in a Friend, put no confidence in a Guide, *keep the Door of thy Lips from her that lyeth in thy Bosom:* Not that there is no Sincerity in any Man, but because there is so much Hypocrisy in many Men, and so much Corruption in the best of Men, that we may not be too confident, nor lay too great a stress upon any Man. Peter's modest expression of Sylvanus is a pattern for us; Sylvanus, a faithful Brother unto you (as I suppose.) The time shall come, saith Christ, that Brother shall betray Brother to Death, Mat. 10. 11. Your Charity for others may be your Duty, but your too great Confidence may be your Snare. Fear what others may do, but fear thy self more.

Serm.
24.
Opens
the Enemies second and third preparatives for the Death of

S E R M O N XXIV.

L U K. XXIII. 23, 24.

And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified; and the voices of them, and of the Chief-Priests, prevailed. And Pilate gave Sentence that it should be as they required.

JUdas has made good his Promise to the High-priest, and delivered Jesus a Prisoner into their Hands. These Wolves of the Evening no sooner seize the Lamb of God, but they thirst and long to be sucking his precious innocent Blood; their Revenge and Malice admits no delay, as fearing a rescue by the People.

When Herod has taken Peter, he committed him to Prison, intending after Easter to bring him forth to the People, Acts 12. 4. But these Men cannot sleep till they have his Blood, and therefore the Preparation of the Passover being come, they resolve in all haste to destroy him; yet left it should look like a downright Murder, it shall be formalized with a Trial. This his Trial and Condemnation are the two last Acts by which they prepared for his Death, and are both contained in this Context; in which we may observe, 1. The *Enditment*. 2. The *Sentence* to which the Judge proceeded.

1. The *Enditment* drawn up against Christ, wherein they accule him of many things, but can prove nothing. They charge him with Sedition and Blasphemy, but taller shamefully in the Proof. However, what is wanting in Evidence, shall be supplied with Clamour and Importunity. For, saith the Text, *they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified; and their Voices prevailed:* When they can neither prove the Sedition or Blasphemy they charged him with, then crucify him, crucify him, must serve the turn, instead of all Witnesses and Proofs.

2. The *Sentence* pronounced upon him; Pilate gave Sentence that it should be as they required, i. e. He sentenced Christ to be nailed to the Cross, and there to hang till he was Dead. From both these we observe these two doctrinal Conclusions.

Doct. 1. *That the Trial of Christ for his Life, was managed most maliciously and*

illegally against him by his unrighteous Judges.

Doct. 2. *That nothing could be proved against our Lord Jesus Christ worthy of Death, or of Bonds; yet was he condemned to be nailed to the Cross, and there to hang till he died.*

I shall handle these two Points distinctly in their order, beginning with the first, namely,

Doct. 1. *That the Trial of Christ for his Life, was managed most maliciously and illegally against him by his unrighteous Judges.*

Reader, here thou may'st see the Judge of all the World standing himself to be judged; He that shall judge the World in Righteousness, judged most unrighteously; He that shall one day come to the Throne of Judgment, attended with thousands and ten thousands of Angels and Saints, standing as a Prisoner at Man's Bar, and there denied the common Right which a Thief or Murderer might claim, and is commonly given them.

To manifest the Illegality of Christ's Trial, let the following particulars be heedfully weighed.

1. That he was inhumanely abused both in Words and Actions before the Court met, or any Examination was taken of the Fact: For as soon as they had taken him, they forthwith bound him, and led him away to the High-priest's house, Luk. 22. 54. And there they that held him, mocked him, smote him, blindfolded him, stroke him on the face, and bid him prophesie who smote him; and many other things blasphemously spake they against him, ver. 63, 64, 65. How illegal and barbarous a thing was this? When they were but binding Paul with Thongs, he thought himself abused contrary to Law, and asked the Centurion that stood by, *Is it lawful for you to scourge a Man that is a Roman,*

Roman,

Roman, and uncondemned? *q. d.* Is this legal: What, punish a Man first, and judge him afterwards! But Christ was not only bound, but horribly abused by them all that Night, dealing with him as the Lords of the *Pharisees* did with *Sampson*, to whom it was a sport to abuse him. No Rest had Jesus that Night; no more Sleep for him now in this World: O it was a sad Night to him: And this under *Caiaphas's* own Roof.

2. As he was inhumanely abused before he was tried, so he was examined and judged by a Court that had no Authority to try him. *Luk. 22. 66. As soon as it was Day, the Elders of the People, and the Chief Priests, and the Scribes came together, and led him into their Council.* This was the Ecclesiastical Court, the great *Sanhedrim*, which, according to its first Constitution, should consist of seventy grave, honourable and learned Men; to whom were to be referred all doubtful Matters, too hard for inferior Courts to decide. And these were to judge impartially and uprightly for God, as Men in whom was the Spirit of God, according to God's Counsel to *Moses*, *Numb. 11. 16, &c.* In this Court the Righteous and Innocent might expect Relief and Protection. And that is conceived to be the meaning of Christ's words, *Luk. 13. 33. It cannot be that a Prophet perish out of Jerusalem*; that is, their Righteousness and Innocency may expect protection. But now, contrary to the first Constitution, it consisted of a pack of malicious Scribes and Pharisees, Men full of Revenge, Malice, and all Unrighteousness: And over these *Caiaphas* (a Head fit for such a Body) at this time presided. And tho' there was still some face of a Court among them, yet their Power was not abridged by the Romans, that they could not hear and determine, judge and condemn in Capital matters as formerly. For as *Josephus* their own Historian informs us, *Herod* in the beginning of his Reign took away this Power from them; and that Scripture seems to confirm it, *Joh. 18. 31. It is not lawful for us to put any Man to Death*; and therefore they bring him to *Pilate's* Bar. He also understood him to be a *Galilean*; and *Herod* being *Tetrarch of Galilee*, and at that time in *Jerusalem*, he is sent to them, and by him remitted to *Pilate*.

3. As he was at first heard and judged by a Court that had no Authority to judge him; so when he stood at *Pilate's* Bar, he was accused of perverting the Nation, and denying Tribute to *Cesar*, than which nothing was more notoriously false. For as all his Doctrine was pure and heavenly, and Malice it self could not find a flaw in it; so he was always observant of the Laws under which he lived, and scrupulous of giving the least just offence to the Civil Powers. Yea, he not only paid the Tribute himself, tho' he might have pleaded exemption, but charged it upon others as their duty so to do, *Mat. 22. 24. Give unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's*. And yet with such palpable Untruths is Christ charged.

4. Yea, and what is more abominable and unparallel'd; to compass their malicious Designs, they industriously labour to suborn false

Witnesses to take away his Life, not sticking at the grossest Perjury, and manifest Injustice, so they might destroy him. So you read, *Mat. 26. 59. Now the Chief Priests and Elders, and all the Council, sought false Witnesses against Jesus, to put him to death.* Abominable Wickedness! For such Men, and so many, to conspire to shed the Blood of the innocent, by known and studied Perjury! What will not Malice against Christ transport Men to?

5. Moreover, the carriage of the Court was most insolent and base towards him during the Trial: For whilst he stood before them as a Prisoner yet uncondemned, sometimes they are angry at him for his silence; and when he speaks, and that pertinently to the point, they smite him on the Mouth for speaking, and scoff at what he speaks. To some of their light, frivolous and ensnaring Questions he is silent, not for want of an Answer, but because he heard nothing worthy of one. And to fulfil what the Prophet *Isaiah* had long before predicted of him; *he was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his Mouth: He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a Sheep before the Shearers is dumb, so he opened not his Mouth.* *Isa. 53. 7.* As also to leave us a Precedent when to speak, and when to be silent, when we for his Name sake shall be brought before Governours: For such Reasons as these he sometimes answers not a Word, and then they are ready to condemn him for a Mute. *Answerest thou nothing?* (saith the High-Priest) *what is it that these witnesses against thee?* *Mat. 26. 62. Hearkest thou not how many things they witness against thee?* saith *Pilate*, *Mat. 27. 13.*

And when he makes his Defence in Words of Truth and Sobriety, they smite him for speaking, *Joh. 18. 22. And when he had thus spoken, one of the Officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his Hand, saying, Answerest thou the High-Priest so?* And what had he spoken to exasperate them? Had he spoken impertinently? Not at all: What he said was but this, when they would have had him insinuate himself with his own Lips: *Jesus answered, I spake openly in the World, I ever taught in the Synagogue, and in the Temple whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? Ask them that heard me, behold they knew what I said: q. d.* I am not obliged to accuse and ensnare my self, but you ought to proceed *secundum allegata & probata*, according to what is alledged and proved. Did he deserve a Blow on his Mouth for this: O who but himself could have so patiently digested such Abuses! Under all this he stands in perfect Innocency and Patience, making no other return to that Wretch that smote him but this, *If I have spoken Evil, bear Witnesses of the Evil; but if Well, why smitest thou me?*

6. Lastly, To instance in no more: He is condemned to die by that very Mouth which had once and again professed he found no fault in him. He had heard all that could be alledged against him, and saw it was a perfect piece of Malice and Envy. When they urge *Pilate* to proceed to sentence him; why, saith he, *What Evil hath he done?* *Mat. 27. 23. Nay, in the*

Quia indignum responso judicari malum fuisse non decessione destitutus, sed ut impleret prophetam craculum, Par.

Preface to the very Sentence it self, he acknowledges him to be a just Person, *Mat. 27. 24.* When Pilate saw he could prevail nothing, but that rather a Tumult was made, he took Water, and washed his Hands before the Multitude, and said, I am innocent of the Blood of this just Person. *See ye to it.* Here the Innocency of Christ brake out like the Sun wading out of a Cloud, convincing the Conscience of his Judge that he was just; and yet he must give Sentence on him for all that to please the People.

Inference 1. Was Christ thus used when he stood before the great Council, the Scribes and Elders of Israel? Then surely great Men are not always wise, neither do the Aged understand Judgment, *Job 32. 9.* Here were many great Men, many aged Men, many politic Men in Council; but not one wise or good Man among them. In this Council were Men of Parts and Learning, Men of great Abilities, and by so much the more pernicious, able to do mischief. Wickedness in a great or learned Man, is like Poison given in Wine, the more operative and deadly. Christ's greatest Enemies were such as these. *Heathen Pilate* had more pity for him than *superstitious Caiaphas*. *Luther* tells us, that his greatest Adversaries did not rise out of the Ale-houses or Brothel-houses, but out of Monasteries, Convents, and Religious Houses.

Inference 2. Hence also we learn, That tho' we are not obliged to answer every captious, idle, or ensnaring Question; yet we are bound faithfully to own and confess the Truth when we are solemnly called thereunto.

It's true, Christ was sometimes silent, and as a deaf Man that heard not; but when the Question was solemnly put, *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?* *Jesus said, I am.* *Mark 14. 61, 62.* He knew that Answer would cost his Life, and yet he dare not deny it. On this account the Apostle saith, he witnessed a good Confession before Pontius Pilate. *1 Tim. 6. 13.* Herein Christ hath ruled out the way of our Duty, and by his own Example, as well as Precept, obliged us to a sincere confession of him, and his Truth, when we are required lawfully so to do, i. e. when we are before a lawful Magistrate, and the Questions are not curious or captious; when we cannot hold our peace, but our Silence will be interpretatively a denying of the Truth; finally, when the Glory of God, Honour of his Truth, and Edification of others, is more attainable by our open Confession, than it can be by our Silence: Then must we with Christ, give direct, plain, and sincere Answers.

It was the old *Priscilian* Error, to allow Men to deny or dissemble their Profession, when an open Confession would infer danger. But you know what Christ hath said, *Mat. 10. 33.* *Whoever shall deny me before Men, him will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven.* Christ will repay him in his own Coin. It was a noble Saying of courageous *Zuinglius*. What Deaths would I not chuse? What Punishment would I not undergo? Yea, into what Vault of Hell would I not rather chuse to be thrown, than to witness against my Conscience? Truth can never be bought dear, nor sold cheap. The

Lord Jesus, you see, owns Truth with the eminent and instant hazard of his Life. The whole Cloud of Witnesses have followed him therein, *Rev. 14. 1.* We our selves once openly owned the ways of Sin: And shall we not do as much for Christ, as we then did for the Devil? Did we then glory in our Shame, and shall we now be ashamed of our Glory? Do not we hope Christ will own us at the great Day! Why, if we confess him, he also will confess us. O think on the reasonableness of this Duty.

Inference 3. Once more, hence it follows, That to bear the Revilings, Contradictions and Abuses of Men, with a meek, composed and even Spirit, is excellent and Christ-like. He stood before them as a Lamb; he rendered not railing for railing; he endured the contradictions of Sinners against himself. Imitate Christ in his Meekness. He calls you so to do, *Mat. 11. 28.* This will be convincing to your Enemies, comfortable for your selves, and honourable for Religion: And as for your Innocency, God will clear it up as Christ's was.

You have heard the illegal Trial of Christ, how insolently it was managed against him; well, right or wrong, innocent or guilty, his Blood is resolved upon: 'Tis bought and sold beforehand; and if nothing else will do it, Menaces and Clamours shall constrain Pilate to condemn him. Whence our second Note was,

Doct. 2. That tho' nothing could be proved against our Lord Jesus Christ worthy of Death, or of Bonds; yet was he condemned to be nailed to the Cross, and there to hang till he died.

For the Explication of this, I shall open the following Particulars. First, Who gave the Sentence. Secondly, Upon whom he gave it. Thirdly, What Sentence was it that was given. Fourthly, In what manner Christ received it.

First. Who and what was he that durst attempt such a thing as this? Why, this was Pilate, who succeeded *Valerius Gratus* in the Presidentship of Judea, (as *Josephus* tells us) in which Trust he continued about ten years. This cruel cursed Act of his against Christ, was An. Ja. in the eighth year of his Government. Two years after he was removed from his Place and Office by *Vitellius* President of Syria, for his inhumane murdering of the innocent Samaritans. This necessitated him to go to Rome to clear himself before *Cesar*: but before he came to Rome, *Tiberius* was dead, and *Caius* in his room. Under him, saith *Eusebius*, Pilate killed himself. He was a Man not very friendly or benevolent to the Jewish Nation, but still suspicious of their Rebellions and Insurrections: This jealous Humour the Priests and Scribes observed, and wrought upon it to compass their Design against Christ. Therefore they tell him so often of Christ's Sedition, and stirring up the People; and that if he let him go, he is none of *Cesar's* Friend; which very Considerations prevailed with him to do what he did. But how durst animo

rem; hunc patant sacerdotes commodum fore ipsum proposito, &c. *Baro in Mat. 27.*

he

he attempt such a Wickedness as this, tho' he had stood in the Opinion of *Cæsar*? What! give Judgment against the Son of God? for 'tis evident, by many Circumstances in this Trial, that he had many inward Fears and Convictions upon him that he was the Son of God: By these he was scared, and sought to release him, *John* 19. 8, 12. the fear of a Deity fell upon him; his Mind was greatly perplexed, and dubious about this Prisoner, whether he was a God or a Man. And yet the fear of *Cæsar* prevailed more than the fear of a Deity, he proceeds to give Sentence.

Audiro
Fili Dei
nomine,
mens ejus
Religione
utda fuerat
metu nu-
minis per-
cussus, in-
ter sacrum
(ut aiunt)
& sacrum
hærebatur.
Maler. in
loc.

O *Pilate*, thou wast not afraid to judge and sentence an Innocent, a known Innocent, and one whom thou thy self suspectedst at least to be more than Man! But see in this predominancy of Self-interest, what Men will not attempt and perpetrate to secure and accommodate Self.

Secondly, Against whom doth *Pilate* give Sentence? against a Malefactor? No, his own Mouth once and again acknowledged him innocent. Against a common Prisoner? No, but one whose Fame no doubt had often reached *Pilate's* ears, even the wonderful things wrought by him, which none but God could do: One that stood before him as the Picture, or rather as the Body, of Innocency and Meekness. Ye have condemned and killed the Just, and he resisteth you not, *James* 5. 6. now was that Word made good, *Psal.* 94. 21. *They gather themselves together against the Soul of the Righteous, and condemn the innocent Blood.*

Thirdly, But what was the Sentence that *Pilate* gave? We have it not in the Form in which it was delivered; but the Sum of it was, that it should be as they required. Now what did they require? why, crucifie him, crucifie him. So that in what Formalities soever it was delivered, this was the Substance and Effect of it, *I adjudge Jesus of Nazareth to be nailed to the Cross, and there to hang till he be dead.* Which Sentence against Christ was,

1. A most unjust and unrighteous Sentence, the greatest perversion of Judgment and Equity that was ever known to the civilized World, since Seats of Judicature were first set up. What! to condemn him before one Accusation was proved against him? And if what they accused him of (that he said he was the Son of God) had been proved, it had been no Crime, for he really was so; and therefore no Blasphemy in him to say he was. *Pilate* should rather have come down from his Seat of Judgment, and adore him, than sit there to judge him. O it was the highest piece of Injustice that ever our Ears heard of!

2. As it was an unrighteous, so it was a cruel Sentence, delivering up Christ to their Wills. This was that Misery which *David* so earnestly deprecated, *Psal.* 27. 12. *O deliver me not over to the will of mine Enemies.* But *Pilate* delivers Christ over to the will of his Enemies, Men full of Enmity, Rage, and Malice; whose greatest pleasure it was to glut themselves with his Blood, and satiate their revengeful Hearts with such a spectacle of Misery. For lo, as soon as these Wolves had grip'd their Prey, they were not fatished with that cursed,

cruel and ignominious Death of the Cross, to which *Pilate* had adjudged him, but they are resolved he shall die over and over; they will contrive many Deaths in one: Now they say as a Tyrant did once, *Moriatur, ut sentiat se mori*, let him die, so as he may feel himself to die, i. e. let him die by inch meal. To this end they presently strip him naked; scourge him cruelly; array him in Scarlet, and mock him; crown him with a Bush of platted Thorns; fasten that Crown upon his Head by a blow with a Cane, which set them deep into his sacred Temples; seeped him with a Reed; spat in his Face; strip off his Mock-Robes again; put the Cross upon his back, and compel him to bear it. All this, and much more, they express their cruelty by, as soon as they had him delivered over to their Will. So that this was a cruel Sentence.

3. As it was a cruel, so it was a rash and hasty Sentence. The Jews are all in haste; consulting all Night, and early up by the break of Day in the Morning, to get him to his Trial. They spur on *Pilate* with all the Arguments they can to give Sentence. His Trial took up but one Morning, and a great part of that was spent in sending him from *Caiaphas* to *Pilate*, and from *Pilate* to *Hered*, and then back again to *Pilate*; so that it was a hasty and headlong Sentence that *Pilate* gave. He did not lift and examine the matter, but handles it very slightly. The Trial of many a mean Man hath taken up ten times more Debates and Time, than was spent about Christ. They that look but slightly into the Cause, easily pronounce and give Sentence. But that which was then done in haste, they have had time enough to repent for since.

Qui ad
piscina re-
cipiunt,
in facile pro-
nunciant.

4. As it was a rash and hasty, so it was an extorted forced Sentence. They squeeze it out of *Pilate* by meer Clamour, Importunity, and suggestions of Danger. In Courts of Judicature such Arguments should inspire but little; not Importunity, but Proof should carry it: but extor-
timorous *Pilate* bends like a Willow at this
Breath of the People; he had neither such a
sence of Justice, nor Spirit of Courage, as to
withstand it.

Minaciter
co, ut
Christum
damnet.
Calv.

5. As it was an Extorted, so it was a Hypocritical Sentence, masking horrid Murder under a pretence and formality of Law. It must look like a legal Procedure to palliate the business. Loth he was to condemn him, lest innocent Blood should clamour in his Conscience; but since he must do it, he will transfer the Guilt upon them, and they take it; *His Blood be on us, and on our Children for ever, say they.* *Pilate* calls for water, washes his hands before them, and tells them, *I am free from the Blood of this just Person.* But say, free from his Blood, and yet condemn a known innocent Person? Free from his Blood, because he washes his hands in Water? No, no, he could never be free, except his Soul had been washed in that Blood he shed. O the Hypocrisy of *Pilate*! Such juggling as this will not serve his turn, when he shall stand as a Prisoner before him, who now stood arraigned at his Bar.

6. And lastly, As it was a Hypocritical, so it was an Unrevoked Sentence: It admitted not of

or a Reprieve, nor, not for a day; nor doth Christ appeal to any other Judicature, or once desire the least delay of the Execution; but away he is hurried in haste to the Execution. Blush, O ye Heavens! And tremble, O Earth, at such a Sentence as this! Now Christ is dead in Law; now he knows whether he must be carried, and that presently. His Soul and Body must feel that, the very sight of which put him into an Agony but the Night before.

Fourthly, and Lastly, In what manner did Christ receive this cruel and unrighteous Sentence? He received it like himself, with admirable Meekness and Patience. He doth as it were wrap himself up in his own Innocency, and Obedience to his Father's will; and stands at the Bar with invincible Patience, and meek Submission. He doth not once desire the Judge to defer the Sentence, much less fall down and beg for his Life, as other Prisoners use to do at such times. No, but as a Sheep he goes to the slaughter, not opening his mouth. Some apply that expression to Christ, *James 5. 6. Ye have condemned and killed the just, and he resisteth you not.* From the time that Pilate gave Sentence, till he was nailed to the Cross, we do not read that ever he said any thing, save only to the Woman that followed him out of the City to *Golgotha*: And what he said there, rather manifested his Pity to them, than any discontent at what was now come upon him; *Daughters of Jerusalem, (saith he) weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your Children, Luke 23. 28, &c.* O the perfect Patience and Meekness of Christ! The Inferences from hence are:

Inference 1. Do you see what was here done against Christ under pretence of Law? *What cause have we to pray for good Laws, and righteous Executions of them.*

O 'tis a singular Mercy to live under good Laws, which protect the Innocent from Injury. Laws are Hedges about our Lives, Liberties, Estates, and all the Comforts we enjoy in this World. Times will be evil enough, when Iniquity is not discountenanced and punished by Law; but how evil are those Times like to prove, when Iniquity is established by Law! As the Psalmist complains, *Psal. 54. 20.* It was the complaint of *Pliny to Trajan*, that whereas Crimes were wont to be the burden of the Age, now Laws were so; and that he feared the Commonwealth which was established, would be subverted by Laws. 'Tis not like that Virtue will much flourish, when Judgment springs up as *Hemlock* in the furrows of the field, *Hosca. 10. 4.* How much therefore is our concernment to pray, that Judgment may run down as a mighty Stream? *Amos 5. 24. That our Officers may be Peace, and that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life in all Godliness and Honesty, 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2.* Great is the Interest of the Church of God in them; they are Instruments of much Good or Evil.

Inference 2. Was Christ condemned in a Court of Judicature? How evident then is it, that there is a Judgment to come after this Life? Surely things will not be always carried as they are in this World. When you see *Jesus* condemned, and *Barabbas* released, conclude, that a time will come when Innocency shall be vindicated, and Wickedness shamed. On this very ground *Solomon* concludes, and very rationally, that God will call over things hereafter at a more righteous Tribunal; *And moreover, I saw under the Sun the place of Judgment, that Wickedness was there, and the place of Righteousness, that Iniquity was there. I said in my Heart, God shall judge the Righteous, and the Wicked: For there is a time there for every purpose, and for every work, Eccles. 2. 16, 17.* Some indeed on this ground have denied the Divine Providence; but *Solomon* draws a quite contrary Conclusion, *God shall judge:* Surely he will take the matter into his own hand, he will bring forth the Righteousness of his People at the Light, and their just Dealing as the Noon-day. It's a Mercy, if we be wronged in one Court, that we can appeal to another, where we shall be sure to be relieved by a just impartial Judge. *Be patient therefore, my brethren, (saith the Apostle) until the coming of the Lord, James 5. 6, 7, 8.*

Inference 3. Again, here you see how Confidence may be over-born and run down by a selfish Interest. Pilate's Confidence bid him beware, and forbear; his Interest bid him act: His fear of *Cæsar* was more than the fear of God. But O! What a dreadful thing is it for Confidence to be enfolded by the fear of Man! *Prov. 25. 26.* To guard thy Soul, Reader, against this Mischief, let such Considerations as these be ever with thee.

1. Consider how dear those Profits or Pleasures cost, which are purchased with the loss of inward Peace! There is nothing in this World good enough to recompense such a Loss, or balance the Misery of a tormenting Conscience. If you violate it, and prostitute it for a fleshly Lust, it will remember the injury you did in many years after; *Gen. 42. 21. Job. 13. 26.* It will not only retain the memory of what you did, but it will accuse you for it; *Mat. 27. 4.* It will not fear to tell you that plainly with others dare not whisper. It will not only accuse, but it will also condemn you for what you have done. This condemning Voice of Conscience is a very terrible Voice.

You may see the horror of it in *Cain*, the vigour of it in *Judas*, the doleful effects of it in *Spiral*. It will from all these its offices produce Shame, Fear, and Despair, if God give not Repentance to Life. The Shame it works will make you confound you, that you will not be able to look up; *Job 31. 14. Psalm. 1. 5.* The Fear it works will make you wish for a hole in the Rock to hide you; *Isa. 2. 9, 10, 15, 19.* And its Despair is a death-pang. The cutting off of Hope is the greatest Cut in the World. O who can stand under such a load as this! *Prov. 18. 14.*

2. Consider the nature of your present Actions; they are Seed sown for Eternity, and will spring up again in suitable Effects, Rewards and Punishments, when you that did them are turned to dust. *Gal. 6. 7. What a Man sows, that shall he reap:* And as sure as the Harvest follows the seed-time, so sure shall Shame, Fear, and Horror, follow Sin, *Dan. 12. 2.* What *Zechariah* the famous Linner said of his Work, may much more truly be said of ours; *Eternity pings, I paint for Eternity*, said he, when one asked him why he was so curious in his Work. Ah, how bitter will those things be in the account and reckoning, which were pleasant in the acting and committing! 'Tis true, our Actions, physically considered, are transient; how soon is a Word or Action spoken or done, and there is an end of it? But morally considered, they are permanent, being put upon God's Book of account. O therefore take heed what you do: So speak, and so act, as they that must give an account.

3. Consider how by these things Men do but prepare for their own torment in a dying hour. There's bitterness enough in Death, you need not add more Gall and Wormwood to add to the bitterness of it. What is the violence and wounding of Conscience now, but the sticking so many Pins or Needles in your Death-bed against you come to lie down on it? This makes Death bitter indeed. How many have with in a dying hour they had rather lived poor and low all their days, than to have strained their Consciences for the World? Ah, how is the face and aspect of things altered in such an hour!

No such Considerations as these had any place in Pilate's heart; for if so, he would never have been courted or scared into such an Act as this.

Inference 4. Did Christ stand arraigned and condemned at Pilate's Bar? Then the Believer shall never be arraigned and condemned at God's Bar. This Sentence that Pilate pronounced on Christ, gives evidence that God will never pronounce Sentence against such: For had he intended to have arraigned them, he would never have suffered Christ their Surety to be arraigned and condemned for them. Christ stood at this time before a higher Judge than Pilate; he stood at God's Bar as well as his. Pilate did but that which God's own Hand and Counsel had before determined to be done, and what God himself at the same time did; tho' God did it justly and holily, dealing with Christ as a Creditor with a Surety; Pilate most wickedly and basely dealing with Christ as a corrupt Judge, that shed the Blood of a known Innocent to pacify the people. But certain it is, that out of his Condemnation flows our Justification: And had no Sentence been given against him, it must have been given against us.

O what a melting Consideration is this! That out of his Agony comes our Victory; out of his Condemnation our Justification; out of his Pain our Ease; out of his Stripes our Healing; out of his Gall and Vinegar our Honey; out of his Curious Blessing; out of his Crown of Thorns our Crown of Glory; out of his Death our Life: If he could not be released, it was that you might. If Pilate gave Sentence against him, it was that the great God might never give Sentence against you. If he yielded that it should be with Christ as they required, it was that it might be with our Souls as well as we can desire. And therefore,

Thanks be to God for his unspeakable Gift.

S E R -

SERMON XXV.

LUKE XXIII. 27, 28, &c.

And there followed him a great company of People, and of Women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for your selves, and for your Children.

THE Sentence of Death once given against Christ, the Execution quickly follows. Away they lead him from Gabbatha to Golgotha, longing as much to be nailing him to the Cross, and feeding their Eyes with his Torments, as the Eagle doth to be tearing the Fleth, and drinking the Blood of that Lamb she hath seized in her Talons, and is carrying away to the top of some Rock to devour.

The Evangelist here observes a memorable Passage that fell out in their way to the place of Execution; and that is the Lamentations and Wailing of some that followed him out of the City, who expressed their Pity and Sorrow for him most tenderly and compassionately: All Hearts were not hard, all Eyes were not dry. *There followed him a great company of People, and of Women, which also bewailed and lamented him, &c.*

In this Paragraph we have two Parts, viz. the Lamentation of the Daughters of Jerusalem for Christ, and Christ's Reply to them.

1. The Lamentation of the Daughters of Jerusalem for Christ. Concerning them, we briefly enquire who they were, and why they mourned.

(1.) Who they were? The Text calls them Daughters, i. e. Inhabitants of Jerusalem; for it is a *Hebraism*; as Daughters of Zion, Daughters of Israel. And it's like the greatest part of them were Women; and they were many of them, a Troop of Mourners that followed Christ out of the City towards the place of his Execution, with Lamentations and Wailings.

(2.) What the principal and ground of these their Lamentations was, is not agreed upon by those that have pondered the Story. Some are of Opinion their Tears and Lamentations were but the Effects and Fruits of their more tender and ingenuous Natures, which were moved and melted with so tragical and sad a Spectacle as was now before them. It's well observed by a judicious Author, "That the tragical Story of some great and noble Personage, full of heroical Virtue and Ingenuity (yet inhumanly and ungratefully used)

"will thus work upon ingenuous Spirits who read or heard of it — which when it reaches no higher, is so far from being Faith, that it is but a carnal and fleshly Devotion, springing from Fancy, which is pleased with such a story, and the principles of Ingenuity stirred towards one, who is of a noble Spirit, and yet abused. Such Stories use to stir up a Principle of Humanity in Men unto a compassionate Love; which Christ himself at his suffering found fault with, as being not Spiritual, nor raised enough in those Women that went weeping to see the Messiah so handled. Weep not for me (saith he) that is, weep not so much for this, to see me so unworthily handled by those for whom I die. This is the Principle from which some conceive these Tears to flow.

But Calvin attributes it to their Faith, looking upon these Mourners as a Remnant reserved by the Lord in that miserable Dispersion; and tho' their Faith was but weak, yet he judges it credible that there was a secret Seed of Godliness in them, which afterwards grew to a maturity, and brought forth Fruit. And to the same Sense others give their Opinion also.

2. Let us consider Christ's Reply to them; *Weep not for me ye Daughters of Jerusalem, &c.* Strange, that Christ should forbid them to weep for him, yea for him under such unparalleled Sufferings and Miseries. If ever there was a heart melting Object in the World, it was here. O who could hold, whose Heart was not petrified, and more obdurate than the senseless Rocks! This Reply therefore of Christ undergoes a double Sense and Interpretation, suitable to the different construction of their Sorrows. Those that look upon their Sorrows as merely natural, take Christ's Reply in a negative Sense, prohibiting such Tears as those. They that expound their Sorrows as the fruit of Faith, tell us, tho' the Form of Christ's expressing be negative, yet the Sense is comparative, as *Matth. 9. 13. I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice*; i. e. Mercy rather than Sacrifice. So here, weep rather upon your own account, than mine; reserve your Sorrows for

the Calamities coming upon your selves and your Children. You are greatly affected, I see, with the Misery that is upon me; but mine will be quickly over, yours will lie long. In which he shews his merciful and compassionate Disposition, who was still more mindful of others Troubles and Burdens than of his own.

And indeed the days of Calamity coming upon them and their Children, were doleful days. What direful and unprecedented Miseries beset them at the breaking up and devastation of the City, who hath not read or heard? And who can refrain from Tears that hears to read it?

Now, if we take the words in the first Sense, as a prohibition of their merely natural and carnal Affections, expressed in Tears and Lamentations for him, no otherwise than they would have been upon any other like tragical Story; then the Observation from it will be this;

Doct. 1. That melting Affections and Sorrows, even from the Sense and Consideration of the Sufferings of Christ, are no infallible signs of Grace.

If you take it in the latter Sense, as the Fruit of their Faith, as Tears flowing from a gracious Principle; then the Observation will be this;

Doct. 2. That the believing Meditation of what Christ suffered for us, is of great force and efficacy to melt and break the Heart.

I shall rather chuse to prosecute both these Branches, than to decide the Controversie; especially since the Notes gathered from either are so useful to us. And therefore I shall begin with the first, *viz.*

Doct. 1. That melting Affections and Sorrows, even from the Sense of Christ's Sufferings, are no infallible Marks of Grace.

In this Point I have two things to do, to prepare it for use.

First, To shew, what the melting of the Affections by way of Grief and Sorrow is.

Secondly, That they may be so melted, even upon the account of Christ, and yet the Heart remain unrenewed.

First, What the melting of the Affections by way of Grief and Sorrow is.

Tears are nothing else but the Juice of a Mind oppressed, and squeezed with Grief. Grief compresses the Heart; the Heart so compressed and squeezed, vents it self sometimes in Tears, Sighs, Groans, &c. and this is twofold; *gracious*, and wholly supernatural; or *common*, and altogether natural. The gracious melting or sorrow of the Soul, is likewise twofold; *habitual*, or *actual*. Habitual godly Sorrow is that gracious disposition, inclination or tendency of the renewed Heart to mourn and melt, when any just occasion is presented to the Soul that calls for such Sorrow. It is expressed, *Ezek. 36. 26. by taking away the heart*

of stone, and giving a heart of flesh; that is, a Heart impulsive, and yielding to such Arguments and Considerations as move it to mourning.

Actual Sorrow is the expression and manifestation of that its Inclination upon just Occasions; and it's expressed two ways, either by the *internal* effects of it, which are the Heaviness, Shame, Loathing, Resolution, and holy Revenge begotten in the Soul upon the account of Sin; or also by more *external* and visible effects, as Sighs, Groans, Tears, &c. The former is *essential* to godly Sorrow, the latter *contingent*, and accidental, much depending upon the natural temper and constitution of the Body.

Natural and common meltings are nothing else but the effects of a better Temper, the fruit of a more ingenuous Spirit, and easier Constitution, which shews it self on any other, as well as upon spiritual Occasions: As *Austin* said, he could weep plentifully, when he read the story of *Dido*. The History of Christ is a very tragical and pathetic History, and may melt an ingenuous Nature, where there is no renewed Principle at all. So that,

Secondly, Our Affections may be melted, even upon the score and account of Christ; and yet that is no infallible evidence of a gracious Heart. And the Reasons for it are,

1. Because we find all sorts of Affections acted and vented by such as have been no better than temporary Believers. The stony-ground hearers in *Matth. 13. 20. received the Word with joy*; and so did *John's* hearers also, who for a season rejoiced in his *Light*, *John 3. 35*. Now if the Affections of Joy under the Word may be exercised, why not of Sorrow also? If the comfortable things revealed in the Gospel may stir up the one, by a parity of Reason, the sad things it reveals may answerably work upon the other. Even those *Israelites* whom *Moses* told they should fall by the Sword, and not prosper, for the Lord would not be with them, because they were turned away from him; yet when *Moses* rehearsed the Message of the Lord in their Ears, they mourned greatly, *Numb. 14. 39*. I know the Lord pardoned to many of them their Iniquities, tho' he took vengeance on their Inventions; and yet it's as true, that with many of them God was not well pleased, *1 Cor. 10. 5*. Many Instances of their weeping and mourning before the Lord, we find in the sacred Story; and yet their Hearts were not stedfast with God.

2. Because tho' the Object, about which our Affections and Passions are moved, may be spiritual; yet the Motives and Principles that set them on work, may be but carnal, and natural ones. When I see a Person affected in the hearing of the Word, or Prayer, even unto Tears, I cannot presently conclude, surely this is the effect of Grace: For it's possible, the pathetic Quality of the Subject matter, the Rhetoric of the Speaker, the very affecting Tone, and modulation of the Voice, may draw Tears, as well as Faith working upon the Spirituality, and deep concernment the Soul hath in those things.

While

Whilst *Austin* was a *Manichee*, he sometimes heard *Ambrose*; and, saith he, I was greatly affected in hearing him, even unto Tears many times; howbeit, it was not the Heavenly nature of the Subject, but the Abilities and rare Parts of the Speaker that so affected him. And this was the case of *Ezekiel's* hearers, *ch. 33. 32.*

Again, 3. These motions of the Affections may rather be a Fit and Mood, than the very Frame and Temper of the Soul. Now there is a vast difference betwixt these: There are times and seasons when the roughest, and most obdure Hearts may be pensive and tender; but that is not its temper and frame, but only a fit, a pang, a transient passion: so the Lord complains of them, *Hof. 6. 4.* O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your Goodness is as a morning-cloud, and as the early dew, it goeth away. And so he complains, *Psal. 78. 34, 35, 36.* When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned, and enquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the most high God their Redeemer; nevertheless they did flatter him with their lips, and lied unto him with their tongues. For had this been the gracious temper of their Souls, it would have continued with them; they would not have been up and down, off and on, hot and cold with God, as they were. Therefore we conclude that we cannot infer a work of Grace upon the Heart, simply and meely from the meltings and thaws that are sometimes upon it. And hence for your use I shall infer that,

Inference i.

If such as sometimes feel their Hearts thawed and melted with the consideration of the Sufferings of Christ, may yet be deceived; What cause have they to fear and tremble, whose Hearts are as unrelenting as the Rocks, yielding to nothing that is proposed, or urged upon them! How many such are there, of whom we may say as Christ speaks of the inflexible Jews, *We have piped unto you, but ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, but ye have not lamented?* *Matt. 11. 17.* They must inevitably come short of Heaven, who come so short of those that do come short of Heaven. If those perish that have rejoiced under the Promises, and mourned under the threats of the Word; What shall become of them that are as unconcerned and untouched by what they hear, as the Seats they sit on, or the Dead that lie under their feet; who are given up to such hardness of Heart, that nothing can touch or affect them! One would think the consideration of the *sixth Chapter to the Hebrews* should startle such Men and Women, and make them cry out, Lord, what will become of such a senseless, stupid, dead Creature as I am? If they that have been enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly Gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the World to come, may, notwithstanding such high raised Affections as these, so fall away, that it shall be impossible to renew them again by Repentance; what

Vol. I.

shall we then say or think of his Estate, to whom the most penetrating and awaking Truths are no more than a Tale that is told? The Fire and Hammer of the Gospel can neither melt nor break them, they are iron, and Brass, *Jer. 6. 28, 29.*

Inference 2.

If such as these may eternally miscarry; Then let all look carefully to their Foundation, and see that they do not bless themselves in a thing of nought. It's manifest from *1 Cor. 10.* *John 8. 54.* *Rom. 2. 18, 19, 21.* *Mat. 23. 11, 12.* *Mat. 7. 22.* That many Souls stand exceeding dangerously, who are yet strongly conceited of their own Safety. And if you please to consult those Scriptures in the margin, you shall find vain Confidence to be a ruling Folly over the greatest part of Men, and that which is the utter overthrow, and undoing of multitudes of Professors.

Now there is nothing more apt to beget and breed this vain Soul-undoing Confidence, than the stirrings and meltings of our Affections about spiritual things, whilst the Heart remains unrenewed all the while. For (as a *Mr. An. Burg.* grave Divine hath well observed) such a Man seems to have all that is required of a Christian, and herein to have attained the very end of all Knowledge; which is operation and influence upon the Heart and Affections.

Indeed (thinks such a poor deluded Soul) if I did hear, read, or pray without any inward Affections, with a dead, cold, and unconcerned Heart; or if I did make shew of Zeal and Affection in Duties, and had it not, well might I suspect my self to be a self-cozening Hypocrite: but it's not so with me. I feel my Heart really melted many times, when I read the Sufferings of Christ; I feel my Heart raised, and ravished with strange Joys and Comforts, when I hear the Glory of Heaven opened in the Gospel: Indeed if it were not so with me, I might doubt the root of the matter is wanting; but if to my Knowledge Affections be added, a melting Heart match't with a knowing Head, now I may be confident all is well. I have often heard Ministers cautioning and warning their People not to rest satisfied with idle and unpractical Notions in their Understandings, but to labour for Impressions upon their Hearts; this I have attained, and therefore what danger of me? I have often heard it given as a mark of a Hypocrite, that he hath Light in his Head, but it sheds not down its influence upon the Heart; whereas in those that are sincere, it works on their Heart and Affections: So I find it with me, therefore I am in a most safe Estate. O Soul! of all the false Signs of Grace, none more dangerous than those that most resemble true ones; and never doth the Devil more surely and incurably destroy, than when transformed into an Angel of Light. What if these meltings of thy Heart be but a flower of Nature? What if thou art more beholden to a good temper of Body, than a gracious change of Spirit for these things? Well, so it may be. Therefore be not secure, but fear and watch. Possibly if thou wouldst but search thine own Heart in this matter, thou mayest find, that any other pathological

R 2 moving

moving Story will have the like effects upon thee. Possibly too, thou mayst find that notwithstanding all thy Raptures and Joys at the hearing of Heaven, and its Glory, yet after that pang is over, thy Heart is habitually earthly, and thy Conversation is not there. For all thou canst mourn at the relations of Christ's Sufferings, thou art not so affected with Sin, that was the meritorious Cause of the Sufferings of Christ, as to crucify one Corruption, or deny the next Temptation, or part with any way of Sin that is gainful, or pleasurable to thee for his sake.

Why now, Reader, if it be so with thee, what art thou the better for the fluency of thy Affections? Dost thou think in earnest, that Christ hath the better thoughts of thee, because thou canst shed Tears for him, when notwithstanding thou every day piercest and woundest him? O be not deceived. Nay for ought I know, thou mayst find upon a narrow search, that thou puttest thy Tears in the room of Christ's Blood, and givest the confidence and dependance of thy Soul to them; and if so, they shall never do thee any good.

O therefore search thy Heart, Reader, be not too confident; take not up too easily upon such poor weak grounds as these, a Soul-undoing Confidence. Always remember, the Wheat and Tares resemble each other in their first springing up; that an Egg is not liker to an Egg, than Hypocrisy, in some shapes and forms into which it can cast itself, is like a genuine work of Grace. O remember that among the ten Virgins, that is, the reformed Professors of Religion, that have cast off and separated themselves from the Worship and Decilements of Antichrist, five of them were foolish.

There be first, that shall be last; and last, that shall be first, *Mat. 19. 30.* Great is the deceitfulness of our Hearts, *Jer. 17. 9.* And many are the Subtleties and Devices of Satan, *2 Cor. 11. 3.* Many also are the astonishing Examples of self-deceiving Souls, recorded in the World. Remember that you lately read of *Judas*. Great also will be the exactness of the last Judgment. And how confident soever you be, that you shall speed well in that day, yet still remember that Trial is not yet past. Your final Sentence is not yet come from the mouth of your Judge. This I speak, not to fright and trouble, but excite and warn you. The loss of a Soul is no small Loss, and upon such grounds as these they are every day cast away.

This may suffice to be spoken to the first Observation, built on this Supposition, that it was but a Pang of meer natural Affection in them. But if it were the effect of a better Principle, the Fruit of their Faith as some judge; then I told you the Observation from it would be this,

Dost. 2. That the believing meditation of robust Christ suffered for us, is of great force and efficacy to melt and break the Heart.

It is the Promise, *Zech. 12. 10.* *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only Son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.* Ponder seriously here the *Spring* and *Motive*, *They shall look upon me*; it's the Eye of Faith that melts and breaks the Heart. The Effect of such a sight of Christ; they shall look and mourn; be in bitterness and sorrow. True Repentance is a drop out of the Eye of Faith. And the measure or degree of that sorrow, caused by a believing view of Christ. To express which, two of the fullest instances of Grief we read of, are borrowed; that of a tender Father, mourning over a dear and only Son; that of the People of *Israel*, mourning over *Josiah* that peerless Prince, in the Valley of *Megiddo*.

Now to shew you how the believing meditation of Christ and his Sufferings, come kindly and savingly to break and melt down the gracious Heart, I shall propound these Four Considerations of the heart-breaking efficacy of Faith, eying a Crucified Jesus.

First, The very realizing of Christ and his Sufferings by Faith, is a most effecting and melting thing. Faith is a true Glass that represents all those his Sufferings and Agonies to the Life. It presents them not as a fiction, or idle tale, but as a true and faithful Narrative. This (saith Faith) is a true and faithful saying, that Christ was not only clothed in our flesh: he that is over all, God blessed for ever, the only Lord, the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, become a Man; but it is also most certain, that in this body of his Flesh, he grappled with the infinite Wrath of God, which fill'd his Soul with horror and amazement; that the Lord of Life did hang dead upon the Tree; that he went as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and was as a Sheep dumb before the Shearer; that he endured all this, and more than any finite Understanding can comprehend, in my room and stead; for my sake he there groaned and bled; for my Pride, Earthliness, Lust, Unbelief, hardness of Heart, he endureth all this. I say, to realize the Sufferings of Christ thus, is of great power to affect the coldest, duldest Heart. You cannot imagine the difference there is in presenting things as Realities, with convincing and satisfying Evidences, and our looking on them as a Fiction or Uncertainty.

Secondly, But Faith can apply, as well as realize; and if it do so, it must needs overcome the Heart.

Ah, Christian, canst thou look upon Jesus as standing in thy room, to bear the Wrath of a Deity for thee? Canst thou think on it, and not melt? That when thou, like *Isaac*, wast bound to the Altar, to be offered up to justice, Christ, like the *Ram*, was caught in the Thicket, and offered in thy room. When thy Sins had raised a fearful Tempest, that threatened every moment to entomb thee in a Sea of wrath; *Jesus Christ* was thrown over to appease that Storm! Say, Reader, can thy Heart dwell one hour upon such as Subject as this? Canst thou with Faith present Christ to thy self,

self, as he was taken down from the Cross, drencht from his own Blood, and say, These were the Wounds that he received for me; this is he that loved me, and gave himself for me; out of these Wounds comes that Balm that heals my Soul, out of these Stripes, my Peace: When he hang'd upon the Cross, he bore my Name upon his Breast, like the high Priest. It was Love, pure Love, strong Love to my poor Soul, to the Soul of an Enemy, that drew him down from Heaven, and all the Glory he had there, to endure these Sorrows in Soul and Body for me.

O you cannot hold up your hearts long to the piercing thoughts of this, but your Bowels will be pained, and like *Joseph*, you will seek a place to vent your Hearts in.

Thirdly, Faith cannot only realize and apply Christ and his Death, but it can *reason* and *conclude* such things from his Death, as will fill the Soul with affection to him, and break the Heart in pieces in his presence. When it views Christ as dead, it infers, Is Christ dead for me? then was I dead in Law, sentenced and condemned to die eternally: 2 Cor. 5. 14. *If one die for all, then were all dead.* How woful was my case, when the Law had past Sentence on me? I could not be sure when I lay down, but that it might be executed before I rose; nothing but a puff of Breath betwixt my Soul and Hell.

Again, Is Christ dead for me? then I shall never die. If he be condemned, I am acquitted. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? It's God that justifieth, it's Christ that died.* Rom. 8. 34. My Soul is escaped as a Bird out of the snare of the Fowler: I was condemned, but am now cleared; I was dead, but am now alive; O the unsearchable Riches of Grace! O Love past finding out!

Again, did God give Christ to such Miseries and Sufferings for me? How shall he withhold any thing now from me? He that spared not his own Son, will doubtless with him freely give me all things, Rom. 8. 32. Now I may rest on him for Pardon, Peace, Acceptance, and Glory for my Soul. Now I may rely up on him safely for Provision, Protection, and all Supplies for my Body. Christ is the Root of all these Mercies; he is more than all these, he is nearer and dearer to God than any other Gift. O what a blessed, happy, comfortable state hath he now brought my Soul into!

To conclude, Did Christ indure all these things for me? then it's past doubt he will never leave, nor forsake me: It cannot be that after he has endured all this, he will cast off the Souls for whom he endured it. Here the Soul is evangelically broken by considering the Mercies that immerge and flow to it out of the Sea of Christ's Blood.

Fourthly, and lastly, Faith cannot only realize, apply, and infer, but it can also *compare* the Love of Christ in all this, both with his dealings with others, and with the Soul's dealing with Christ, who so loved it. To compare Christ's dealings with others, is most affecting: He hath not dealt with every one, as with me; nay, few there are that can speak of such Mercies as I have from him: How

many are there that have no part nor portion in his Blood? that must bear that Wrath in their own Persons, that he bare himself for me! He that kissed me over other mens shoulders; he hath reached a Pardon to me over other mens heads; he espied me out, and singled me forth to be the Object of his Love, leaving thousands and millions still unconcill'd; not that I was better than they, for I was the greatest of Sinners, far from Righteousness, as unlikely as any to be the Object of such Grace and Love: My Companions in Sin are left, and I taken. Now the Soul is full, the Heart grows big, too big to contain it self.

Yea, Faith helps the Soul to compare the Love of Christ to it, with the returns it hath made to him for that Love. And what, my Soul! hath thy carriage to Christ been, since this Grace that wants a Name appeared to thee? Hast thou returned Love for Love? Love fuitable to such Love? Hast thou prized, valued and esteemed this Christ, according to his own Worth in himself, or his kindness to thee? Ah no, I have grieved, pierced, wounded his Heart a thousand times since that, by my Ingratitude; I have suffered every trifle to juggle him out of my Heart; I have neglected him a thousand times, and made him say, Is this thy kindness to thy Friend? Is this the Reward I shall have for all that I have done, and suffered for thee? Wretch that I am, how have I requited the Lord! This shames, humbles, and breaks the Heart.

And when from such sights of Faith, and considerations as these the Heart is thus affected it affords a good Argument indeed, that thou art gone beyond all the Attainments of temporary Believers; Flesh and Blood hath not revealed this.

Inference 1.

Have the believing Meditations of Christ and his Sufferings such heart-melting Influences? *Then sure there is but little Faith among Men.* Our dry Eyes and hard Hearts are evidences against us, that we are strangers to the Sights of Faith.

God be merciful to the hardness of your Hearts. How is Christ and his Love slighted among Men! How shallow doth his Blood run to some Eyes! O that my Head were Waters, and mine Eyes Fountains of tears for this! What Monsters are carnal Hearts! We are as if God had made us without Affections, as if all ingenuity and tenderness were dried up. Our Ears are so accustomed to the sounds of Christ, and his Blood, that now they are become as common things. If a Child die, we can mourn over our dead; but who mourns for Christ as for an only Son? We may say of Faith, when Men and Women sit so unaffected under the Gospel, as *Martina* said of Christ concerning her Brother *Lazarus*, If thou (precious Faith) hadst been here, so many Hearts had not been dead this day, and in this duty. Faith is that burning-glass which contracts the beams of the Grace, and Love, and Wisdom, and Power of Jesus Christ together, reflects these on the Heart, and makes it burn; but without it we feel nothing savingly.

Infer.

Quia misit
filium, im-
misit spiri-
tum, pro-
misit vul-
tum; quid
tantum de-
negabit?
Prop.

Inference 2.

Have the believing Meditations of Christ and his Sufferings such heart-melting Influences? *Then surely, the proper order of raising the Affections, is to begin at the exercise of Faith.* It grieves me to see how many poor Christians tug at their own dead Hearts, endeavouring to raise and affect them, but cannot: they complain and strive, strive and complain, pump and draw, but no Love to the Lord comes, no brokenness of Heart comes; they go to this Ordinance and that, to one Duty and another, hoping that now the Lord will affect it, and fill the Sails; but come back disappointed, and ashamed, like the Troops of *Tema*. Poor Christian, hear me one word; possibly it may do thy Business, and stand thee in more stead than all the Methods thou hast yet used. If thou wouldst indeed get a Heart evangelically melted for Sin, and broken with the kindly sense of the Grace and Love of Christ, thy way is not to force thy Affections, nor to vex thy self, and go about complaining of a hard Heart, but set thy self to believe, realize, apply, inter, and compare by Faith as you have been directed; and see what this will do: *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn.* This is the way, and proper method to raise the Heart, and break it.

Inference 3.

Is this the way to get a truly broken Heart? *Then let those that have attained brokenness of Heart this way, bless the Lord whilst they live, for so choice a Mercy; and that upon a double account.*

1. For as much as a Heart so affected and melted, is not attainable by any natural or un-renewed Person. If they would give all they have in the World, it cannot purchase one such Tear, or Groan over Christ. Mark what Characters of special Grace it bears in the description that's made of it, in that forementioned place, *Zech. 12. 10.* Such a Frame as this is not born with us, or to be acquired by us; for it's there said to be poured out by the Lord upon us, *I will pour on them, &c.* There's no hypocrisy or dissimulation in these Mourning, they being compared to the mourning of a

Man for his only Son; and sure Parents Hearts are not untouched when they behold such Sights.

Nature is not the principle of it, but Faith; for it's there said, they shall look on me; *i. e.* believe and mourn. *Self* is not the End and Centre of these Sorrows; it is not so much for damning our selves, as for piercing Christ: *They shall look on me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn;* so that this is Sorrow after God, and not a flash of Nature, as dis-couraged in the former Point. Therefore you have cause to bless the Lord wilt you live for such a special Mercy as this is. And,

2. As it's the right, so it is the choicest and most precious Gift that can be given you; for it's ranked among the prime Mercies of the new Covenant, *Ezek. 36. 26.* This shall be the Covenant; *A new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony Heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a Heart of flesh.* What wouldst thou have given sometimes for such a Heart as now thou hast, tho' it be not yet as thou wouldst have it? And however you value and esteem it, God himself sets no common value on it: For mark what he saith of it, *Psal. 15. 17. The Sacrifices of God are a broken heart: A broken and a contrite Spirit, O God, thou wilt not despise;* *i. e.* God is more delighted with such a Heart than all the Sacrifices in the World; one Groan, one Tear, flowing from Faith, and the Spirit of Adoption, is more to him, than the Cattle upon a thousand Hills. And to the same Sense he speaks again, *Isai. 66. 1, 2. Thus saith the Lord, The Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my Footstool: Where is the House that ye build to me? And where is the place of Rest? — but to this Man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word; q. d. all the magnificent Temples, and glorious Structures in the World, give me no Pleasure in comparison of such a broken Heart as this.*

O then, for ever bless the Lord, that hath done that for you, which none else could do, and which he has done but for few besides you.

SERMON

Serm. 26.
Opens the
nature and
quality of
the death
Christ died
upon the
Cross.

S E R M O N XXVI.

ACTS II. 23.

Him being delivered by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken; and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.

Mors Christi
fit ultimus
humiliatio-
nis actus,
sibi ex-
tremus,
horribilis,
& maxi-
mus pro
hominum
peccatis,
poenas
Amf.

HAVING considered in order the pre-
parative Acts for the Death of
Christ, both on his own part, and on
his Enemies part; we now come to
consider the Death of Christ it self, which was
the principal Part of his Humiliation, and the
chief Pillar of our Consolation. Here we shall
in order consider,

First, The kind and nature of the Death he
died.

Secondly, The manner in which he bare it,
viz. patiently, solitarily, and instructively;
dropping divers holy and instructive Lessons
upon all that were about him, in his seven
last Words upon the Cross.

Thirdly, The Funeral Solemnities at his Bu-
rial.

Fourthly, and lastly, The weighty Ends,
and great Designs of his Death. In all which
Particulars, as we proceed to discuss and open
them; you will have an account of the deep
Abasement and Humiliation of the Son of
God.

In this Text, we have an account of the
kind and nature of that Death which Christ
died: As also of the causes of it, both prin-
cipal and instrumental.

First, The kind and nature of the Death
Christ died, which is here described more ge-
nerally, as a violent Death. *Ye have slain him*:
And more particularly, as a most ignominious,
curfed, dishonourable Death; *ye have cruci-
fied him*.

Secondly, The Causes of it are here likewise
expressed: And that both principal and instru-
mental. The principal Cause, permitting, or-
dering, and disposing all things about it, was
the determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge
of God. There was not an Action or Circum-
stance, but came under this most wise and holy
Counsel, and Determination of God.

The Instruments effecting it, were their
wicked Hands. This Foreknowledge and Coun-
sel of God, as it did no way necessitate or en-
force them to it; so neither doth it excuse
their Fact from the least aggravation of its
fintfulness. It did no more compel or force their
wicked Hands to do what they did, than the
Mariner's hoisting up his Sails, to take the
Wind to serve his Design, compels the Wind.
And it cannot excuse their Action from one
Circumstance of sin: Because God's end and
manner of acting was one thing; their end

and manner of acting another. His most pure
and holy; theirs most malicious, and daringly
wicked. *Idem quod duo faciunt, non est idem*.
To this purpose a grave Divine well ex-
presses it.

In respect of God, Christ's Death was Ju-
stice and Mercy. In respect of Man, it was Exercise at
Murder and Cruelty. In respect of himself, *Giles's*
it was Obedience and Humility. Hence our
Note is,

*Doct. That our Lord Jesus Christ was not
only put to death, but to the worst of deaths,
even the death of the Cross.*

To this the Apostle gives a plain Testimo-
ny, *Phil. 2. 8. He became obedient to death,
even the death of the Cross*; where his Humi-
liation is both specified; he was humbled to
Death; and aggravated by a most emphatical
reduplication, even the death of the Cross. So
*Acts 5. 30. Jesus whom ye slew, and hanged
upon a tree; q. d. it did not suffice you to put
him to a violent, but you also put him to the
most base, vile, and ignominious death: you
hanged him on a tree.*

In this Point we will discuss these three
Particulars, *viz. the nature or kind, the man-
ner, and reasons of Christ's death upon the
Tree.*

First, I shall open the kind or nature of his
death, by shewing you that it was a violent,
painful, shameful, curfed, slow, and succourless
death.

First, It was a violent death, that Christ
died. Violent in it self, though voluntary on his
part. *He was cut off out of the land of the li-
ving, Isa. 53. 8. And yet he laid down his life
of himself; no man took it from him, John 10.
17. I call his death violent, because he died
not a natural death, (i. e.) he lived not till
Nature was consumed with Age, as it is in
many who live till their balsamum radicale, ra-
dical moisture, like the Oil in the Lamp, be
quite consumed, and then go out like an ex-
piring Lamp. It was not so with Christ. For
he was but in the flower and prime of his
time when he died. And indeed he must ei-
ther die a violent death, or not die at all;
partly because there was no sin in him, to open
a door to natural death; as it doth in all others.
Partly because else his death had not been a
Sacrifice acceptable and satisfactory to God
for us. That which died of it self; was ne-
ver offered up to God; but that which was
slain*

Non excu-
santur Ju-
dei quia
huic oc-
ciderunt
non ob-
temperant,
sed odio &
affectibus
impulsi;
Christum
percusse-
runt inno-
centem:
contra le-
ges. Parem.

John 2. 19 slain when it was in its full strength and health. The Temple was a Type of the body of Christ. Now, when the Temple was destroyed, it did not drop down as an ancient structure decayed by time; but was pulled down by violence, when it was standing in its full strength. Therefore he is said to *suffer death*, and to be *put to death* for us in the flesh, 1 Pet. 3. 18. That's the first thing. It was a violent, though a voluntary death. For violent is not opposed to voluntary, but to natural.

Secondly, The death of the Cross was a most painful death. Indeed in this death were many deaths contrived in one. The Cross was a Rack, as well as a Gibbet. The pains Christ suffered upon the Cross, are by the Apostle emphatically still'd *τὰς αἰσθὰς τὸ δυνάτω*, Acts 2. 24. the pains of death: but properly they signify the pangs of Travail: yea, the birth pangs, the most acute sorrows of a travelling Woman. His Soul was in travail, Isa. 53. His body in bitter pangs; and being as *Aquinas* speaks, *optime complexionatus*, of the most excellent Crasis, exact and just temperament; his Senses were more acute and delicate than ordinary: and all the time of his suffering so they continued; not in the least blunted, dulled or rebated by the pains he suffered.

The death of Christ doubtless contained the greatest, and acutest pains imaginable. Because these pains of Christ alone, were intended to equalize all that misery, which the sin of man deserved, all that pain which the Damned shall, and the Elect deserved to feel. Now to have pains meeting at once upon one person, equivalent to all the pains of the damned: Judge you what a plight Christ was in.

Thirdly, The death of the Cross, was a shameful death. Not only because the crucified were stripped quite naked, and so exposed as spectacles of shame: but mainly, because it was that kind of death which was appointed for the basest, and vilest of men.

The Free-men when they committed capital Crimes, were not condemned to the Cross. No, that was looked upon as the death appointed for Slaves. *Tacitus* calls it *servile supplicium*, the punishment of a Slave: and to the same sense *Juvenal* speaks, *pone crucem servo*, put the cross upon the back of a slave. As they had a great esteem of a Free-man, so they manifested it, even when they had forfeited their lives, in cutting them off by more honourable kinds of death. This by hanging on the tree, was always accounted most ignominious. To this day we say of him that's hanged, he dies the death of a Dog: And yet it's said of our Lord Jesus, *Heb.* 12. 2. he not only endur'd the Cross, but also despised the shame. Obedience to his Father's Will, and Zeal for your Salvation, made him digest the shame of it, and despise the baseness that was in it.

Fourthly, The death of the Cross, was a cursed death. Upon that account he is said to be made *nāmes*, a curse for us; For it is written, *curst is every one that hangeth on a Tree*, Gal. 3. 13. This refers to *Deut.* 21. 23. *His body shall not remain all night upon*

the Tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; for he that is hanged, is accursed of God. The very symbol of lifting them up betwixt heaven and earth, carried much shame in it. For it implieth this in it, that the person so used, was so execrable, base and vile, that he deserved not to tread upon the earth, or touch the surface of the ground any more. And the command for burying them that day, doth not at all mitigate, but rather aggravates this curse: speaking the person to be so abominable, that as he is lifted up into the air, and hanging between heaven and earth, as unworthy ever to set foot more upon the earth; so when dead, they were to hasten to bury him, that such an abominable sight might be removed as soon as might be, from before the eyes of men; and that the earth might not be defiled, by his lying on the surface of it, when taken down.

However, as the learned *Junius* hath judiciously observed, that this curse is only a Ceremonial Curse: For otherwise it's neither in it self, nor by the Law of nature, or by civil Law, more execrable than any other death. And the main reason why the Ceremonial Law affixed the curse to this rather than to any other death, was principally with respect to the death Christ was to die. And therefore, Reader, see and admire the Providence of God, that Christ should die by a *Roman* and not by a *Jewish* Law. For crucifying, or hanging on the Tree, was a *Roman* punishment, and not in use among the *Jews*. But the Scriptures cannot be broken.

Fifthly, The death of the Cross was a very slow, and lingering death. They died leisureably. Which still encreaseth, and aggravates the misery of it. If a man must die a violent death, it's a favour to be dispatched; as they that are pressed to death, beg for more weight. And it's a favour to those that are hanged, to be smitten on the breast, or plucked by the heels by their Friends. On the contrary, to hang long in the midst of tortures, to have death coming upon us with a slow pace, that we may feel every tread of it, as it comes on, is a misery.

The Tyrant that heard the poor Martyr was dead under his first torments, said as one disappointed, *Evassi*. He hath escaped me. For he intended to have kept him much longer under torments. And it was the cruel counsel of another to his Executioner; *Let him die so, as he may feel himself how he dies*. And surely in this respect it was worse for Christ, than any other that was ever nailed to the Tree. For all the while he hang'd there, he remained full of life and acute sense. His life departed not gradually, but was whole in him to the last. Other men die gradually, and towards their end their sense of pain is much blunted. They falter, fumble and expire by degrees; but Christ stood under the pains of death in his full strength. His life was whole in him. This was evident by the mighty out-cry he made, when he gave up the Ghost. Which argued him then to be full of strength, contrary to the experience of all other men. Which made the Centurion when he heard it, to conclude,

Non statuitur hoc cadaver illud male dictum cito a superficie terre tollatur, & terra non quinetur. Sic Bonferrius.

Continebat penas maximas, quia miseriam illam totam aequabat, qua hominum peccata mererantur, Amer. med.

Vide Lyfium de crucce. Lib. 1. chap. 11. Ingenui hominis nulla est estimatio. Mortem hanc Homerus Odys. vocat gloriosam. Et Eustathius similis fecit. daum.

Moriatur, ut sentiat se mori.

Vitam & vires quasque voluit Christus servavit, & quando deponebat. Amer.

clude; Surely this was the Son of God, Mark 15. 37, 39.

Sixthly, It was a succourless and helpless death to Christ. Sometimes they gave to Malefactors amidst their torments, Vinegar and Myrrh, to blunt, dull and stupify their Senses. And if they hanged long, would break their bones, to dispatch them out of their pains. Christ had none of this favour. Instead of Vinegar and Myrrh, they gave him Vinegar and Gall to drink, to aggravate his torments. And for the breaking of his bones, he prevented it, by dying before they came to break his legs. For the Scriptures must be fulfilled, which say, *not a bone of him shall be broken.*

This now was the kind and nature of that death he died. Even the violent, painful, shameful, cursed, slow and succourless death of the Cross. An ancient punishment both among the Romans and Carthaginians. But in honour of Christ, who died this death, Constantine the Great, abrogated it by Law, ordaining that none should ever be Crucified any more, because Christ died that Death.

Secondly, As to the manner of the execution. They that were condemned to the death of the Cross, (saith a Learned Antiquary of our own) bare their Cross upon their own shoulders, to the place of Execution. Then were stript of all their cloaths, for they suffered naked. And then were fastned to the Cross with nails.

The manner how that was done, one gives us in these words, They stretch him out (meaning Christ) like another Isaac upon his own burden, the Cross; that so they might take measure of the holes. And though the Print of his blood upon it, gave them the true length of his body; yet how strictly do they take it longer than the truth. Thereby at once to Crucifie, and rack him. Then being nailed, like as Moses lifted up the Serpent, so was the Son of Man lifted up. And when the Cross, with the Lord fastned on it, fell into its socket, or basis, it jerked the whole, and every part of his sacred body. And the whole weight hanging on his nailed hands, the wounds by degrees grew wider and wider: till at last he expired in the midst of those tortures.

And that the equity of their proceedings might the better appear, to the People; the cause of the punishment was written in Capital Letters, and fixed to the Tree over the head of the Malefactor. Of this appendant to this kind of death, I shall speak distinctly in the next Sermon, before I come to handle the manner of his Death: there being so much of providence in that circumstance, as invites us to spend more than a few transient thoughts upon it. Mean while in the next place,

Thirdly, We will enquire briefly into the reasons why Christ died this, rather than any other kind of death. And amongst others, these three are obvious.

First, Because Christ must bear the curse in his death, and a curse by Law was affixed to no other kind of death, as it was to this. The Learned *Mafius* upon *Joshua* 2. 29, Com-

Vol. I.

menting upon the death of the King of *Asi*, who was hanged on the Tree, until evening, tells us that the principal reason of the malediction and execrable death of his death was, because the death of Christ was prefigured in that mystery. Christ came to take away the curse from us, by this death; and so must be made a curse. On him must all the curses of the Moral Law lie, which were due to us. And that nothing might be wanting to make it a full curse; the very death he died, must also have a Ceremonial curse upon it.

Secondly, Christ died this, rather than any other kind of death; to fulfil the Types, and Prefigurations that of old were made with respect to it. All the Sacrifices were lifted up from the earth, upon the Altar. But especially the brazen Serpent prefigured this death, *Num. 21. 9. Moses made a Serpent of Brafs and put it upon a Pole.* And, saith Christ, *Joh. 3. 14. As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness so must the Son of man be lifted up,* that so he might correspond with that lively Type, made of him in the Wilderness.

Thirdly, Christ died, this rather than any other death, because it was predicted of him, and in him must all the Predictions, as well as Types be fully accomplished. The Psalmist spake in the person of Christ, of this death, as plainly as if he had rather been writing the History of what was done, than a Prophecy of what was to be done, so many years afterwards, *Psal. 22. 16, 17.* For dogs have compassed me about, the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones, they look and stare upon me. Which hath a manifest reference to the distinction of all his members upon the Tree, which was as a rack to him. So *Zech. 12. 10.* They shall look upon me, whom they have pierced. Yea, Christ himself had foretold the death he should die, in the forecited, *Joh. 3. 14.* Saying he must be lifted up, (i. e.) hanged between heaven and earth. And the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

Thus you have a brief account both of the kind, manner, and reasons of this death of Christ. The improvement of it, you have in the following Inferences of truth, deducible from it.

Inference 1. Is Christ dead? And did he die the violent, painful, shameful, cursed, slow, and succourless death of the Cross? *Then surely there is forgiveness with God, and pardon for plentiful redemption for the greatest of Sinners, that by Faith apply the blood of the Cross, to their poor guilty Souls.* So speaks the Apostle, *Col. 1. 14. In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins,* And *1 Joh. 1. 7. The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.* Two things will make this demonstrable.

First, That there is sufficient efficacy in this blood of the Cross, to expiate the greatest Sins.

Secondly, That the efficacy of it is designed and intended by God for believing sinners. How clearly do both these propositions lie in the Word.

S

First,

Sermon. lib. 1. chap. 8.

Godwins Antiq. lib. 3. Sect. 3. p. 192.

Herles Con-templa. of Christ's Pas- sin.

Potissima causa maledictionis huius est quia Christus in mysterio praesignatur. Mafius.

First, That there is sufficient efficacy in the blood of the Cross, to expiate and wash away the greatest sins. This is manifest, for it is precious blood, as it's called, 1 Pet. 1. 18. *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as Silver and Gold; but with the precious blood of the Son of God.* This preciousness of the blood of Christ rises from the union it hath with that person, who is over all, God blessed for ever. And on that account is styled the blood of God, *Acts* 20. 28. And so it becomes Royal, Princely blood. Yea, such for the dignity, and efficacy of it, as never was created, or shall ever run in any other veins, but his. The blood of all the Creatures in the world, even a Sea of humane blood, bears no more proportion to the precious and excellent blood of Christ, than a dish of common-water, to a River of liquid Gold. On the account of it's invaluable preciousness, it becomes satisfying and reconciling blood to God. So the Apostle speaks, *Col.* 1. 20. *And (having made peace through the blood of his Cross) by him to reconcile all things to himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.* The same blood which is Redemption to them that dwell on earth, is Confirmation to them that dwell in Heaven. Before the efficacy of this Blood Guilt vanishes; and shrinks away; as the shadows before the glorious Son. Every drop of it hath a voice, and speaks to the Soul that sits trembling under its guilt, better things than the blood of *Abel*, *Heb.* 12. 24. It sprinkles us from an evil, (*i. e.*) an unquiet, and accusing conscience, *Heb.* 10. 22. For having enough in it to satisfy God, it must needs have enough in it to satisfy Conscience.

Conscience can demand no more for its satisfaction, nor will it take less, than God demands for his satisfaction. And in this blood is enough to give both satisfaction.

Secondly, As there is sufficient Efficacy in this blood, to expiate the greatest guilt; so it's as manifest, that the virtue and efficacy of it, is intended and designed by God for the Use of believing sinners. Such blood as this was shed without doubt for some weighty end, that some might be the better for it. Who they are for whom it is intended, is plain enough from *Acts* 13. 39. *And by him all that believe, are justified from all things; from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses.*

That the remission of the sins of believers was the great thing designed in the pouring out of this precious blood of Christ, appears from all the Sacrifices that figured it to the ancient Church. The shedding of that Typical blood, spake a design of pardon. And the putting of their hands upon the head of the Sacrifice, spake the way and method of believing, by which that blood was then applied to them in that way: and is still applied to us in a more excellent way. Had no pardon been intended, no Sacrifices had been appointed.

Moreover, let it be considered; this blood of the Cross is the blood of a Surety; that came under the same obligations with us, and in our name or stead shed it: and so of course

freed and discharges the principal offender, or debtor, *Heb.* 7. 22. Can God exact satisfaction from the blood and death of his own Son, the surety of Believers; and yet still demand it from Believers? It cannot be. *Who* (saith the Apostle) *shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Is it God that justifieth, Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died,* *Rom.* 8. 33, 34. And why are Faith and Repentance, prescribed as the means of pardon? Why doth God every where in his Word, call upon sinners to repent, and believe in this blood? Encouraging them so to do, by so many precious promises of remission; and declaring the inevitable and eternal ruine of all impenitent and unbelieving ones, who despise and reject this blood? What, I say, doth all this speak, but the possibility of a pardon for the greatest of sinners; and the certainty of a free, full, and final pardon, for all believing sinners? O what a joyful sound is this? What ravishing voices of peace, pardon, grace, and acceptance come to our ears, from the blood of the Cross!

The greatest guilt that ever was contracted upon a trembling shaking Conscience, can stand before the efficacy of the blood of Christ no more, than the sinner himself can stand before the justice of the Lord, with all the guilt upon him.

Reader, The Word assures thee, what ever thou hast been, or art, that sins of as deep a die as thine, have been waisted away in this blood. *I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, injurious; but I obtained mercy,* saith Paul, 1 Tim. 1. 13. but it may be thou wilt object: this was a rare and singular instance, and it's a great question whether any other sinner shall find the like grace, that he did. No question of it at all, if you believe in Christ, as he did: for he tells us *vers.* 16. *For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him, to life everlasting.* So that upon the same grounds he obtained mercy, you may obtain it also.

Those very men who had a hand in the shedding of Christ's blood, had the benefit of that blood afterwards pardoning them, *Acts* 2. 36. There is nothing but unbelief and impenitency of heart, bars thy Soul from the blessings of this blood.

Inference. 2. Did Christ die the cursed death of the Cross for believers, *then though there be much of pain, there is nothing of curse in the death of the Saints.* It still wears its dart, by which it strikes; but hath lost its sting by which it hurts and destroys. A Serpent that hath no sting, may hiss and affright; but we may take him in our hand without danger. Death poured out all its poison, and lost its sting in Christ's side, when he became a curse for us.

But what speak I of the innocence and harmlessness of death to believers? It is certainly their friend and great benefactor. As there is no curse, so there are many blessings in it. *Death is yours,* 1 Cor. 3. 22. Yours as a special privileged and favour. Christ hath

not

not only conquered it, but is more than a conqueror; for he hath made it beneficial, and very serviceable to the Saints. When Christ was nailed to the tree, then he said as it were to death which came to grapple with him there; *O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction*. And so he was: for he swallowed up death in victory, spoiled it of its power. So that it drives but a poor trade now among believers, frightening some weak ones among them, though it cannot hurt them at all.

Inference 3. If Christ died the cursed death of the Crofs for us, *how cheerfully should we submit to, and bear any Crofs for Jesus Christ!*

He had his Crofs, and we have ours; but what feathers are ours, compared with his? His Crofs was a heavy crofs indeed, yet how patiently and meekly did he support it! *He endured his Crofs*, we cannot endure or bear ours, though they be not to be named with his. Three things would marvellously strengthen us to bear the Crofs of Christ, and bring up a good report upon it in the World.

First, That we shall carry it but a little way. *Secondly*, Christ bears the heaviest end of it. *Thirdly*, Innumerable blessings and mercies grow upon the Crofs of Christ.

First, We shall bear it but a little way. It should be enough to me (faith a holy one) that Christ will have joy and sorrow halves of the life of the Saints. And that each of them should have a share of our days, as the night and day are kindly partners of time, and take us that it up betwixt them. But if sorrow be the greediest halfer of our days here, I know joys day shall dawn, and do more than recompence all our sad hours.

Let my Lord Jesus (since he will do so) weave my bit-and-span length of time with white and black; well and wo. — Let the rose be neighbour with the thorn. — ‘When we are over the water Christ shall cry; Down Crosses and up Heaven for evermore. Down Hell, and down Death, and down Sin, and down Sorrow: and up Glory, up Life, up Joy for evermore. Tis true, Christ and his Cross are not separable in this life; howbeit, Christ and his Cross part at Heavens door. For there is no house-room for crosses in Heaven. One tear, one sigh, one sad heart, one fear, one loss, one thought of trouble cannot find Lodging there. — Sorrow and the Saints are not married together; or suppose it were so, Heaven shall make a divorce. Life is but short, and therefore Crosses cannot be long. Our Sufferings are but for a while, 1 *Pet.* 5. 10. They are but the Sufferings of the present time, *Rom.* 8. 18.

Secondly, As we shall carry the Cross of Christ but a little way, so Christ himself bears the heaviest end of it. And as one happily expresses, he faith of their Crosses, *half mine*. He divideth Sufferings with them, and takes the largest share to himself. ‘O how sweet a fight (faith one sweetly) is it to see a Cross betwixt Christ and us. To hear our Redeemer say, at every sigh, at every blow, and every loss of a Believer, *half mine*. For they are called

Vol. I.

the Sufferings of Christ, and the reproach of Christ, *Col.* 2. 24. *Heb.* 11. 26. As when two are partners and owners of a Ship, half of the gain and half of the Loss belongeth to either of the two. So Christ in our Sufferings, is half gainer and half loser with us; yea, the heaviest end of the black tree lyeth on your Lord. It falleth first upon him, and but rebounds from him upon you: *the reproaches of them that reproached thee, are fallen upon me*, *Psal.* 69. 9. Nay, to speak as the thing is, Christ doth not only bear half, or the better part; but the whole of our cross and burden. Yea, he bears all, and more than all; for he bears us, and our burden too; or else we should quickly sink, and faint under it.

Thirdly, As we have not far to carry it, and Christ carries the heaviest part; yea, all the burden for us: yea, us, and our burden too: So in the last place it's reviving to think what an innumerable multitude of blessings and mercies are the fruit and off-spring of a sanctified Cross. Since that tree was so richly watered with the blood of Christ; what store of choice, and rich fruits doth it bear to believers?

Our Sufferings (faith one) are washed in the blood of Christ, as well as our Souls. ‘For Christ's merits bought a blessing to the Crosses of the Sons of God. Our troubles owe us a free passage through him. Devils, and men, and crosses are our debtors; and death, and all storms are our debtors, to blow our poor tossed bark over the water freight-free: and to set the Travellers in their own known ground. Therefore we shall die, and yet live. — I know no man hath a velvet Cross, but the Cross is made of what God will have it; but verily, howbeit, it be no warrantable market to buy a Cross, yet I dare not say, O that I had liberty to sell Christ's Cross, left therewith all I should sell joy, comfort, sense of love, patience, and the kind visits of a Bridegroom.

— I have but small experience of Sufferings for Christ, but let my Judge and Witness in Heaven, lay my Soul in the balance of Justice; If I find not a young Heaven, and a little Paradise of glorious comforts, and soul delighting love kisses of Christ, in suffering for him and his truth.

— My prison is my palace, my sorrow is with child of Joy. My losses are rich losses, my pain easie pain, my heavy days are holy days, and happy days. I may tell a new tale of Christ to my friends. — O what owe I to the file, and to the hammer, and to the furnace of my Lord Jesus! who hath now let me see how good the wheat of Christ is, that goes through his mill, and his oven, to be made Bread for his own Table. Grace tried, is better than grace, and more than grace. It's glory in the Infancy.

‘Who knows the truth of Grace without a trial? — O how little getteth Christ of us but what he winneth (to speak so) with much toil and pains? And how soon

S 2

' would Faith freeze without a Cross! bear
' your Cross therefore with joy.

Inference 4. Did Christ die the death, yea,
the worst of deaths for us? Then it follows,
that our mercies are brought forth with great
difficulties; and that which is sweet to us in
the fruition, was costly and hard to Christ in the
acquisition. Surely upon every Mercy we have,

Lock in Coll. this Motto written, *The price of Blood,*
Col. 1. 14. *In whom we have redemption through
his blood:* Upon which a late neat Writer de-
livers himself thus. ' The way of Grace is
' here considerable; Life comes thro' Death;
' God comes in Christ; and Christ comes in
' Blood: the choicest Mercies come through
' the greatest Miseries; prime Favours come
' swimming in Blood to us. Through a red Sea,
' Israel came to Canaan. Many a Man lost
' his Life, and much Blood shed; the very
' Land flowing with Milk and Honey, was
' first made to flow with Blood, ere Israel
' could inherit the Promise. Seven Nations
' were destroyed ere the Land of Canaan was
' divided to the Israelites, Acts 13. 19. —
' Sin makes Mercy so deadly hard to bring
' forth. To Christen every precious Child,
' every Benjamin Benoni, every Son of God's
' right-hand, a Son of sorrow and death
' to her that brings him forth. Adam's sweets
' had no bitter till he transgressed God's Will:
' One Mercy did not die to bring forth another,
' till he died. But oh! how should this

' raise the value of our Mercies! What, the
' price of Blood, the price of precious Blood,
' the Blood of the Cross! O what an esteem
' should this raise!

' Things (as the same ingenious Author
adds) are prized rather as they come, than
as they are. Far fetch'd and dear bought
makes all the Price, and gives all the worth
with us weak Creatures. Upon this ground
the Scripture, when it speaks of our great
fortune, tells the great price it cost, as ey-
ing our weakness, who look more at what
things cost, than at what they are. And as
knowing if any thing will take with us, this
will. *To him that loved us, and washed us
from our sin, in his own blood,* Rev. 1. 5.

' Man is a legal Creature, and looks much
at what is given for a thing. What did this
cost? Why, it cost Christ's own Blood. Co-
lour is more than the Cloth with us, and
Scarlet colour is a general taking colour
with us: And therefore is Christ's Garment
dipt in Blood, and he admired in this habit.
*Who is this that cometh from Edom? with gar-
ments dyed red from Bozra?*

Beware then you abuse not any of the Mer-
cies that Christ brought forth with so many
bitter pangs and throws. And let all this en-
dear Christ more than ever to you, and make
you in a deep sense of his Grace and love, to
say,

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

Serm. 27.

Opens and
improves
that final
Providence
with a di-
rected and
ordered the
little affec-
ed to the
Cross of
Christ.

S E R M O N XXVII.

LUKE XXIII. 38.

*And a superscription also was written over him, in letters
of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew; This is the King of
the Jews.*

BEfore I pass on to the manner of
Christ's death, I shall consider the
Title affixed to the Cross; in which
very much of the Wisdom of Providence
was discovered. It was the manner of
the Romans, that the Equity of their Proceed-
ings might the more clearly appear to the Peo-
ple, when they crucified any Man, to publish
the cause of his death in a Table written in
Capital Letters, and placed over the Head of
the crucified. And that there might be at
least a shew and face of Justice in Christ's
death, he also shall have his Title or Super-
scription.

The worst and most unrighteous Actions
labour to cover and shroud themselves under
pretensions of Equity. Sin is so shameful a
thing, that it cares not to own its name. Christ
shall have a Table written for him also. This
Writing one Evangelist calls the *Accusation*,

Matth. 27. 37. Another calls it the *Title*,
John 19. 19. Another the *Inscription* or *Super-
scription*, so the Text. And another the *Super-
scription* of his *Accusation*, Mark 15. 26.
In short, it was a fair legible Writing, intend-
ed to express the Fact or Crime, for which
the Person died.

This was their usual manner, though some-
times we find it was published by the Voice
of the Common Crier. As in the Case of *At-
talus* the Martyr, who was led about the Am-
phitheater, one proclaiming before him, *This
is Attalus the Christian*. But it was customary
and usual to express the Crime in a written
Table, as the Text expresses it, Wherein
these three things offer themselves to your
Consideration.

First, The Character or Description of Christ
contained in that Writing. And he is describ-
ed by his Kingly Dignity: *This is the King*
of

Euseb. Ec-
cles. Hist.
lib. 5. c. 1.

1.

larger of the Jews. That very office which but a little before they had reproached and derided, bowing the Knee to him in mockery, saying, *Hail King of the Jews*; the Providence of God so orders it, that therein he shall be vindicated and honoured. *This is the King of the Jews*: Or as the other Evangelists com-
pleat it, This is Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.

2. *Secondly*, The Person that drew his Character or Title. It was *Pilate*, he that but now condemned him: He that was his *Judge*, shall be his *Herald*, to proclaim his Glory. For the Title is honourable. Surely this was not from himself, for he was Christ's Enemy; but rather than Christ should want a Tongue to clear him, the Tongue of an Enemy shall do it.

3. *Thirdly*, The time when this honour was done him: It was when he was at the lowest ebb of his Glory; when shame and reproach were heaped on him by all hands. When all the Disciples had forsaken him, and were fled. Not one left to proclaim his Innocency or speak a word in his Vindication. Then doth the Providence of God as strangely as powerfully overrule the Heart and Pen of *Pilate*, to draw this Title for him, and affix it to his Cross. Surely we must look higher than *Pilate* in this thing, and see how Providence serves it self by the hands of Christ's Adversaries. *Pilate* writes in honour of Christ, and stilly defends it too. Hence our Observati-
on is;

Doct. 1. *That the Dignity of Christ was openly proclaimed, and defended by an Enemy; and that in the time of his greatest Reproaches and Sufferings.*

To open this Mytery of Providence to you, that you may not stand idly gazing upon Christ's Title, as many then did: We must *first* consider the nature and quality of this Title. *Secondly*, What hand the Providence of God had in this Matter. *Thirdly*, And then draw forth the proper Uses and Improvements of it.

First, To open the nature and quality of Christ's Title or Inscription; let it be thoroughly considered and we shall find,

First, That it was an extraordinary Title, varying from all Examples of that kind; and directly crossing the main Design and End of their own Custom. For, as I hinted before, the End of it was to clear the Equity of their Proceedings, and shew the People how justly they suffered those Punishments inflicted on them for such Crimes. But lo, here is a Title expressing no Crime at all, and so vindicating Christ's Innocency. This some of them perceived, and moved *Pilate* to change it, not this is, but this is he that said, *I am the King of the Jews*. In that as they conceived lay his Crime. O how strange and wonderful a thing was this! But what shall we say! It was a day of Wonders and extraordinary Things. As there was never such a Person crucified before, so there never was such a Title affixed to the Cross before.

Secondly, As it was an extraordinary, so it was a publick Title, both written and publish-

ed with the greatest advantages of spreading it self far and near, among all People that could be. For it was written in three Languages, and those most known in the World at that time. The *Greek* Tongue was then known in most parts of the World. The *Hebrew* was the Jews native Language. And the *Latin* the Language of the Gentiles. So that it being written both in *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latin*, it was easie to be understood, both by Jews and Gentiles.

And indeed unto this the Providence of God had a special Eye, to make it notorious and evident to all the World. For even so all things design'd, for publick view, and knowledge were written. *Josephus* tells us of certain Pillars, on which was engraven in Letters of Greek and Latin, *It is a wickedness for strangers to enter into the holy Place*. So the Soldiers of *Gordian*, the third Emperor, when he was slain upon the Borders of *Persia*, they raised a Monument for him, and engraved his Memorial upon it, in *Greek*, *Latin*, *Perick*, *Judaick*, and *Egyptick* Letters, that all People might read the same. And as it was written in three learned Languages, so it was exposed to view in a publick Place; and at that time, when multitudes of Strangers, as well as Jews were at *Jerusalem*: It was at the time of the Passover. So that all things concurred to spread and divulge the Innocency of Christ, vindicated in this Title.

Thirdly, As it was a publick, so it was an honourable Title. Such was the nature of it, *saith Bucer*; that in the midst of death Christ began to triumph by it. And by reason thereof the Cross began to change its own nature, and instead of a Rack, or Engine of Torture, it became a Throne of Majesty. Yea, it might be called now as the Church it self is, *the Pillar and Ground of Truth*; for it held our much of the Gospel, much of the Glory of Christ; as that Pillar doth, to which a Royal Proclamation is affixed.

Fourthly, It was a vindicating Title: It clear'd up the Honour, Dignity, and Innocency of Christ, against all the false Imputations, Calumnies, and Blasphemies, which were cast upon him before, by the wicked Tongues, both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

They had called him a Deceiver, an Ufurper, a Blasphemer, they rent their Cloaths in token of their detestation of his Blasphemy; because he made himself the Son of God, and King of *Israel*. But know in this they acknowledged him to be both Lord and Saviour. Not a mock King, as they had made him before. So that herein the honour of Christ was fully vindicated.

Fifthly, Moreover it was a *predising* and *presaging* Title. Evidently forshewing, the propagation of Christ's Kingdom; and the spreading of his Name and Glory, among all Kindreds, Nations, Tongues, and Languages. As Christ hath right to enter into all the Kingdoms of the Earth by his Gospel, and set up the Throne in every Nation: So it was prefigured by this Title, that he should do so.

Tribus linguis toto orbe tunc vulgatisimus; scribitur; ut ab omnibus legi, & intelligi possent. Pa-

In locum sanctum ingredi alienigenis nefas est.

Bucer. in Loc.

Tribus linguis scribitur; ut ab omnibus legi, & intelligi possent. Pa-

And

Hoc extraordinarium est, quod sine ignominia titulus apponitur. Calv.

non modo Hebræorum, sed & Græcorum & Latinarum ad Christi regnum. Par.

And that both Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins, should be called to the knowledge of him. Nor is it a wonder that this should be predicted by wicked *Pilate*, when *Caiaphas* himself, a man every way as wicked as he, had prophesied to the same purpose, *Joh. 11. 51, 52*. For being High Priest that year, he prophesied, that *Jesus* should die for that Nation, and not for that Nation only, but that also he should gather together in one, the children of God, that were scattered abroad. Yea, many have prophesied in Christ's Name, who for all that shall never be owned by him, *Matth. 7. 22*.

Sixthly, And lastly, it was an immutable Title. The *Jews* endeavoured, but could not persuade *Pilate* to alter it. To all their importunities he returns this resolute answer, *What I have written I have written*; as if he should say, urge me no more, I have written his Title, I cannot, I will not alter a Letter, a Point thereof. Surely the constancy of *Pilate*, at this time, can be attributed to nothing, but divine special Providence. Most wonderful, that he, who before was as unconstant, as a Reed shaken by the wind, is now as fixed as a Pillar of Braſs.

And yet more wonderful that he should write down that very particular in the Title of Christ, *This is the King of the Jews*, which was the very thing, that so feared him but a little before, and was the very consideration that moved him to give Sentence. What was now become of the fear of *Cæſar*? that *Pilate* dares to be Christ's Herald, and publickly to proclaim him *The King of the Jews*. This was the Title.

Secondly, We shall next enquire what hand the divine providence had in this business.

And indeed, the Providence of God in this hour acted gloriously, and wonderfully these five ways.

First, In over-ruling the heart and hand of *Pilate*, in the draught and stile of it, and that contrary to his own inclination. I doubt not but *Pilate* himself was ignorant of, and far enough from designing that which the wisdom of Providence aimed at, in this matter. He was a wicked man, he had no love to Christ. He had given Sentence of death against him. Yet this is he that proclaimed him to be, *Jesus, King of the Jews*. It so over-ruled his Pen, that he could not write what was in his own heart and intention, but the quite contrary; even a fair and publick Testimony to the Kingly office of the Son of God, *This is the King of the Jews*.

Secondly, Herein the wisdom of providence was gloriously displayed, in applying a present, proper, publick remedy, to the reproaches and blasphemies which Christ had then newly received in his name and honour. The superstitious *Jews* wound him, and heathen *Pilate* prepares a plaister to heal him. They reproach, he vindicates. They throw the dirt, he washes it off. O, the profound and inscrutable wisdom of Providence!

Thirdly, Moreover Providence eminently appeared at this time, in keeping so timorous a Person, a man of so base a Spirit, that would not stick at any thing to please the People, from receding, or giving ground in the least to their

importunities. Is *Pilate* become a man of such resolution and constancy? Whence is this? But from the God of the Spirits of all flesh. Who now flowed in so powerfully upon his Spirit, that he could not chuse but write: and when he had written, had no more power to alter what he had written, than he had to refuse to write it.

Fourthly, Herein also much of the wisdom of Providence appeared, in calling the ignominy of the death of Christ upon those very men who ought to bear it. *Pilate* was moved by divine instinct, at once to clear Christ, and accuse them. For it is, as if he had said, you have moved me to Crucify your King, I have Crucified him, and now let the ignominy of his death rest upon your heads, who have extorted this from me. He is righteous, the Crime is not his but yours.

Fifthly, And lastly, the Providence of God wonderfully discover'd it self, (as before was noted) in fixing this Title to the Cross of Christ, when there was so great a confluence of all sorts of People, to take notice of it. So that it could never have been more advantageously published, than it was at this time. So that we may say, how wonderful are the works of God! His ways are in the Sea, his paths in the great deeps; his footsteps are not known. His Providence hath a prospect beyond the understandings of all Creatures.

Inference 1. Hence it follows that the Providence of our God can, and often doth overrule the Counsels and Actions of the worst of men to his own Glory.

It can serve it self by them that oppose it, and bring about the glory and honour of Christ, by those very men, and means, which are design'd to lay it in the dust. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, *Pſalm 76. 10*. The *Jews* thought when they Crowned Christ with Thorns, bowed the knee, and mocked him, led him to *Golgotha* and crucified him; that now they had utterly despoiled him of all his Kingly Dignities: and yet even there, he is proclaimed a King. Thus the dispersion of the *Jews* upon the death of *Stephen*, spread the Gospel far and near, *For they went everywhere preaching the Word, Acts 8. 4*. Thus *Paul's* bonds for the Gospel, fell out to the furtherance of the Gospel, *Phil. 1. 12*. O, the depth of divine wisdom to propagate, and establish the interest of *Jesus Christ*, by those very means that seem to import its destruction: that extracts a Medicine out of Poison! How great a support should this be to the faith of God's People! When all things seem to run cross to their hopes and happiness! Let *Israel* therefore hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous Redemption, *Pſalm 130. 7. (i. e.)* He is never at a loss for means, to promote and serve his own ends.

Inference 2. Hence likewise it follows, That the greatest services performed to Christ accidentally, and undesignedly, shall never be accepted nor rewarded of God. *Pilate* did Christ an eminent piece of service. He did that for Christ that not one of his own Disciples at that time durst do; and yet this service was not accepted of God, because he did it not designed-

Hæc Pilati
constantia
divinæ
providen-
tiæ tribu-
enda est.
Calv.

Longe alius
prof-
pexit Dei
providen-
tia, quæ
Pilati sty-
lum guber-
navit. Calv.

designedly for his glory, but from the meer over-rulings of Providence.

If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted, according to what a man hath, faith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 8. 12. The eye of God is first and mainly upon the Will; if that be sincere and right for God, small things will be accepted; and if not, the greatest shall be abhorred. So 1 Cor. 9. 17. If I do this thing, (i. e.) (Preach the Gospel) willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation is committed to me, q. d. If I upon pure principles of Faith and Love, from my heart, designing the Glory of God, and delighting to promote it by my ministry, do cheerfully and willingly apply myself to the Preaching of the Gospel, I shall have acceptance and reward with God: but if my work be a burden to me, and the service of God esteemed as a Bondage, why then Providence may use me for the dispensing of the Gospel to others, but I myself shall lose both reward and comfort. As it doth not excuse my sin, that God can bring glory to himself out of it: so neither doth it justify an action that God hath praise and honour accidentally by it. Paul knew that even the strife & envy in which some Preached Christ, should turn to his Salvation; and yet he was not at all beholding to them for promoting his Salvation that way. So Pilate here promotes the honour of Jesus Christ to whom he had no Love, and whose glory he did not at all design in this thing; and therefore hath neither acceptance nor reward with God.

O, therefore whatever you do for Christ, do it heartily, designedly, for his glory. Or a ready and willing mind. With pure and sincere aims at his glory. For this is that the Lord more respects, than the greatest services by accident.

Inference 3. Would not Pilate recede from what he had written on Christ's behalf. How shameful a thing is it for Christians to retract what they have said or done on Christ's behalf! When Pilate had asserted him to be King of the Jews, he maintains his assertion and all the importunity of Christ's enemies shall not move him an hairs breadth from it. What I have written, I have written, q. d. I have said it, and I will not revoke it. Did Pilate say, What I have written, I have written? And shall not we say, What we have believed, we have believed? And what we have professed, we have professed. What we have engaged to Christ we have engaged. We will stand to what we have done for him; we will never recant our former ownings of, and appearances for Christ.

As God's Election, so your profession must be irrevocable. O let him that is holy be holy still. That Counsel given by a Reverend Divine in this case, is both safe and good. Be sure (saith he) you stand on good ground, and then resolve to stand your ground against all the world. Follow God, and fear not men. Art thou godly? repent not whatsoever thy Religion cost thee. Let sinners repent, but let not Saints repent. Let Saints repent of their faults, but not of their faith: Of their iniquities, but not of their righteousness. Repent not of your righteousness, lest you afterward repent of your

repentance. — Repent not of your Zeal, or your forwardness, or activity in the holy ways of the Lord. — With not your selves a step farther back, or a cubit lower in your stature, in the Grace of God. With not any thing undone, concerning which God will say, well done.

In Gallen's time it was a proverbial expression, when any one would shew the impossibility of a thing; You may as soon turn a Christian from Christ as do it.

A true heart-choice of Christ is without reserves, and what is without reserves, will be without repentance. There is a stiffness and stoutness of spirit, which is our sin. But this is our glory, in the matters of God, said Luther, I assume this Title, *cedo nulli*, I yield to none: if ye be hot & cold, off and on; profess, and retract your profession, He that condemned Christ with his lips, will condemn you by his example. Resolute Pilate shall be your Judge.

Inference 4. Did Pilate affix such an honourable vindicating Title to the Crofs? Then the Crofs of Christ is a dignified Crofs. Then the Crofs and Sufferings of Christ are attended with glory and honour. Remember when your hearts begin to startle at the sufferings and reproaches of Christ, there is an honourable Title upon the Crofs of Christ. And as it was upon his, so it will be upon your Crofs also, if ye suffer for Christ. Moses saw it, which made him esteem the very reproaches of Christ above all the Treasures of Egypt, Heb. 11. 26. How did the Martyrs glory in their suffering for Christ! calling their chains of Iron, chains of Gold, and their Manacles, Bracelets?

I remember it's storied of Ludovicus Marcus a Knight of France, that when he with divers other Christians of an inferior rank and degree in the world, being condemned to die for Religion, and the Jaylor had bound them with chains, but did not bind him, being a more honourable person than the rest: He was offended greatly by that omission, and said, why do not you honour me with a Chain for Christ also, and create me a Knight of that illustrious Order?

To you (saith the Apostle) it's given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake, Phil. 1. 29. There is a twofold honour attending the Crofs of Christ: One in the very sufferings themselves; another, as the reward and fruit of them. To be called out to suffer for Christ, is a great honour. Yea, an honour peculiar to the Saints. The damned suffer from Christ, the wicked suffer for their sins. The Angels glorify Christ by their active, but not by their passive obedience. This is reserved as a special honour for Saints.

And as there is a great deal of honour in being called forth to suffer on Christ's account; so Christ will confer special honour upon his suffering Saints, in the day of their reward, Matth. 10. 32. He that confesses me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven. O Sirs, one of these days the Lord will break out of Heaven, with a shout, accompanied with Myriads of Angels, and ten thousands of his Saints, those glittering Courtiers,

Carme non
quoque
torq; do-
nas, & il-
lustris iis-
us ordinis
militem
non creas?
Thuan Hist.

riers of Heaven. The Heavens and Earth shall flame and melt before him. And it shall be very tempestuous round about him; the graves shall open; the sea and earth yield up their dead. You shall see him ascending the awful throne of Judgment, and all flesh gathered before his face; even multitudes, multitudes that no man can number. And then to be brought forth by Christ before that great assembly of Angels and Saints; and there to have an honourable mention and remembrance made of your labours, and sufferings, your pains, patience, and self-denial, of all your sufferings, and losses for Christ; and to hear from his mouth, *Well done good and faithful servant: O what honour is this!* Yet this shall be done to the man, that now chuses sufferings for Christ, rather than sin: *that esteems his reproaches greater riches, than the treasures of Egypt.*

I tell you, it's an honour the Angels have not. I make no doubt but they would be glad, (had they bodies of flesh as we have) to lay their necks on the block for Christ. But this is the Saints peculiar privilege. The Apostles went away from the council rejoicing that they were honoured to be dishonoured for Christ: or as we translate, *counted worthy to suffer shame for him*, Acts 5. verse 41. Surely, if there be any *stigmata laudis*, marks of honour, they are such as we receive for Christ's sake. If there be any shame that hath glory in it, it is the reproach of Christ, and the shame you suffer for his Name.

5 Inference 3. Did Pilate so stiffly assert and defend the honour of Christ, *what doubt can then be made of the success of Christ's interest, and the prosperity of his cause; when the very enemies thereof are made to serve it?*

Rather than Christ shall want honour, Pilate the man that condemned him, shall do him honour. And as it fared with his person, just so with his interest also. How often have the people of God received choice mercies, from the hands of their enemies? Rev. 12. 16. *The earth helped the woman*, (i. e.) wicked men did the Church service. So that this may singularly relieve us against all our dependencies and fears of the miscarriage of the interest of Christ.

That People can never be ruined, who thrive by their losses; conquer by being conquered; multiply by being diminished. Whole worst enemies are made to do that for them, which friends cannot or dare not do. See you a heathen Pilate proclaiming the honour and innocency of Christ; God will not want instruments to honour Christ by. If others cannot, his very enemies shall.

Inference 6. Did Pilate vindicate Christ in drawing up such a Title to be affixed to his Cross, then hence it follows, *that God will sooner or later, clear up the innocence and integrity of his people, who commit their cause to him.* Christ's name was clouded with many reproaches. Wounded through and through by the blasphemous tongues of his malicious enemies. He committed himself to him that judgeth righteously, 1 Pet. 2. 23. and see

how soon God vindicates him. That's sweet and seasonable counsel for us, when our Names are concluded with unjust censures, *Psalms 37. 5, 6. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon day.* Joseph was accused of incontinency; David of treason; Daniel of disobedience; Elijah of troubling Israel; Jeremiah of revolting; Amos of preaching against the King; the Apostles of sedition, rebellion and alteration of Laws; Christ himself of gluttony, forcery, blasphemy, sedition: But how did all these honourable Names wade out of their reproaches, as the Sun out of a Cloud! God clear'd up their honour for them even in this World. Slanders, faith one, are but as soap, which though it soils and daubs for the present, yet it helps to make the garment more clean and shining. When Hair is shaven, it comes the thicker, and with a new increase. So when the Razor of censure hath (faith one) made your heads bare, and brought on the baldness of reproach, be not discouraged, God hath a time to bring forth your righteousness as the light, by an apparent conviction to dazzle and discourage your adversaries.

The World was well changed, when Constantine killed the hollow of Paphnutius Eye, which was ere while put out for Christ. Scorn and reproach is but a little cloud, that is soon blown over. But suppose ye should not be vindicated in this World; but die under a Cloud upon your Names: Be sure God will clear it up, and that to purpose in that great Day. Then shall the righteous (even in this respect) shine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of their Father. Then every detracting mouth shall be stopped, and no more cruel arrows of reproach shot at the white of your reputation.

Be patient therefore, my Brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. *The Lord comes with ten thousands of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed. And of all their hard speeches which ungodly Sinners have spoken against him*, Jude 15. Then they shall retract their Censures, and alter their opinions of the Saints. If Christ will be our Compurgator, we need not fear who are our Accusers. If your Names for his sake be cast out as evil, and spumed in the dirt; Christ will deliver it you again in that day whiter than the snow in Salmon.

Inference 7. Did Pilate give this Title to cast the reproach of his death upon the Jews, and clear himself of it? *How natural is it to Men to transfer the fault of their own Actions figerem, from themselves to others?* For when he writes this is the King of the Jews, he wholly charges them with the crime of crucifying their King: and it is as if he had said, hereafter let the blame and fault of this action lie wholly upon your own heads, who have brought the guilt of his blood upon your selves and children.

Mat. in
Jan. p. 227.

Q. d. Volu-
itis ut Re-
gem vesti-
rum cruci-
fixum, crucifixi:
vestra post-
hac erit ig-
nominia
qui hoc à
me extor-
seritis.
Calv. ad
Mat. 27. 37.

I am

I am clear, you have extorted it from me. O where shall we find a Spirit so ingenuous, to take home to it self the shame of its own actions, and charge it self freely with its own guilt? Indeed it's the property of renewed gracious Hearts to remember, confess, and freely bewail their own evils, to the glory of God: and that's a gracious Heart indeed,

which in this case judgeth that the glory which Nee enim pudet sanctos vi-
by Confession goeth to the name of his God, ros, post-
is not so much glory lost to his own name, but quam reno-
it's the power of grace moulding our proud vata corda
natures into another thing, that must bring fuerint, pe-
them to this. resipiscen-
tiam. Lapsus sui & dedecoris ad Dei gloriam meminisse. Nihil nobis decessit, quod redit in illius honorem. *Brightmanus in Cant.*

Serm. 28.

Opens the manner of Christ's death in re- spect of the solitariness thereof.

S E R M O N XXVIII.

Z E C H. XIII. 7.

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

IN the former Sermons, we have opened the nature and kind of the Death Christ died; even the cursed death of the Cross. Wherein, nevertheless his innocency was vindicated, by that honourable Title providentially affixed to his Cross. Method now requires that we take into consideration the manner in which he endured the Cross, and that was *solitarily, meekly, and instructively.*

His solitude in suffering is plainly expressed in this Scripture now before us, it cannot be doubted, but the Prophet in this place speaks of Christ, if you consider, *Matth. 26. 31.* Where you shall find these words applied to Christ by his own accommodation of them. *Then said Jesus unto them, all ye shall be offended because of me this night, for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.* Besides the Title here given [God's Fellow] is too big for any creature in Heaven or Earth beside Christ.

In these words we have four things particularly to consider. *First*, The Commission given to the Sword by the Lord of Hosts. *Secondly*, The Person against whom it is Commissioned. *Thirdly*, The dismal effect of that stroke. *Fourthly*, and lastly, The gracious mitigation of it.

First, The Commission given to the Sword by the Lord of Hosts, *Awake, O sword and smite, saith the Lord of Hosts.* The Lord of Hosts, at whose beck and command all the Creatures are. Who with a word of his Mouth can open all the Armories in the World, and command what weapons, and instruments of death he pleaseth. Calls here for the Sword. Not the Rod, gently to chasten; But the Sword to destroy. The Rod breaks no bones, but the Sword opens the door to death and destruction. The Strokes and thrusts of the Sword are mortal. And he bids it awake. It signifies both to rouse up as one that awakes out of sleep, and to rouse or awake

Vol. I.

with triumph and rejoycing. So the same word is rendered, *Job 31. 29.* Yea, he commands it to awake and *smite.* And it is as if the Lord had said, come forth of thy Scabbard oh Sword of Justice, thou halt been hid there a long time, thou halt as it were been asleep in thy Scabbard, now awake and glitter, thou shalt Drink Royal Blood, such as thou never shedst before.

Secondly, The Person against whom it is commissioned, *My Shepherd, and the man that is my fellow.* This Shepherd can be no other than Christ, who is often in Scripture stiled a Shepherd, yea, the chief Shepherd, the Prince of Pastors. Who redeemed, feeds, guides, and preserves the flock of God's Elect, *D. Pareus, 1 Pet. 5. 4. John 10. 11.* This is he whom he also stiles *the Man his fellow.* Or his neighbour, as some render it. And so Christ is in respect of his equality and unity with the Father both in essence and will. His next neighbour. His other self. You have the sense of it in *Phil. 2. 6.* He was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God.

Against Christ his Fellow, his next neighbour, the delight of his Soul, the Sword here receives its Commission.

Thirdly, You have here the dismal consequence of this deadly stroke upon the Shepherd. And that is the scattering of the Sheep. By the Sheep understand here that little flock the Disciples which followed this Shepherd till he was smitten, (*i. e.*) apprehended by his Enemies, and then they were scattered, (*i. e.*) dispersed, they all forsook him and fled. And so Christ was left alone amidst his Enemies. Not one durst make a stand for him, or own him in that hour of his danger.

Fourthly, And lastly, here is a gracious mitigation of this sad disperision, *I will turn my hand upon the little ones.* By little ones he means the same that before he called Sheep;

T

bur

but the expression is designedly varied to shew their feebleness and weakness, which appeared in their relapse from Christ. And by turning his hand upon them, understand God's gracious reduction and gathering of them again after their sad dispersion, so that they shall not be lost, though scattered for the present. For after the Lord was risen, he went before them into Galilee, as he promised, *Matth.* 26. 31. And gather'd them again by a gracious hand, so that not one of them was lost but the Son of Perdition.

The words thus opened I shall observe suitably to the Method I have propos'd.

Doct. That Christ's dearest Friends forsook and left him alone, in the time of his greatest Distress and Danger.

This Doctrine containing only matter of Fact, and that also so plainly deliver'd by the Pens of the several faithful Evangelists. I need spend no longer time in the Proof of it, than to refer you to the several Testimonies they have given to it. But I shall rather chuse to fit and prepare it for Use, by explaining these four Questions.

First, Who were the Sheep that were scattered from their Shepherd, and left him alone?

Secondly, What Evil was there in this their scattering?

Thirdly, What were the Grounds and Causes of it?

Fourthly, And lastly, what was the Issue and Event of it?

First, Who were these Sheep, that were dispersed and scattered from their Shepherd when he was smitten. It's evident they were those precious elect Souls that he had gathered to himself, who had long followed him, and dearly loved him, and were dearly beloved of him. They were Persons that had left all and followed him, and till that time faithfully continued with him in his Temptations, *Luke* 22. 28. And were all resolv'd so to do, though they should die with him, *Mat.* 26. 35. These were the Persons.

Secondly, But were they as good as their word, did they indeed stick faithfully to him? No, they all forsook him and fled. These Sheep were scattered. This was not indeed a total and final Apostacy, that's the fall proper to the Hypocrite, the temporary Believer, who like a Comet expires when that earthly Matter is spent that maintain'd the blaze for a time.

These were Stars fixed in their Orb, though clouded and overcast for a time. This was but a Mist or Fog which overspreads the Earth in the morning till the Sun be risen, and then it clears up and proves a fair day. But though it was not a total and final Apostacy; yet it was a very sinful and sad relapse from Jesus Christ, as will appear by considering the following Aggravations and Circumstances of it. For,

First, This relapse of theirs was against the very Articles of Agreement which they had seal'd to Christ at their first admission into his Service, he had told them in the beginning what they must resolve upon, *Luke* 14.

26, 27. *If any man come to me, and hate not his Father, and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my Disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his Cross, and come after me, cannot be my Disciple.* Accordingly, they submitted to these terms, and told him, they had left all and followed him, *Mark* 10. 28. Against this Engagement made to Christ they now sin. Here was unfaithfulness.

Secondly, As it was against the very Terms of their Admission, so it was against the very Principles of Grace implanted by Christ in their Hearts. They were holy sanctified Persons in whom dwelt the love and fear of God: By these they were strongly inclined to adhere to Christ in the time of his Sufferings, as appears by those honest resolves they had made in the case. Their Grace strongly inclined them to their Duty, their Corruptions sway'd them the contrary way. Grace bid them stand, Corruption bid them fly. Grace told them it was their Duty to share in the Sufferings as well as in the Glory of Christ. Corruption represented these Sufferings as intolerable, and bid them shift for themselves whilst they might. So that here mult needs be a force and violence offer'd to their Light, and the loving Constraints thereof; which is no small Evil.

For though I grant it was a sudden surprising Temptation, yet it cannot be imagined that this Fact was wholly deliberated, nor that for so long time they were without any Debates or Reasonings about their Duty.

Thirdly, As it was against their own Principles, so it was much against the Honour of their Lord and Master. By this their sinful flight they expos'd the Lord Jesus to the contempt and scorn of his Enemies. This some conceive is import'd in that Question which the High Priest asked him, *John* 8. 19. *The High Priest then asked Jesus of his Disciples, and of his Doctrine.* He asked him of his Disciples, how many he had, and what was become of them now? And what was the reason they forsook their Master, and left him to shift for himself when Danger appeared? But to those Questions Christ made no Reply. He would not accuse them to their Enemies, though they had deserted him. But, doubtless, it did not a little reflect upon Christ, that there was not one of all his Friends that durst own their Relation to him, in a time of Danger.

Fourthly, As it was against Christ's Honour, so it was against their own solemn Promise made to him before his apprehension, to live and die with him. They had past their Word, and given their Promise that they would not flinch from him, *Matth.* 26. 35. *Peter said to him, though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the Disciples.* This made it a perfidious Relapse. Here they brake Promise with Christ, who never did so with them. He might have told them when he met them afterwards in Galilee, as the Roman Soldier told his General when he refused his Petition after the War was ended, *I did not serve you so at the Battle of Actium.*

Fifthly,

Fifthly, As it was against their solemn Promise to Christ, so it was against Christ's heart-melting Expollulations with them; which should have aboad upon their Hearts while they lived. For when others that followed him went back, and walked no more with him, Jesus said to these very Men that now forsook him at last, *Will ye also go away?* There is an Emphasis in [*Ye*] *q. d.* What, Ye that from Eternity were given to me! Ye whom I have called, loved and honoured above others, for whose sakes I am ready and resolved to die. *Will ye also forsake me?* John 6. 67. Whatever others do, I expect other things from you.

Sixthly, As it was against Christ's Heart-melting expollulations with them, so it was against a late direful example presented to them in the fall of *Judas*. In him as in a Glass they might see how fearful a thing it is to apostatize from Christ. They had heard Christ's dreadful threats against him. They were present when he call'd him the Son of Perdition, John 17. 11. They had heard Christ to say of him, *Good bad it been if he had never been born.* An expression able to scare the dearest Heart. They saw he had left Christ the Evening before. And that very day in which they fled, he hang'd himself. And yet they fly. For all this they forsake Christ.

Seventhly, As it was against the dreadful warning given them in the fall of *Judas*, so it was against the Law of Love, which should have knit them closer to Christ and one another.

If to avoid the present shock of Persecution they had fled, yet surely they should have kept together praying, watching, encouraging, and strengthening one another. This had made it a lesser evil: but as they all forsook Christ, so they forsook one another also; For it's said, John 16. 32. *They shall go every man to his own, and leave Christ alone,* (i. e.) saith *Beza*, every man to his own house, and to his own business. They forsook each other, as well as Christ. O what an hour of temptation was this!

Eighthly, And lastly, this their departure from Christ was accompanied with some offence at Christ. For so he tells them, *Mat. 26. 31. All ye shall be offended, because of me this Night.* The word is *scandalizabimini*, you shall be scandalized, at me or in me. Some think the scandal they took at Christ was this, that when they saw he was fallen into his enemies' hands, and could no longer defend himself; they then began to question whether he were the Christ or no, since he could not defend himself from his enemies. Others more rightly understand it of their shameful flight from Christ, seeing it was not now safe to abide longer with him. That seeing he gave himself into their hands, they thought it advisable to provide as well as they could for themselves, and some where or other to take refuge from the present storm, which had overtaken him. This was the nature and quality of the fact. We enquire.

Thirdly, Into the grounds and reasons of it. Which were three.

Vol. I.

First, God's suspending wonted Influences and Aids of Grace from them. They were not wont to do so. They never did so afterwards. They would not have done so now, had there been Influences of Power, Zeal, and Love from Heaven upon them. But how then should Christ have born the Heat and Burden of the Day? How should he tread the Wine-Press alone? How should his Sorrows have been extream, unmixed and succourless (as it behoved them to be) if they had stuck faithfully to him in his Troubles? No, no, it must not be; Christ must not have the least Relief or Comfort from any Creature; and therefore, that he might be left alone, to grapple hand to hand with the Wrath of God, and of Men; the Lord for a time with-holds his encouraging, strengthening Influences from them; and then, like *Sampson*, when he had lost his Locks, they were weak as other Men.

Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, saith the Apostle, *Eph. 6. 10.* If that be with-held, our Resolutions and Purposes melt away before a Temptation, as Snow before the Sun.

Secondly, As God permitted it, and with-held usual Aid from them; so the Efficacy of that Temptation was great, yea, much greater than ordinary. As they were weaker than they were used to be, so the Temptation was stronger than any they had yet met withal. It's call'd, *Luke 22. 53. Their hour, and the power of darkness.* A lifting winnowing hour, verse 46. O it was a black and cloudy day. Never had the Disciples met with such a Whirlwind, such a furious Storm before. The Devil desired but to have the winnowing of them in that day, and so would have sifted and winnowed them, that their Faith had utterly failed, had not Christ secured it by his Prayer for them. So that it was an extraordinary Tryal that was upon them.

Thirdly, and *Lastly*, That which concurred to their shameful Relapse, as a special Cause of it, was the remaining Corruptions that were in their Hearts yet unmortified. Their Knowledge was but little. And their Faith not much. Upon the account of their Weakness in Grace, they were called *little Ones* in the Text. And as their Graces were weak, so their Corruptions were strong. Their Unbelief and carnal Fears grew powerfully upon them.

Do not censure them, Reader, in thy Thoughts, nor despise them for this their Weakness. Neither say in thy Heart, Had I been there as they were, I would never have done as they did. They thought as little of doing what they did, as you or any of the Saints do; and as much did their Souls detest and abhor it: But here thou may'st see whither a Soul that fears God may be carried, if his Corruptions be irritated by strong Temptations, and God with-holds usual Influences.

Fourthly, and *Lastly*, Let us view the Issue of this sad Apostacy of theirs. And you shall find it ended far better than it began. Though these Sheep were scattered for a time, yet the Lord made good his Promise, in turning his

T 2

Hand.

Cogitant
vel cum
non esse
Christum,
quem hac-
tenus esse
credide-
rant; cum
se defende-
re ab hos-
tibus non
possit, vel
non esse
consultum
eius causa,
mortis pe-
riculum a-
dire. *Par.*

Hand upon these little Ones to gather them. The Morning was over-cast, but the Evening was clear.

Peter repents of his perfidious denial of Christ, and never denied him more. All the rest likewise returned to Christ, and never forsook him any more. He that was afraid at the Voice of a Damsel, afterwards feared not the Frowns of the Mighty. And they that durst not own Christ now, afterward confessed him openly before Councils, and rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for his sake, *Acts* 5. 41. They that were now as numerous as Hares, started at every sound, afterwards became as bold as Lyons, and feared not any danger, but sealed their Confession of Christ with their Blood. For though at this time they forsook him, it was not voluntarily, but by surprisal. Though they forsook him, they still loved him; though they fled from him, there still remain'd a gracious Principle in them; the Root of the Matter was still in them, which recovered them again.

To conclude: Though they forsook Christ, yet Christ never forsook them; he loved them still: *Go tell the Disciples, and tell Peter that he goeth before into Galilee, Mark* 16. 7. *q. d.* let them not think that I do remember their Unkindness, as to own them no more: No, I love them still.

The use of this is contained in the following Inferences.

Inference 1. Did the Disciples forsake Christ though they had such strong Persuasions and Resolutions never to do it? then we see, *That self confidence is a Sin too incident to the best of Men.* They little thought their Hearts would have proved so base and deceitful, as they found them to be when they were tried. *Tho' all Men forsake thee (saith Peter) yet will not I.* Good Man, he relolved honestly, but he knew not what a Feather he should be in the Wind of Temptation, if God once left him to his own Fears.

Little reason have the best of Saints to depend upon their inherent Grace, let their stock be as large as it will. The Angels left to themselves, quickly left their own Habitations, *Jude* 6. Upon which one well observes, that the best of created Perfections are of themselves defeasible. Every Excellency without the Prop of Divine Preservation, is but a weight which tends to a fall. The Angels in their Innocency were but frail, without God's Sustainment; even Grace it self is but a Creature, and therefore purely dependent. 'Tis not from its Being and Nature, but from the assistance of something without it, that it's kept from annihilation. What becomes of the Stream, if the Fountain supply it not? What continuance hath the reflection in the Glass, if the Man that looks into it turn away his Face? The constant Supplies of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, are the Food, and Fewel of all our Graces. The best Men, will shew themselves but Men, if God leave them. He who hath set them up, must also keep them. It's safer to be humble with one Talent, than proud with ten. Yea, better to be a humble Worm, than a proud Angel. *Adam* had more advantage to

maintain his Station than any of you. For tho' he were left to the liberty of his own mutable and self-determining Will, yet he was created upright, and had no inherent Corruption to endanger him, yet fell.

And shall we be self-confident after such Instances of human Frailty! Alas, Christian! What Match art thou for Principalities and Powers, and spiritual Wickedness! Be not high minded, but fear. When you have consider'd well the Example of *Noah, Lot, David, and Hezekiah*, Men famous and renowned in their Generations, who all fell by Temptations; yea, and that when one would think they had never been better provided to cope with them.

Lot fell after, yea presently after the Lord had thrust him out of *Sodom*, and his Eyes had seen the direful Punishment of Sin. Hell as it were rained upon them out of Heaven. *Noah* in like manner, immediately after God's wonderful, and astonishing Preservation of him in the Ark; when he saw a World of Men and Women perishing in the Floods, for their Sins.

David after the Lord had settled the Kingdom on him, which for Sin he rent from *Saul*, and given him rest in his House. *Hezekiah* was but just up from a great sickness, wherein the Lord wrought a wonderful Salvation for him. Did such Men, and at such times when one would think no Temptations should have prevailed, fall; and that so foully? Then let him that thinks he standeth take heed lest he fall. O be not high minded, but fear.

Inference 2. Did Christ stand his Ground and go through with his suffering Work, when all that had follow'd him forsook him? Then a resolute adherence to God and Duty, though left alone, without Company or Encouragement, is Christ-like, and truly excellent. You shall not want better Company than that which hath forsaken you in the way of God. *Elijah* complains, *1 Kings* 19. 10. *They have forsaken thy Covenant, thrown down thine Altars, and slain thy Prophets with the Sword; and I, even I only am left, and they seek my Life, to take it away.* And yet all this did not damp, or discourage him in following the Lord; for still he was very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts.

Paul complains, *2 Tim.* 4. 16. *At my first answer no Man stood by me, all Men forsook me: Nevertheless the Lord stood with me.* And as the Lord stood by him, so he stood by his God alone, without any Aids or Support from Men. How great an Argument of Integrity is this! He that professes Christ for Company, will also leave him for Company. But to be faithful to God, when forsaken of Men; to be a *Lot* in *Sodom*, a *Noah* in a corrupted Generation; oh how excellent is it! 'Tis sweet to travel over this Earth to Heaven, in the Company of the Saints that are bound thither with us, if we can; but if we can meet no Company, we must not be discouraged to go on. It's not unlike but before you have gone many Steps farther you may have cause to say as one did once, *Never less alone, than when alone.*

Inference 3. Did the Disciples thus forsake Christ, and yet were all recovered at last? Then though

though Believers are not privileged from backslidings, yet they are secured from final Apostacy and Ruin. The new Creature may be sick, it cannot die. Saints may fall, but they shall rise again, *Mica. 7. 8.* The highest Flood of natural Zeal and Resolution may ebb, and be wholly dried up; but saving Grace is a Well of Water, still springing up into everlasting Life, *John 4. 14.* God's unchangeable Election, the Frame and Constitution of the New Covenant, the meritorious and prevalent Intercession of Jesus Christ does give the Believer abundant security against the danger of a total, final Apostacy. *My Father which gave them me (saith Christ) is greater than all: And none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand, John 10. 29.*

And again, *The Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal; the Lord knoweth who are his, 2 Tim. 2. 19.* Every Person committed to Christ by the Father, shall be brought by him to the Father, and not one wanting.

God hath also so framed and ordered the New Covenant, that none of those Souls who are within the blessed Clasp and Bond of it can possibly be lost. It's settled upon immutable Things: And we know all Things are as their Foundations be, *Heb. 6. 18, 19.* Among the many glorious Promises contained in the Bundle of Promises, this is one, *I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good: But I will put my Fear in their Hearts, that they shall not depart from me.*

And as the fear of God in our Hearts pleads in us against Sin, so our potent Intercessor in the Heavens pleads for us with the Father, and by reason thereof we cannot finally miscarry, *Rom. 8. 34, 35.* Upon these Grounds we may (as the Apostle in the Place last cited doth) triumph in that full security which God hath given us; and say, What shall separate us from the Love of God? Understand it either of God's to us, as *Calvin, Beza, and Martyr* do; or of our Love to God, as *Ambrose and Augustine* do: It's true in both senses, and a most comfortable Truth.

Inference 4. Did the Sheep fly when the Shepherd was smitten; such Men, and so many forsake Christ in the Tryal? Then learn how sad a thing it is for the best of Men to be left to their own carnal Fears in a day of Temptation: This was it that made those good Men shrink away so shamefully from Christ in that Tryal: *The fear of Man brings a Snare, Prov. 29. 25.* In that Snare these good Souls were taken, and for a time held fast.

Oh what work will this unruly Passion make, if the fear of God do not over-rule it! Is it not a shame to a Christian, a Man of Faith, to see himself out-done by an Heathen? Shall natural Conscience and Courage make them stand, and keep their Places in times of danger; when we shamefully turn our Backs upon Duty, because we see Duty and Danger together?

When the Emperor *Vespasian* had commanded *Fludius Priscus* not to come to the Senate; or if he did, to speak nothing but what

he would have him? The Senator return'd this brave and noble answer, 'That as he was a Senator, it was fit he should be at the Senate; and if being there, he were required to give his Advice, he would speak freely, that which his Conscience commanded him. The Emperor threatening, that then he should die; he returned thus, 'Did I ever tell you that I was Immortal? Do you what you will, and I will do what I ought. It is in your Power to put me to death unjustly, and in me to die constantly. O think, what Mischiefs your Fear may do your selves, and the discovery of them to others. O learn to trust God with your Lives, Liberties, and Comforts in the way of your Duty; and at what time you are afraid trust in him: And do not magnify poor Dust and Ashes, as to be scared by their Threats from your God and Duty. The politick Design of Satan herein is to affright you out of your Coverts where you are safe, into the Net. I will enlarge this no farther; I have elsewhere laid down fourteen Rules for the Cure of this, in what of mine is publick.

Inference 5. Learn hence, how much a Man may differ from himself, according as the Lord is with him, or withdrawn from him. Christians do not only always differ from other Men, but sometimes from themselves also. Yea, so great is the difference betwixt himself and himself, as if he were not the same Man. And where is he that doth not so experience it? Sometimes bold and courageous, despising Dangers, bearing down all Discouragements in the strength of Zeal and Love to God: At another time faint, feeble and discouraged at every petty Thing. Whence is this but from the different Administrations of the Spirit, who sometimes gives forth more, and sometimes less of his gracious Influence. These very Men that flinch'd now, when the Spirit was more abundantly shed forth upon them, could boldly own Christ before the Council, and despised all Dangers for his sake.

A little Dog, if his Master be by, and encourage him, will venture upon a greater Beast than himself. *Peter* stood at the Door without, when the other Disciple, or one of the other Disciples, (as the *Syriack* turns it, and *Grotius* approves it as the best) that is, one of the private Disciples that lived in *Jerusalem*, went in so boldly, *John 18. 16, 17.* We are strong or weak, according to the Degrees of assisting Grace. So that as you cannot take the just measure of a Christian by one act, so neither must they judge of themselves, by what they sometimes feel in themselves.

But when their Spirits are low, and their Hearts discouraged, they should rather say to their Souls, *Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him:* It's low with me now, but it will be better.

Inference 6. Was the Sword drawn against the Shepherd, and he left alone to receive the mortal Strokes of it? How should all adore both the Justice, and Mercy of God, so illustriously displayed herein! Here is the Triumph of Divine Justice, and the highest Triumph that ever it had, to single forth the chief Shepherd,

Char. of
Wisdom,
P. 358.

A Saint in-
deed,
P. 72. &c.

Illus ex
Discipulis
aliis, non
aliquem
ex duode-
cim. Sed
alium
quendam
Hierosoly-
mitanum
non aequè
manifestum
factorem
Jesu.
Grotius.

the Man that is God's Fellow, and sheath its Sword in its Breast for Satisfaction. No wonder its drawn and brandish'd with such a Triumph; awake rejoicingly, O Sword, against my Shepherd, &c. For in this Blood shed by it, it hath more glory than if the Blood of all the Men and Women in the World had been shed.

And no less is the Mercy and Goodness of God, herein signalized, in giving the Sword a Commission against the Man, his Fellow, rather than against us. Why had he not rather said, Awake, O Sword, against the Men that are my Enemies; shed the Blood of them that have sinned against me, than smite the Shepherd, and only scatter the Sheep. Blessed be God the dreadful Sword was not drawn and brandish'd against our Souls; that God did not set it to our Breasts; that he had not made it fat with our Flesh, and bathed it in our Blood: That his Fellow was smitten that his Enemies might be spared. O what manner of Love was this! Blessed be God therefore for Jesus Christ, who received the fatal Stroke himself; and hath now so sheathed that Sword in its Scabbard, that it shall never be drawn any more against any that believe in him.

Inference 7. Were the Sheep scattered, when the Shepherd was smitten? Learn hence that the best of Men know not their own Strength, 'till they come to the trial. Little did these holy Men imagine such a cowardly Spirit had been in them, 'till Temptation put it to the Proof. Let this therefore be a Caution for ever to the People of God. You resolve never to forsake Christ, you do well; but so did these, and yet were scattered from him. You can never take a just Measure of your own Strength, 'till Temptation have tried it. 'Tis said, *Deut.* 18. 2, 3. That God led the People for many Years in the Wilderness, to prove them; and to know (*i. e.*) (to make them know) what was in their Hearts. Little did they think such Unbelief, Murmurings, Discontents, and a Spirit bent to Backslidings, had been in them; 'till their Straights in the Wilderness gave them the sad Experience of these Things.

Inference 8. Did the dreadful Sword of Divine Justice smite the Shepherd, God's own Fellow; and at the same time the Flock, from whom all his outward Comforts arose, were scattered from him? Then learn, that the boliest of Men have no reason, either to repine, or despond; though God at once should strip them of all their outward and inward Comforts together. He that did this by the Man his Fellow, may much rather do it by the Man his Friend. Smite my Shepherd; there's all Comfort gone from the inward Man. Scatter the Sheep; there's all Comfort gone from the outward Man. What Refreshments had Christ in this World, but such as came immediately from his Father, or those holy Ones now scattered from him? In one Day he loseth both heavenly and earthly Comforts. Now as God dealt by Christ, he may at one time or other

deal with his People. You have your Comforts from Heaven; so had Christ, in a fuller measure than ever you had, or can have. He had Comforts from his little Flock; you have your Comforts from the Society of the Saints, the Ordinances of God, comfortable Relations, &c. Yet none of these are so firmly settled upon you, but you may be left destitute of them all in one day. God did take all Comfort from Christ, both outward, and inward; and are you greater than he? God sometimes takes outward, and leaves inward Comfort, sometimes he takes inward, and leaves outward Comfort: But time may come when God may strip you of both.

This was the case of *Job*, a Favourite of God, who was blessed with outward and inward Comforts. Yet a time came when God strip'd him of all, and made him poor to a Proverb, as to all outward Comfort; and the Venom of his Arrows drank up his Spirit, and the inward Comforts thereof.

Should the Lord deal thus with any of you, how seasonable and relieving will the following Considerations be?

First, Though the Lord deal thus with you, yet this is no new thing; he hath dealt so with others, yea with Jesus Christ that was his Fellow. If these things were done in the green Tree; in him that never deserved it for any Sin of his own; how little reason have we to complain? Nay,

Secondly, Therefore did this befall Jesus Christ before you, that the like Condition might be sanctified to you, when you shall be brought into it. For therefore did Jesus Christ pass thro' such Varieties of Conditions, on purpose that he might take away the Curse, and leave a Blessing in those Conditions, against the time that you should come into them. Moreover,

Thirdly, Though inward Comforts and outward Comforts were both removed from Christ in one day, yet he wanted not Support in the absence of both. How relieving a Consideration is this! *John* 16. 32. *Behold (saith he) the hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.* With me by way of Support, when not by way of Comfort. Thy God (Christian) can in like manner support thee, when all sensible Comforts shrink away together from thy Soul and Body in one day.

Lastly, It deserves a Remark, that this comfortless forsaken Condition of Christ, immediately preceded the day of his greatest Glory and Comfort. Naturalists observe, the greatest Darkness is a little before the dawning of the Morning. 'Twas so with Christ, it may be so with Thee. It was but a little while and he had better Company than theirs that forsook him. Aft therefore your Faith upon this, that the most glorious Light usually follows the thickest Darkness. The louder your Groans are now, the louder your Triumphs hereafter will be. The Horror of your present, will but add to the Lustre of your future State.

SERMON

SERMON XXIX.

Serm. 29.
Opens the
manner of
Christ's
death, in
respect of
the Patience
thereof

ISA I. LIII. 7.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearers is dumb; so he opened not his mouth.

HOW our Lord Jesus Christ carried on the Work of our Redemption in his humbled State, both in his Incarnation, Life and Death, hath in part been discovered in the former Sermons. I have shewed you the *Kind* or Nature of that Death he died; and am now engaged by the Method propoed, to open the *manner* of his Death. The Solitariness or Loneliness of Christ in his Sufferings, was the Subject of the last Sermon. The Patience and Meekness of Christ in his Sufferings comes in order to be opened in this.

This Chapter treats wholly of the Sufferings of Christ, and the blessed Fruits thereof. *Hornebeck* tells us of a learned Jew that ingeniously confessed this very Chapter converted him to the Christian Faith. And such delight he had in it, that he read it more than a thousand times over. Such is the clearness of this Prophecy, that he who perit it, is deservedly titled the Evangelical Prophet. I cannot allow time to analyze the Chapter; but my Work lying in the seventh *Verse*, I shall speak to these two Branches or Parts of it, *viz.* The grievous Sufferings of Christ, and the glorious Ornament he put upon them.

First, Christ's grievous Sufferings; he was afflicted, and he was oppressed, brought to the Slaughter, and shorn as a Sheep, (*i. e.*) he lost both Fleece and Blood. Life and the Comforts of Life. *He was oppressed*; the word signifies both to answer and oppress, humble or depress. The other word rendered *afflicted*, signifies to act and afflict, and so implies Christ to stand before God, as a Surety before the Creditor; who exacts the utmost Satisfaction from him, by causing him to suffer according to the utmost Rigor and Severity of the Law. It did not suffice that he was shorn as a Sheep, (*i. e.*) that he was strip'd and depriv'd of his Riches, Ornaments, and Comforts; but his Blood and Life must go for it also. He is brought to the Slaughter. These were his grievous Sufferings.

Secondly, Here is the glorious Ornament he put upon those grievous Sufferings, even the Ornament of a meek and patient Spirit. He opened not his Mouth. But went as a Sheep to be shorn, or a Lamb to the Slaughter. The Lamb goes as quiet to the Slaughter-house, as to the Fold. By this lively and lovely similitude, the Patience of Christ is here expressed

to us. Yet Christ's Dumbness and Silence is not to be understood *Simply*, and universally; as though he spake nothing at all when he suffer'd; for he utter'd many excellent and weighty Words upon the Cross, as you shall hear in the following Discourses; but it must be understood *respectively*, (*i. e.*) he never opened his Mouth repiningly, passionately, or revengefully under his greatest Tortures and highest Provocations. Whence the note is,

Doct. That Jesus Christ supported the Burden of his Sufferings, with admirable Patience, and meekness of Spirit.

It is a true Observation, that Meekness inviteth Injury, but always to its own cost. And it was evidently verified in the Sufferings of Christ. Christ's Meekness triumphed over the Affronts and Injuries of his Enemies, much more than they triumphed over him. Patience never had a more glorious triumph, than it had upon the Cross.

The Meekness and Patience of his Spirit amidst Injuries and Provocations, is excellently set forth in 1 *Pet.* 2. 22, 23. *Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.*

In this Point we have these three things to open Doctrinally.

1. The Burden of Sufferings, and Provocations that Jesus Christ was oppressed with.

2. The Meekness and admirable Patience with which he supported that Burden.

3. The Causes and Grounds of that perfect Patience which he then exercised.

First, The Burden of Suffering and Provocations which Christ supported, was very great. For on him met all sorts and kinds of Trouble at once, and those in their highest degrees and fullest strength. Troubles in his Soul, and these were the Soul of his Troubles. His Soul was laden with spiritual Horrors and Troubles, as deep as it could swim, *Mark* 14. 33. *He began to be sore amazed and very heavy.* The Wrath of an infinite dreadful God beat him down to the Dust. His Body full of Pain and exquisite Tortures in every Part. Not a Member or Sense but was the Seat and Subject of Torment.

His Name and Honour suffered the vilest Indignities, Blasphemies, and horrid Reproaches that the malignity of Satan, and wicked Men could belch out against it. He was call'd a Blasphemer,

Ingenue
protector
illud ip-
sum caput
ad fidem
Christi-
nam me
adduxisse,
nam plus
millies il-
lud caput
perlegit.
Hornebeck
contra Jud.
lib. 6. c. 1.
p. 408.

Respondit.
Humana-
vit. Demi-
fit. Depressit.
Exegit.
Affixit.
Baxi.

Blasphemer, Seditious, one that had a Devil, a Glutton, a Wine bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Harlots. The Carpenter's Son, this Fellow. He that was *God's fellow*, as you heard lately, now *this fellow*. Contempt was poured upon all his Offices. Upon his *Kingly Office*, when they crowned him with Thorns, arrayed him in Purple, bowed the Knee in mockery to him, and cry'd, *Hail King of the Jews*. His *Prophetical Office*, when they blinded him, and then bid him *Prophesie who smote him*. His *Priestly Office*, when they reviled him upon the Cross, saying, *He saved others, himself he cannot save*. They scourged him. Spit in his Face. Smote him on the Head and Face. Besides the very kind of death they put him to, was reproachful and ignominious; as you heard before.

Now all this, and much more than this, meeting at once upon an innocent and dignified Person. One that was greater than all. That lay in the Bosom of God. And from Eternity had his Smiles and Honours. Upon one that could have crushed all his Enemies as a Moth: I say for him to bear all this without the least discomposure of Spirit, or breach of Patience, is the highest triumph of Patience that ever was in the World. It was one of the greatest Wonders of that wonderful Day.

Secondly, And that is the next thing we have to consider, even this almighty Patience and unpattern'd Meekness of Christ, supporting such a burden with such evenness and steadiness of Spirit. Christian Patience, or the Grace Patience, *is an ability of power to suffer hard and heavy things, according to the Will of God*.

It is a power, and a glorious power that strengthens the suffering Soul to bear. It is our passive fortitude, Col. 1. 11. *Strengthened with all might, according to the glorious power, unto all patience, and long-suffering with joyfulness*; (i. e.) strengthened with a might or power of God himself. Or such as might appear to be the proper Impress and Image of that divine power, which is both its *principle* and *pattern*. For the patience which God exercises towards sinners that daily wrong and load him, is call'd Power, and great Power, Numb. 14. 17. *Let the power of my Lord be great, as thou hast spoken, saying, the Lord is long suffering, forgiving, &c.* Hence it's observed, Prov. 24. 10. *That the loss or breaking of our Patience under Adversity, argues a decay of strength in the Soul. If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.*

It's a power or ability in the Soul, to bear hard, heavy and difficult things. Such only are the Objects of Patience. God hath several sorts of burdens to impose upon his People. Some heavier, others lighter. Some to be carried but a few hours, others many days. Others all our days. Some more spiritual bearing upon the Soul. Some more external, touching or punishing the Flesh immediately; and the Spirit by way of sympathy. And sometimes both sorts are laid on together. So they were at this time on Christ. His Soul burdened as deep as it could swim. Full of the sense, the bitter sense and apprehension of

the wrath of God. His Body fill'd with tortures. In every Member, and Sense, Grief took up his lodging. Here was the higher exercise of Patience.

It's a power to bear hard and heavy things according to the will of God. The involving of that respect differs Patience the Christian Grace, from Patience the Moral Virtue. So the Apostle describes it, 1 Pet. 4. 19. *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, &c.* (i. e.) who exercise Patience graciously, as God would have them.

And then our Patience is, (as Christ most exactly was) according to the Will of God; when it is as *extensive*, as *intensive*, and as *protenfive* as God requires it to be.

First, When it is as *extensive* as God would have it. So was Christ's Patience. It was a Patience that stretched, and extended it self to all and every trouble and affliction, that came upon him. Troubles came upon him in Troops, in Multitudes. It's said, Psalm 40. 12. *Innumerable evils have compassed me about*. Yet he found Patience enough to receive them all. It is not so with us. Our Patience is often worn out. And, like sick People, we fancy if we were in another Chamber, or Bed, it would be better. If it were any other trouble than this, we could bear it. Christ had no exceptions at any burden his Father would lay on. His Patience was as large as his Trouble, and that was large indeed.

Secondly, It's then according to the Will of God, when it is as *intensive* as God requires it to be, (i. e.) in the Apostle's Phrase, *Jam. 1. 4*. When it hath its *perfect work*, or exercise; when its not only extended to all kinds of troubles; but when it works in the highest and most perfect degree. And then may Patience be said to be perfect (as it was in Christ) when it is *plenum sui*, & *prohibens alieni*, full of it self, and exclusive of its opposites. Christ's Patience was full of its self, (i. e.) it included all that belonged to it. It was full of submission, Peace and serenity; full of obedience and complacency in his Father's Will. He was in a perfect calm. As a Lamb or Sheep (saith the Text) that howls not, opposes not, but is dumb and quiet. And as his external behaviour, so his internal frame and temper of Soul was most serene and calm. Not one repining Thought against God. Not one revengeful Thought against Man, once ruffled his Spirit. *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*, was all the hurt he wish'd his worst Enemies. And as it included all that belonged to it, so his perfect Patience excluded all its opposites. No discontents, murmurings, dependencies had place in his Heart. So that his Patience was a most intensive, perfect Patience. And as it was as extensive, and as intensive, so it was

Thirdly, As *protenfive* as God required it to be, (i. e.) it held out to the end of his Trial. He did not faint at last. His Troubles did not out live his Patience. He indeed was strengthened with all might unto all patience, and long suffering. This was the patience of Christ our perfect Pattern. He had not only Patience, but Longanimity.

Thirdly,

Ha due
virtutes,
scilicet
simplicitas &
mansuetudo
fuit illius
roboris, &
fortitudi-
nis quam
spiritus
nobis lar-
gitur indi-
vidue co-
munes. Dav.

Thirdly, In the last place let us inquire into the grounds and reasons of this his most perfect Patience. And if you do so, you shall find perfect Holiness, Wisdom, Foreknowledge, Faith, Heavenly-mindedness, and Obedience at the Root of this his perfect Patience.

First, This admirable patience and meekness of Christ, was the fruit and off spring of his perfect Holiness. His nature was free from those corruptions, that ours groan and labour under; otherwise he could never have carried it at this rate. Take the meek Moses, who excell'd all others in that Grace; and let him be tried in that very Grace, wherein he excels, and see how *unadvisedly he may speak with his Lips*, Psalm 106. 33. Take a Job, whose famous Patience is trumpeted, and refounded over all the World; *ye have heard of the patience of Job*. And let him be tried by outward, and inward troubles meeting upon him in one day; and even a Job may curse the day when he was born. Envy, revenge, discontent, despondencies, are Weeds naturally springing up in the corrupt Soil of our sinful Natures. I saw a little Child grow pale with Envy, said Austin. And the Spirit that is in us lusteth unto Envy, (saith the Apostle) *Jam.* 4. 5. The Principles of all these Evils being in our Natures, they will shew themselves in time of Trial. The old Man is freful and passionate. But it was otherwise with Christ. His Nature was like a pure Cristal Glas full of pure Fountain Water; which though shaken and agitated never so much, cannot shew, because it hath no dregs. *The Prince of this world cometh, and hath nought in me*, John 14. 30. No principle of corruption, for a handle of temptation. Our High-Priest was holy, harmless, undefil'd, separate from Sinners, *Heb.* 7. 26.

Secondly, The Meekness and Patience of Christ proceeded from the infinite wisdom with which he was filled. The wiser any Man is, the more patient he is. Hence meekness the fruit, is denominatèd from patience, the root that bears it, *James* 3. 13. *The meekness of wisdom*. And anger is lodged in folly, as its proper cause, *Eccles.* 7. 9. *Anger resteth in the bosom of fools*. Seneca would allow no place for passion in a wise Man's breast. Wise Men use to ponder, consider and weigh things deliberately in their Judgments, before they suffer their affections and passions to be stirred and engaged. Hence comes the constancy and serenity of their Spirits. As wife Solomon hath observed, *Prov.* 17. 27. *A man of understanding is of an excellent* (or as the Hebrew is) *a cool Spirit*.

Now Wisdom filled the Soul of Christ. He is wisdom in the abstract, *Prov.* 8. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom, *Col.* 2. 3. Hence it was that he was no otherwise moved with the revilings and abuses of his Enemies, than a wise Physician is with the impertinencies of his distemper'd and crasse Patient.

Thirdly, And as his patience flow'd from that his perfect wisdom and knowledge, so also from his foreknowledge. He had a perfect prospect of all those things from Eternity, which befel him afterwards. They came not

upon him by way of surprizal. And therefore he wonder'd not at them when they came, as if some strange thing had happened. He foresaw all these things long before, *Mark* 8. 31. *And he began to teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the Elders, and chief Priests, and Scribes, and be killed*. Yea, he had compacted and agreed with his Father to endure all this for our sakes, before he assum'd our Flesh. Hence, *Isa.* 50. 6. *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that pulled off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and spitting*.

Now look as Christ in *Job.* 16. 4. obviates all future offences his Disciples might take at suffering for his sake, by telling them beforehand, what they must expect. *These things* (saith he) *I told you, that when the time shall come ye may remember that I told you of them*. So he fore-knowing what himself must suffer, and had agreed so to do, he bare those sufferings with singular Patience. *Jesus therefore knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye?* John 18. 4.

Fourthly, As his patience sprang from his fore-knowledge of his sufferings; so from his Faith which he exercis'd under all that he suffer'd in this World. His Faith looked through all those black and dismal Clouds, to the Joy propos'd, *Heb.* 22. 2. He knew that though Pilate condemn'd, God would justifie him, *Isa.* 50. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. And he set one over against the other. He balanced the Glory into which he was to enter, with the Sufferings through which he was to enter into it. He acted Faith upon God for divine support and assistance under suffering; as well as for glory, the fruit and reward of them, *Psalms* 16. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *I have set* (or as the Apostle varies it) *I foresaw the Lord always before me, because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth*. There's Faith acted by Christ for strength to carry him through. And then it follows, *My flesh also shall rest in hope, for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption. Thou wilt shew me the path of life. In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore*. There's his Faith acting upon the Glory into which he was to enter, after he had suffered these things. This fill'd him with Peace.

Fifthly, As his Faith cyeing the Glory into which he was passing, made him endure all things; so the heavenliness of his Spirit also fill'd him with a heavenly tranquillity, and calmness of Spirit under all his Abuses and Injuries. It's a certain Truth, that the more heavenly any Man's Spirit is, the more sedate, compos'd and peaceful. As the higher Heavens (saith Seneca) are more ordinate and tranquil. There are neither Clouds, nor Winds, Storms, nor Tempests, they are the inferior Heavens that lighten and thunder. The nearer

nec in nubem cogitur, nec in tempestatem impellitur, nec versatur in turbinem: omni tumultu caret, inferiora fulmiant. Eodem modo sublimis animus quietus semper & in statione tranquilla collocatur. Seneca.

Pars superior mundi est ordinatior, ac propinqua syderibus.

the Earth the more tempestuous, and unquiet. Even to the sublime and heavenly mind, is placed in a calm and quiet station.

Certainly that Heart which is sweetened frequently with heavenly delightful communion with God, is not very apt to be imbibed with wrath, or soured with revenge against Men. The Peace of God doth *bestow*, appease and end all Strifes and Differences as an Umpire. So much that word, *Col. 3. 15.* imports. The heavenly Spirit marvellously affects a sedate and quiet Breast.

Now, never was there such a heavenly Soul on Earth, since Man inhabited it, as Christ was. He had most sweet and wonderful communion with God. He had Meat to eat, which others, yea, and those his greatest intimates, knew not of. The Son of Man was in Heaven upon Earth, *John 3. 13.* Even in respect of that blessed heavenly communion he had with God, as well as in respect of his immense Deity. And that his Heart was in Heaven, when he so patiently endured and digested the pain and shame of the Cross; is evident from *Heb. 12. 2.* *For the joy set before him, he endured the Cross, despised the shame.* See where his Eye and Heart was, when he went as a Lamb to the slaughter.

Sixthly, and lastly, As his meekness and patience sprang from the heavenliness and sublimity of his Spirit: So, from the complete and absolute Obedience of it to his Father's Will and Pleasure. He could most quietly submit to all the Will of God, and never regret at any part of the Work assign'd him by his Father. For you must know that Christ's death in him was an act of Obedience, he all along eyeing his Father's Command and Counsel in what he suffered, *Phil. 2. 7, 8.* *Job. 18. 11.* *Psal. 40. 6, 7, 8.* Now look as the eyeing and considering of the Hand of God in an affliction, presently becalms and quiets a gracious Soul; as you see in *David*, *2 Sam. 16. 11.* *Let him alone, it may be God hath bid him curse David:* So much more it quieted Jesus Christ, who was privy to the Design and End of his Father, with whose Will he all along complied; looking on Jews and Gentiles but as the Instruments ignorantly fulfilling God's Pleasure, and serving that great Design of his Father. This was his patience, and these the grounds of it.

Use. I might variously improve this Point, but the direct and main use of it is to press us to a Christ-like Patience in all our Sufferings, and Troubles. And seeing in nothing we are more generally defective; and that defects of Christians herein, are so prejudicial to Religion, and uncomfortable to themselves: I resolve to wave all other Uses, and spend the remaining time wholly upon this Branch. Even a *persuasive* to Christians unto all Patience, in Tribulations. To imitate their Lamb-like Saviour. Unto this (Christians) you are expressly call'd, *1 Pet. 2. 21, 22.* *Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but com-*

mitted himself to him that judgeth righteously. Here's your Pattern. A perfect Pattern. A lovely and excellent Pattern. Will you be persuaded to the imitation of Christ herein? Methinks I should persuade you to it. Yea, every thing about you persuades to patience in your sufferings, as well as I. Look which way you will, upward or downward, inward or outward, backward or forward, to the right hand or to the left; you shall find all things persuading and urging the Doctrine of Patience upon you.

First, Look upward, when Tribulations come upon you. Look to that Sovereign Lord, that commissionates and finds them upon you. You know troubles do not rise out of the dust, nor spring out of the ground, but are framed in Heaven, *Jer. 18. v. 11.* *Behold I frame evil, and devise a device against you.* Troubles and afflictions are of the Lord's framing, and devising, to reduce his wandering People to himself. Much like that device of *Abshalom* in setting *Joab's* field of Corn on fire to bring *Joab* to him, *2 Sam. 14. 30.* In the frame of your afflictions you may observe much of divine Wisdom in the choice, measure and season of your Troubles. Sovereignty in electing the Instruments of your affliction. In making them as afflictive as he pleaseth. And in making them obedient both to his call in coming and going, when he pleaseth. Now could you in times of trouble look up to his Sovereign Hand, in which your Souls, Bodies, and all their Comforts and Mercies are; how quiet would your Hearts be! *Psal. 39. 9.* *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because it is thy doing.* *1 Sam. 3. 18.* *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* O, when we have to do with Men, and look no higher; how do our Spirits swell and rise with revenge, and impatience! But if you once come to see that Man as a Rod in your Father's hand, you will be quiet, *Psal. 46. 10.* *Be still, and know that I am God; q. d.* consider with whom you have to do. Not with your fellow, but with your God, who can puff you to destruction, with one blast of his Mouth. In whose Hand you are, as the Clay in the Potter's hand. It is for want of looking up to God in our Troubles, that we fret, murmur, and despond at the rate we do.

Secondly, Look downward, and see what is below you, as well as up to that which is above you. You are afflicted, and you cannot bear it. O! no trouble like your trouble! Never Man in such a case as you are. Well, well, cast the eye of your Mind downward, and see who lie much lower than you. Can you see none on Earth in a more miserable state than your selves? Are you at the very bottom, and not a Man below you? Sure there be thousands in a sadder case than you on Earth. What is your affliction? Have you lost a Relation? Others have lost all. Have you lost an Estate, and are become poor? Well, but there be some you read of, *Job 30. 4, 5, 6, 7.* *Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and Juniper roots for their meat. They are driven forth from among men, they cryed after them as after a thief. They dwell in the cliffs*

of

of the Vallies, in caves of the Earth, and in the Rocks. Among the bushes they brayed, under the nettles they were gathered together. What difference as to manner of Life, do you find between the Persons here described, and the wild Beasts, that herd together in a desolate Place? Are you persecuted and afflicted for Christ's sake? What think you of their Sufferings, Heb. 11. 36, 37. Who had trial of cruel mockings, yea, moreover of Bonds and Imprisonments; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the Sword, they wandered about in sheepskins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented. And are you better than they? I know not what you are, but I am sure these were such of whom the world was not worthy, verse 38.

Or are your Afflictions more spiritual and inward? Say not, the Lord never dealt more bitterly with the Soul of any, than he hath with yours. What think you of the case of David, Heman, Job, Asaph, whose doleful Cries, by reason of the Terrors of the Almighty, are able to melt the stoneiest Heart that reads their Stories? The Almighty was a Terror to them. The Arrows of God were with-in them. They roared by reason of the discomforts of their Hearts.

Or are your Afflictions outward and inward together? An afflicted Soul, in an afflicted Body. Are you fallen like the Ship in which Paul sailed, into a Place where two Seas meet? Well, so it was with Paul, Job, and many other of those Worthies gone before you. Sure you may see many on Earth, who have been, or are in far lower and sadder States than your selves.

Or if not on Earth, doubtless you will yield there are many in Hell, who would be glad to exchange Conditions with you, as bad as you think yours to be. And were not all these moulded out of the same Lump with you? Surely if you can see any Creature below you, especially any reasonable Being, you have no reason to return so ungratefully upon your God, and accuse your Maker of Severity; or charge God foolishly. Look down and you shall see Grounds enough to be quiet.

Thirdly, Look inward, you discontented Spirits, and see if you can find nothing there to quiet you. Cast your Eye into your own Hearts. Consider either the Corruptions, or the Graces that are there. Cannot you find Weeds enough there, that need such winter weather as this to rot them? Hath not that proud Heart need enough of all this to humble it? That carnal Heart need of such things as these to mortify it? That backsliding wandering Heart, need of all this, to reduce, and recover it to its God? If need be, ye are in heaviness, 1 Pet. 1. 6. O Christian, didst thou not see need of this before thou camest into Trouble? Or hath not God shewn thee the need of it since thou wast under the Rod? It's much thou shouldst not see it; but be assured, if thou do'st not, thy God doth. He knows thou wouldst be ruined for ever, if he should not take this course with thee.

Thy Corruptions require all this to kill
Vol. I.

them. Thy Lusts will take all this, it may be more than this; and all little enough. And as your Corruptions call for it, so do your Graces too. Wherefore think ye the Lord planted the Principles of Faith, Humility, Patience, &c. in your Souls? What were they put there for nothing? Did the Lord intend they should lie sleeping in their drowsie Habits? Or were they not planted there in order to exercise? And how shall they be exercised without Tribulations? can you tell? Doth not tribulations work patience, and patience experience, and experience hope? Rom. 5. 3, 4. Is not the trial of your faith much more precious, than of Gold that perishes, 1 Pet. 1. 7. O look inward, and you will be quiet.

Fourthly, Look outward, and see who stands by, and observes your Carriage under Trouble. Are there not many Eyes upon you; Yea, many envious Observers round about you? It was David's Request, Psal. 5. 8. Lead me, O Lord in thy righteousness, because of mine Enemies; or, as the Hebrew word there might be rendered, because of mine Observers or Watchers. There's many an envious Eye upon you. To the Wicked there can scarcely be an higher Gratification and Pleasure, than to see your Carriage under Trouble, so like their own. For thereby they are confirm'd in their Prejudices against Religion; and in their good Opinion of themselves. These may talk and profess more than we, but when they are tried and put to it, it appears plainly enough, their Religion enables 'em to do no more than we do. They talk of Heaven's Glory, and their future Expectances; but it is but talk, for it's apparent enough their Hopes cannot ballance a small Affliction, with all the Happiness they talk of. Oh, how do you dishonour Christ before his Enemies! when you make them think all your Religion lies in talking of it. Consider who looks on.

Fifthly, Look backward, and see if there be nothing behind you that may huff and quiet your impatient Spirits. Consult the multitude of Experiences past and gone. Both your own and others. Is this the first straight that ever you were in? If so, you have reason to be quiet, yea, to bless God that hath spared you so long, when others have had their days fill'd up with Sorrow. But if you have been in Troubles formerly, and the Lord hath helped you; if you have past through the Fire, and not been burnt; Through the Waters and not drowned. If God hath stood by you, and hitherto helped you. O what cause have you to be quiet now, and patiently wait for the Salvation of God? Did he help you then, and cannot he do so now? Did he give Waters, and cannot he give Bread also? Is he the God of the Hills only, and not the God of the Vallies also? O call to mind the days of old, the years of the right hand of the most high, These things I recal to my mind, therefore have I hope, Lam. 3. 21. Have you kept no Records of past Experiences? How ungrateful then have you been to your God, and how injurious to your selves, if you have not read them over in such a day as this, for to that end they were given you?

V 2 O when

O when you shall confider what a God he hath been to you, at a pinch. How faithfully *Jehovah-jereb* hath flood by you. That this is not the first time your Hearts and Hopes have been low, as well as your Condition; and yet God hath raised you again; surely you will find your present Troubles made light, by a glance back upon your past Experiences.

Sixthly, Look forward, to the end of your Troubles; yea, look to a double end of them, the end of their *duration*, and the end of their *operation*. Look ye to the end of their duration, and that's fast by you. They shall not be everlasting Troubles, if you be such as fear the Lord. *The God of all grace, who hath call'd us unto his eternal glory, by Jesus Christ, after that ye have [suffered a while] make you perfect,* 1 Pet. 5. 10. *These light afflictions are but for a moment,* 2 Cor. 4. 18. It is no more comparatively with that vast Eternity that is before you. Alas, what are a few days and nights of Sorrows, when they are past? Age they not swallow'd up as a spoonful of Water in the vast Ocean? But more especially look to the end of their *operation*. What do all these Afflictions tend to, and effect? Do they not work out an exceeding weight of Glory? Are you not by them made *partakers of his Holiness*? Heb. 12. Is not this all the Fruit to take away your Sins? What, and be impatient at this! Fret and repine because God is this way perfecting your Happiness? O ungrateful Soul! Is this a due requital of that Love, that disdain not to stoop to so low an Employment, as to scour and cleanse your Souls, that they might be shining Vessels of honour to all Eternity!

O look forward to the end of your Trou-

bles. The end of their duration and operation.

Seventhly, Look to the right hand, and see how you are shamed, convinced, and silenced by other Christians; and it may be such too as never made that profession you have done; and yet cannot only patiently bear the afflicting hand of God; but are blessing, praising, and admiring God under their Troubles; whilst you are sinning against, and dishonouring him under smaller ones. It may be you will find some poor Christians that know not where to have their next Bread, and yet are speaking of the Bounty of their God; while you are repining in the midst of Plenty. Ah, if there be any ingenuity in you, let this shame you. If this will not, then

Eighthly, Look to your left hand, and there you will see a sad sight, and what one would think should quiet you. There you may see a Company of wicked graceless Wretches, carrying themselves under their Troubles, but too like your selves. What do they more, than fret and murmur, despond and sink, mix Sin with their Afflictions, when the Rod of God is upon them?

It's time for thee to leave off, when thou seest how near thou art come to them, whom thou hopest thou shalt never be ranked and numbred with. Reader, such Considerations as these, I am persuaded, would be of singular use to thy Soul at such a time, but above all, thine eying the great pattern of patience, *Jesus Christ*; whose Lamb-like Carriage, under a Trial, with which thine is not to be named the same day, is here recommended to thee. O how should this transform thee into a Lamb, for Meekness also?

S E R M O N XXX.

LUKE XXIII. 34.

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

Serm. 30.

Opens the instructiveness of the death of Christ in his seven last words; the first of which is here opened.

THE manner in which Christ died hath already been opened in the *Solitude and Patience* in which he died. The third, to wit, the *Instructiveness* of his Death, now follows, in these seven excellent and weighty Sayings, which dropt from his blessed Lips upon the Tree; whilst his sacred Blood dropt on the Earth from his wounded Hands and Feet; so that on the Cross he exercised both his Priestly and Prophetical Office together, redeeming us by his Blood, and instructing us by his Words.

These seven Words of Christ upon the Cross are his last Words, with which he breathed

out his Soul. The last Words of a dying Man are remarkable, the Scripture puts a remark upon them, 2 Sam. 23. 1. *Now these be the last words of David.* How remarkable then are the last Words of Christ?

These words are seven in number; three directed to his Father, and four more to those about him. Of the former sort this is one, *Father, forgive them*, &c. In which we have, *First, The Mercy desired by Christ*, and that is Forgiveness. *Secondly, The Persons for whom it is desired, [Them]* that is, those cruel and wicked Persons that were now imbrewing their hands in his Blood. And *Thirdly, The motive or argument urged to procure that Mercy*

Mercy from his Father, *for they know not what they do.*

First, The Mercy prayed for, that is, Forgiveness, *Father forgive.* Forgiveness is not only a Mercy, a spiritual Mercy, but one of the greatest Mercies a Soul can obtain from God. It is such a Mercy that without it whatever else we have from God, is no Mercy to us. So great a Mercy is Forgiveness, that David calls him blessed, or rather admires the blessedness of him whose Transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. This Mercy, this best of Mercies he requests for them, *Father forgive them.*

Secondly, The Persons for whom he requests Forgiveness, are the same that with wicked hands crucified him. Their Fact was the most horrid that ever was committed by Men. They not only shed innocent Blood, but the Blood of God; the best of Mercies, is by him desired for the worst of Sinners.

Thirdly, The Motive or Argument urged to procure this Mercy for them, is this, *for they know not what they do.* As if he should say, Lord, what these poor Creatures do, is not so much out of Malice to me, as the Son of God; but it is from their Ignorance. Did they know who, and what I am, they would rather be nailed to the Cross themselves, than do it. To the same purpose the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 2. 8. Whom none of the Princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* Yet this is not to be extended to all that had an hand in the death of Christ, but to the ignorant Multitude; among whom, some of God's Elect were, who afterwards believed in him, whose Blood they spilt, *Acts 3. 17. And now brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it.* For them this Prayer of Christ was heard. Hence the Notes are,

Doct. 1. *That Ignorance is the usual cause of Enmity to Christ.*

Doct. 2. *That there is Forgiveness with God, for such as oppose Christ out of Ignorance.*

Doct. 3. *That to forgive Enemies, and beg Forgiveness for them, is the true Character and Property of the Christian Spirit.*

These Observations contain so much practical Truth, that it will be worth our time to open and apply them distinctly,

Doct. 1. *That Ignorance is the usual cause of Enmity to Christ.*

These things (saith the Lord) will they do, because they have not known the Father, nor me, John 16. 3. What thing doth he mean? Why, kill and destroy the People of God, and therein suppose they do God good Service, (*i. e.*) think to oblige and gratify the Father, by their butchering his Children. So *Jer. 9. 3. They proceed from evil, to evil; and have not known me, saith the Lord, q. d.* Had they the Knowledge of God, they would check and stop them in their ways of Wickedness, and so *Psal. 74. 20. The dark places of the Earth, are full of the habitations of cruelty.*

Three things must be inquired into, *sc.* what their Ignorance of Christ was. Whence

it was. And how it disposed them to such Enmity against him.

First, What was their Ignorance, who crucified Christ? Ignorance is two-fold, *simple, or respektive.* Simple Ignorance is not supposable in these Persons, for in many things they were a knowing People. But it was a respektive particular Ignorance, *Rom. 11. 25. Blindness in part, is happened to Israel.* They knew many other Truths, but did not know Jesus Christ. In that their Eyes were held. Natural Light they had. Yea, and Scripture Light they had. But in this particular, that *this was the Son of God*, the Saviour of the World; therein they were blind and ignorant.

But how could that be? Had they not heard at least of his miraculous Works? Did they not see how his Birth, Life and Death squar'd with the Prophecies both in time, place and manner? Whence should this their Ignorance be, when they saw, or at least might have seen the Scriptures fulfill'd in him, and that he came among them in a time when they were big with Expectations of the Messiah.

'Tis true indeed, they knew the Scriptures, and it cannot but be suppos'd the Fame of his mighty Works had reach'd their Ears; but yet,

First, Though they had the Scriptures among them, they misunderstood them; and did not rightly measure Christ by that right Rule. You find, *John 7. 52. how they reason with Nicodemus against Christ, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and see; for out of Galilee ariseth no Prophet.* Here is a double mistake. *First*, They suppos'd Christ to arise out of Galilee, whereas he was of Bethlehem, tho' much Conversant in the parts of Galilee. And *Secondly*, They thought because they could find no Prophet had arisen out of Galilee, therefore none should.

Another mistake that blinded them about Christ, was from their conceit that Christ should not die, but live for ever, *John 12. 34. We have heard out of the Law, that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest thou the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is the Son of Man? That Scripture which probably they urge against the Mortality of Christ, is Isa. 9. 7. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, &c.* In like manner, *John 7. 17. we find them in another mistake, We know this man whence he is, but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.* This likely proceeded from their misunderstanding of *Mica. 5. 2. His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.* Thus were they blinded about the Person of Christ by misinterpretations of Scripture Prophecies.

Secondly, Another thing occasioning their mistake of Christ was the outward meanness and despicableness of his Condition. They expected a pompous Messiah, one that should come with State and Glory, becoming the King of Israel. But when they saw him in the Form of a Servant, coming in Poverty, not to be ministr'd unto, but to Minister:

They

Felicitates
hominis.
Abat.

They utterly rejected him, *We hid as it were our Faces from him, he was despised, and we esteemed him not.* Isa. 53. 3. Nor is it any great wonder these should be scandalized at his Poverty. When the Disciples themselves, had such carnal Apprehensions of his Kingdom, *Mark 10. 37, 38.*

Thirdly, Add to this, their implicit Faith in the learned Rabbies and Doctors, who utterly misled them in this matter, and greatly prejudiced them against Christ. *Lo (say they) he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing to him. Do the Rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?* They pinned their Faith upon the Rulers Sleeves, and suffered them to carry it whither they would. This was their Ignorance, and these its Causes.

Thirdly, Let us see in the next place, how this disposed them to such Enmity against Christ. And this it doth three ways;

First, Ignorance disposes Men to Enmity and Opposition to Christ, by removing those Hindrances that would otherwise keep them from it: As Checks and Rebukes of Conscience, by which they are restrained from Evil; but Conscience binding and reproving in the Authority and Virtue of the Law of God; where that Law is not known, there can be no Reproofs, and therefore we truly say, That Ignorance is virtually every Sin.

Secondly, Ignorance enslaves and subjects the Soul to the Lusts of Satan; he is the ruler of the darkness of this world, *Eph. 6. 12.* There is no work so base and vile, but an ignorant man will undertake it.

Thirdly, Nay, which is more, if a Man be ignorant of Christ, his Truths, or People; he will not only oppose and persecute, but he will also do it conscientiously, (*i. e.*) he will look upon it as his duty so to do, *John 16. 3.* Before the Lord opened Paul's Eyes, he verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Christ. Thus you have a brief account what, and whence their Ignorance was, and how it disposed and prepared them for this dreadful work. Hence we learn,

Inference 1. How justly is the Gospel charged as the cause of Discord and Trouble in the World. 'Tis not light, but darkness that makes Men fierce and cruel. As light encreases, so doth Peace, *Isa. 14. 6, 9.* *The Wolf also shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard lie down with the Kid; and the Calf and the young Lion, and the Fatting together; and a little Child shall lead them; they shall not hurt, nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.* What a sad condition would the World be in without Gospel-light! All places would be Dens of Rapine and Mountains of Prey. Certainly we owe much of our Civil Liberty, and outward Tranquility to Gospel-light. If a Sword and Variance at any time follow the Gospel, it's but an accidental, not a direct and proper effect of it.

Inference 2. How dreadful is it to oppose Christ and his Truths knowingly, and with open Eyes? Christ pleads their Ignorance as an Argument to procure their Pardon. Paul him-

self was once fill'd with Rage and Madnels, against Christ and his Truths. It was well for him he did it ignorantly. Had he gone against his light and knowledge, there had been little hope of him, *1 Tim. 1. v. 13.* *I was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly, and in unbelief.* I do not say it's simply impossible for one that knowingly, and maliciously opposes and persecutes Christ and his People, to be forgiven, but it is not usual, *Heb. 6. 4, 5.* There are few Instances of it.

Inference 3. What an awful Majesty sits upon the Brow of Holiness, that few dare to oppose it that see it! There are few or none so daringly wicked, to fight against it with open Eyes, *1 Pet. 3. 13.* *Who will harm you while ye are followers of that which is good, q. d. who dare be so hardy to set upon known godliness, or afflict and wrong the known Friends of it?* The true reason why many Christians speed so bad, is not because they are godly, but because they do not manifest the power of godliness more than they do. Their lives are so like the lives of others, that they are often mistaken for others. *Cyprian* brings in the Wicked of his time thus scoffing at Professors. Behold they that boast themselves to be redeemed from the Tyranny of Satan, and to be dead to the World, how are they overcome by the Lusts of it, as well as other Men? Look as the Poverty and Meanness of Christ's outward Condition was a ground of their mistake of him then, so the Poverty and Meanness of our Love to God, heavenly Mindedness, and Mortification to this World, is a disguise to Professors, and a cause why they are no more owned, and honoured in the Consciences of Men at this day. For Holiness, manifested in its Power, is so awfully glorious, that the Consciences of the Vilest cannot but honour it, and do obedience to it, *Mark 6. 20.* Herod feared John, for he was a just man.

Inference 4. The Enemies of Christ are Objections of Pity. Alas they are blind, and know not what they do. It's pity that any other affection than Pity, should stir in our Hearts towards them. Were their Eyes but open, they would never do as they do. We should look upon them as the Physician doth upon his grati, mul-ti furiis ambitionis agitati; far from hating Christ or his Ways as you are, omnia ista Simul ac desinant ignorare, desinant odire, as tam propterea facit sapienter quam

Inference 5. How needful is it before we engage our selves against any person or way, to be well satisfied and resolved that it is a wicked person or practice that we oppose? You see the World generally runs upon a mistake in this matter: O beware of doing you know not what! For though you do, you know not what, Satan knows what he is doing by you. He blinds your Eyes, and then sets you to work, knowing that if you should but see what you are doing, you would rather die than do it. You may now do you know not what; but you may afterward have time enough to reflect

Eccc qui
jactant
se redemptos à Ty-
rannide
Satanæ, qui
prædicant
se mortuos
mundo, ni-
hilominus
cupiditati-
bus vin-
cuntur.
Cypri.

Multi mihi
occurrunt
vino dedi-
ti, Libidi-
nos, in-
ambicionia
agitati; far
from hating
Christ or his
Ways as you
are, omnia
ista Simul
ac desinant
ignorare, de-
sinant odire,
as tam pro-
pterea facit
sapienter
quam

engros suos
medicatus
well satisfied
and resolved
that it is a
wicked
scena de
ira.

reflect on, and lament what you have done. You may now do you know not what, and hereafter you may not know what to do. Obeware what you do.

Doct. 2. *That there is forgiveness with God, for such as oppose Christ out of ignorance.*

If all manner of Sin and Blasphemy shall be forgiven to Men, then this as well as others, *Matth. 12. 31.* We are not with *Theophilus* to understand that place of the certainty of Pardon: Much less with *Origen* of the desert of it: Nor yet with *Jansenius* of the facility of it, but rather of the possibility of forgiveness. It shall be so to some, it may be so to you: Even those whose wicked Hands had crucified Christ, receive remission by that Blood they shed, *Acts 2. 23, 38.* compared.

I have two things here to do; *First*, to open the nature of the forgiveness, and shew you what it is. *Secondly*, To evince the possibility of it, for such as mistakingly oppose Christ.

For the *First*, Forgiveness of God's gracious discharge of a believing penitent sinner, from the guilt of all his sin, for Christ's sake.

It's God's discharge: There is indeed fraternal forgiveness, by which one Man forgives another; so far as he is interested in the wrong, *Luke 6. 37.* There is also a ministerial forgiveness, whereby the Minister of Christ as his Mouth, and in his Name declares the pardon, or ministerially applies the promises of pardon to penitent offenders, *John 20. 23.* But none can absolutely, and properly forgive sin, but God only, *Mark 2. 7.* The primary and principal wrong is done to them, *Psalms 51. 4.* *Against thee, thee only (i. e.)* thee mainly or especially, have I sinned. Hence sins are metonymically called debts, debts to God, *Mat. 6. 12.* Not that we owe them to God, or ought to sin against him; but as a pecuniary debt obliges him that owes it, to the penalty, if he satisfy not for it; so do our sins. And who can discharge the Debtor, but the Creditor?

It's a gracious act or discharge. *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgression for mine own name sake, Isaiah 43. 25.* And yet sin is not so forgiven, as that God expects no satisfaction at all; but as expecting none from us, because God hath provided a surety for us, from whom he is satisfied. *Eph. 1. 7.* *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*

It's a gracious discharge from the guilt of sin. Guilt is that which pardon properly deals with. Guilt is an obligation to punishment. Pardon is the dissolving that Obligation. Guilt is a Chain with which sinners are bound and fettered by the Law. Pardon is that *Aquafortis* that eats it asunder, and makes the Prisoner a Free-man. The pardoned Soul is a discharged Soul, *Rom. 8. 33.* *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who shall condemn? It's Christ that died.*

It's God's discharge of a believing penitent sinner. Infidelity and impenitency are not only sins in themselves, but such sins as bind fast

all other sins upon the Soul. By him all that believe are justified from all things, *Acts 10. 43.* So *Acts 3. 19.* *Repent therefore, that your sins may be blotted out.* This is the method in which God dispenseth pardon to sinners. Lastly,

It is for Christ's sake we are discharged; he is the meritorious cause of our remission. As God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you, *Eph. 4. 32.* It's his Blood alone that meritoriously procures our discharge.

This is a brief, and true account of the nature of forgiveness.

Secondly, Now to evince the possibility of forgiveness, for such as ignorantly oppose Christ. Let these things be weigh'd.

First, Why should any poor Soul that is now humbled for its enmity to Christ in the days of ignorance, question the possibility of forgiveness: When this effect doth not exceed the power of the cause; nay, when there is more efficacy in the Blood of Christ the meritorious cause, than is in this effect of it? There's power enough in that Blood not only to pardon thy sins, but the sins of the whole world, were it actually applied, *1 John 2. 2.* There is not only a sufficiency, but also a redundancy of merit, in that precious Blood. Surely then thy Enmity to Christ, especially before thou knewest him, may not look like an unpardonable Iniquity in thine Eyes.

Secondly, And as this Sin exceeds not the Power of the meritorious cause of Forgiveness; so neither is it any where excluded from pardon, by any word of God. Nay, such is the extensiveness of the promise to believing Penitents, that this case is manifestly included, and Forgiveness tendered to thee in the promises, *Isai. 55. 7.* *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Many such extensive Promises there are in the Scriptures. And there is not one Parenthesis in all those blessed Pages, in which this case is excepted.

Thirdly, And it's yet more satisfactory that God hath already actually forgiven such sinners; and that which he hath done, he may again do. Yea, therefore he hath done it to some, and those eminent for their enmity to Christ, that others may be encouraged to hope for the same Mercy when they also shall be in the same manner humbled for it. Take one famous Instance of many; it's that of Paul in *1 Tim. 1. 13. 16.* *Who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious: But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief — howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life.* It's no small encouragement to a sick Man, to hear of some that have been recovered out of the same Disease, and that prevailing in an higher degree, than in himself.

Fourthly, Moreover, it is encouraging to consider, that when God hath cut off others in the way of their sin, he hath hitherto spared thee.

thee. What speaks this but a purpose of mercy to thy Soul? Thou shouldst account the long-suffering of God thy Salvation, 2 Pet. 3. 15. Had he smitten thee in the way of thy sin and enmity to Christ, what hope had remained? But in that he hath not only spared thee, but also given thee a heart ingenuously ashamed, and humbled for thy evils; doth not this speak mercy for thee? surely it looks like a gracious design of love to thy Soul.

Inference 1. And is there forgiveness with God for such as have been Enemies to Christ, his Truths, and People? *Then certainly there is pardon and mercy for the friends of God, who involuntarily fall into sin, by the surprisals of temptation, and are broken for it as ingenuous Children for offending a good Father.* Can any doubt, if God have pardon for such Enemies, he hath none for Children? If he have forgiveness for such as shed the Blood of Christ with wicked hands; hath he not much more mercy and forgiveness for such as love Christ, and are more afflicted for their sin against him, than all the other troubles they have in the World? Doubt it not, but he that receives *Enemies* into his Bosom, will much more receive and embrace *Children* tho' offending ones.

How penfive do the dear Children of God sometimes sit, after their lapses into sin? Will God ever pardon this? Will he be reconciled again! May I hope his Face shall be to me as in former times? Penfive Soul, if thou didst but know the largeness, tenderness, freeness of that Grace which yearns over *Enemies*; and hath given forth thousands, and ten thousands of Pardons to the worst of sinners; thou wouldest not sink at that rate.

Inference 2. Is there pardon with God for *Enemies*; how inexcusable then are all they that *persist and perish in their Enmity to Christ!* Sure their destruction is of themselves. Mercy is offered to them if they will receive it. Proclamation is made in the Gospel, That if there be any among the *Enemies* of Christ, who repent of what they have been, and done against him; and are now unfeignedly willing to be reconciled upon the word of a King, he shall find Mercy. But God shall wound the Head of his *Enemies*, and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses, Psal. 68. 21. If he turn not, he will wet his sword, he hath bent his bow and made it ready; he hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors, Psalm 7. 12.

This lays the Blood of every Man that perishes in his enmity to Christ, at his own door. And vindicates the righteousness of God in the severest strokes of wrath upon them. This also will be a cutting thought to their hearts eternally. I might once have had pardon, and I refused it. The Gospel-Trumpet sounded a Parly. Fair and gracious Terms were offered, but I rejected them.

Inference 3. Is there mercy with God and forgiveness even for his worst *Enemies* upon their submission, how unlike to God then are all *implacable Spirits!* Some there are that cannot bring their hearts to forgive an Enemy :

To whom revenge is sweeter than life, 1 Sam. 24. 16. If a man find his enemy, will be let him go? This is Hell-fire, a fire that never goeth out; how little do such poor Creatures consider, if God should deal by them, as they do by others; what words could express the misery of their Condition! It's a sad sin, and a sad sign, a Character of a wretched state, where ever it appears. Those that have found mercy, should be ready to shew mercy: and they that expect mercy themselves, should not deny it others.

This brings us upon the third and last Observation, viz.

Doct. 3. That to forgive *Enemies*, and beg forgiveness for them, is the true Character and Property of the Christian Spirit.

Thus did Christ; Father, forgive them. And thus did Stephen in imitation of Christ, Acts 7. 59, 60. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit: and he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. This suits with the rule of Christ, Matth. 5. 44, 45. But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you: That ye may be the children of God your Father which is in Heaven.

Here I shall first open the nature of this Duty, and shew you what a forgiving Spirit is; and then the excellency of it: How well it becomes all that call themselves Christians.

First, Let us inquire what this Christian forgiveness is. And that the nature of it may the better appear, I shall shew you both what it is not, and what it is.

First, It consists not in a stoical insensibility of wrongs and injuries. God hath not made Men as insensible stupid Blocks, that have no sense or feeling of what is done to them. Nor hath he made a Law inconsistent with their very natures that are to be governed by it. But allows us a tender sense of natural evils, though he will not allow us to revenge them by moral evils. Nay, the more deep and tender our resentments of Wrongs and Injuries are, the more excellent is our forgiveness of them: So that a forgiving Spirit doth not exclude sense of Injuries, but the sense of Injuries graces the forgiveness of them.

Secondly, Christian forgiveness is not a politic concealment of our wrath and revenge, because it will be a reproach to discover it; or because we want opportunity to vent it. This is carnal policy, not Christian meekness. So far from being the mark of a gracious Spirit, that it's apparently the sign of a vile nature. It is not Christianity to repose, but depose Injuries.

Thirdly, Nor is it that moral Virtue, for which we are beholding to an easier and better Nature, and the help of moral Rules and Documents. There are certain Virtues attainable without the change of Nature, which they call *Homilitical Virtues*, because they greatly adorn and beautifie Nature; such as Temperance, Patience, Justice, &c. these are of singular use

Est vindicta bonum viri iucundus ipse.

Manet alta mente repositum.

use to conserve Peace and Order in the World. And without them (as one aptly speaks) the World would soon break up, and its civil Societies disband. But yet though these are the Ornaments of Nature, they do not argue the change of Nature. All Graces in the exercises of them, involve a respect to God. And for the being of them, they are not by natural acquisition, but supernatural infusion.

Fourthly, and lastly, Christian forgiveness is not an injurious giving up of our Rights and Properties, to the Lusts of every one that hath a mind to invade them. No; these we may lawfully defend and preserve, and are bound so to do; though if we cannot defend them legally, we must not avenge our Wrongs unchristianly. This is not Christian forgiveness. But then positively;

It is a Christian lenity or gentleness of mind; not retaining, but freely passing by the Injuries done to us; in Obedience to the Command of God.

It is a lenity, or gentleness of mind. The Grace of God demulces the angry Stomach; calms the tumultuous Passions; new moulds our fowre Spirits, and makes them benign, gentle and easie to be intreated, Gal. 5. 22. The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, &c.

This gracious lenity inclines the Christian to pass by Injuries: So to pass them by, as neither to retain them revengely in the mind, or require them when we have opportunity with the hand. Yea, and that freely, not by constraint, because we cannot avenge our selves, but willingly. We abhor to do it when we can. So that as a carnal heart thinks revenge its glory, the gracious heart is content that forgiveness should be his glory. I will be even with him, faith Nature. I will be above him, faith Grace. It is his glory to pass over Transgression, Prov. 19. 11.

* And this it doth in Obedience to the command of God: Their own nature inclines them another way. The spirit that is in us lusteth to envy, but he giveth more grace, James 4. 5. It lusteth to revenge, but the fear of God represses those motions. Such Considerations as these, God hath forbidden me. Yea, and God hath forgiven me, as well as forbidden me; they prevail upon him, when nature urges to revenge the wrong. Be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you, Eph. 4. 32. This is forgiveness in a Christian sense.

Secondly, And that this is excellent, and singularly becoming the Profession of Christ, is evident. In as much as,

This speaks your Religion excellent, that can mould your Hearts into that heavenly frame to which they are so averse, yea contrarily disposed by nature. It is the glory of Pagan Morality that it can abscondere vitia, hide and cover Mens Lusts and Passions. But the glory of Christianity lies in this, that it can abscondere vitia, not hide, but destroy, and really mortifie the Lusts of Nature. Would Christians but live up to the excellent Principles of their Religion, Christianity shall be no more

Vol. I.

outvied by heathenish Morality. The greatest Christian shall be no more challenged to imitate Socrates, if he can. We shall utterly spoil that proud boast, That the Faith of Christians is outdone by the Infidelity of Heathens. O Christians, yield not the day to Heathens. Let all the World see the true greatness, heaviness, and excellency of your represented Pattern; and by true mortification of your corrupt Natures, enforce an acknowledgment from the World, that a greater than Socrates is here. He that is really a meek, humble, patient, heavenly Christian wins this glory to his Religion, that it can do more than all other Principles, and rules in the World. In nothing were the most accomplished Heathens more defective than this forgiving of Injuries. It was a thing they could not understand, or if they did, could never bring their Hearts to it; witness that Rule of their great Tully. It's the first Office of Justice (saith he) to hurt no Man, except first provoked by an Injury. The addition of that exception, spoiled his excellent Rule.

simplicem veramque sententiam duorum verborum adiectione corrupti!

But now Christianity teaches, and some Christians have attained it, to receive evil, and return good, 1 Cor. 4. 12, 13. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we intreat. This certainly is that Meekness wrought in us by the Wisdom that is from above, Jam. 3. 17.

This makes a Man fit sure in the Consciences of others, who with Soul must acknowledge, when they see themselves so outdone; thou art more righteous than I, 1 Sam. 24. 16, 17. had we been so injured, and had such opportunities to revenge them, we should never have passed them by, as these Men did.

This impresses and stamps the very Image of God upon the Creature, and makes us like our heavenly Father who doth good to his Enemies, and sends down showers of outward Blessings upon them, that pour out floods of Wickedness daily to provoke him, Matth. 5. 44, 45. In a word, this Christian temper of Spirit gives a Man the true possession and enjoyment of himself. So that our Breasts shall be as the pacific Sea, smooth and pleasant, when others are as the raging Sea, foaming, and casting up mire and dirt.

Inference 1. Hence we clearly infer, That Christian Religion exalted in its power, is the greatest Friend to the Peace and Tranquillity of States and Kingdoms. Nothing is more opposite to the true Christian Spirit, than implacable fierceness, strife, revenge, tumults and uproars. It teaches Men to do good, and receive evil; to receive evil, and return good. The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable; gentle, and easie to be intreated: full of mercy, and good fruits; without partiality, and without hypocrisy: and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, of them that make peace, James 3. 17, 18.

The Church is a Dove for meekness, Cant. 6. 9. When the World grows full of strife, Christians then grow weary of the World; and

Non præstat fides, quod præstitit infidelitas. Cæcilius in Minucius.

Veritas Christianorum pulchrior est Helenæ Græcorum.

On which Rule Laetantius thus speaks. O quam

and sigh out the Psalmist's request, *O that I had the wings of a Dove, that I might fly away and be at rest.* Strigelius desired to die, that he might be freed *ab implacabilibus odiis theologorum*, from the implacable strifes of contending Divines.

The Rule by which they are to walk is, if it be possible as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, *avenge not your selves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay it, saith the Lord.* Rom. 12. 18, 19. It is not Religion, but Lusts that make the World so unquiet, *Jaïn.* 4. 1, 2. Not Godliness, but Wickedness that makes Men bite and devour one another. One of the first effects of the Gospel is to civilize those Places where it comes, and settle Order and Peace among Men. How great a mistake and evil then is it to cry out, when Atheism and Irreligion have broken the civil Peace; this is the fruit of Religion; this is the effect of the Gospel. Happy would it be, if Religion did more obtain in all Nations. It is the greatest Friend in the World to their Tranquillity and Prosperity.

Inference 2. How dangerous a thing is it to abuse and wrong meek and forgiving Christians? Their patience and easiness to forgive, often invites Injury, and incourages vile Spirits to insult and trample upon them; but if Men would seriously consider it, there's nothing in the World should more scare and fright them from such Practices than this. You may abuse and wrong them, they must not avenge themselves, nor repay evil for evil; true, but because they do not, the Lord will; even the Lord to whom they commit the Matter; and he will do it to purpose, except ye repent.

Be patient therefore, Brethren, unto the coming of the Lord, *Jam.* 5. 7. Will ye stand to that Issue? Had you rather indeed have to do with God than with Men? When the Jews put Christ to death, he committed himself to him that judgeth righteously, *1 Pct.* 2. 22, 23. And did that People get any thing by that? Did not the Lord severely avenge the Blood of Christ on them and their Children? Yea, do not they, and their Children groan under the doleful effects of it to this day? If God undertakes (as he always doth) the cause of his abused, meek and peaceable People; he will be sure to avenge it seven fold more than they could. His little Finger will be heavier than their Loins. You will get nothing by that.

Infer. 3. Lastly, Let us all imitate our pattern Christ, and labour for meek forgiving Spirits. I shall only propole two inducements to it. The Honour of Christ, and your own Peace. Two dear things indeed, to a Christian. His Glory is more than your Life, and all that you enjoy in this World. O do not expose it to the scorn and derision of his Enemies. Let them not say, how is Christ a Lamb, when his followers are Lions? How is the Church a Dove, that smites and scratches like a Bird of prey? Consult also the quiet of your own Spirits. What is Life worth, without the comfort of Life? What comfort can you have in all that you do possess in the World, as long as you have not the possession of your own Souls? If your Spirits be full of tumult and revenge, the Spirit of Christ will grow a stranger to you. That Dove delights in clean and quiet Breasts. O then imitate Christ in this excellency also.

S E R M O N XXXI.

Serm. 31.

Opens the second excellent word of Christ upon the Cross

JOHN XIX. 27.

Then saith he to the Disciple, Behold thy Mother.

WE now pass to the Consideration of the second memorable and instructive Word of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross, contain'd in this Scripture. Wherein he hath left us an excellent Pattern for the discharge of our relative Duties. It may be well said, the Gospel makes the best Husbands and Wives, the best Parents and Children, the best Masters and Servants in the World; seeing it furnishes them with the most excellent Precepts, and proposeth the best Patterns. Here we have the Pattern of Jesus Christ presented to all gracious Children for their imitation, teaching them how to acquit themselves towards their Parents, according to the

Laws of Nature and Grace. Christ was not only subject and obedient to his Parents whilst he lived, but manifested his tender Care even whilst he hang'd in the torments of death upon the Cross. *Then saith he to the Disciple, Behold thy Mother.*

The words contain an affectionate Recommendation of his distressed Mother, to the Care of a dear Disciple, a bosom Friend; wherein let us consider the Design, Manner, and Season of this Recommendation.

First, The Design and End of it, which doubtless was to manifest his tender Respects and Care for his Mother, who was now in a most distressed comfortless state. For now was *Simcon's* Prophecy, *Luke* 2. 35. fulfilled,

in

in the trouble and anguish that fill'd her Soul. Yea, a Sword also shall pierce through thine own Soul, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. Her Soul was pierced for him, both as she was his Mother, and as she was a mystical Member of him, her Head, her Lord. And therefore he commends her to the beloved Disciple that lay in his Bosom, saying, *Behold thy Mother*, (i. e.) let her be to thee as thine own Mother. Let thy Love to me be now manifested in thy tender Care for her.

Secondly, The manner of his recommending her is both affectionate and mutual. It's very affectionate and moving, *Behold thy Mother*, q. d. *John*, I am now dying; leaving all humane Society and Relations; and entering into a new State, where neither the Duties of natural Relations are exercised, nor the Pleasures and Comforts of them enjoyed. It's a state of Dominion over Angels and Men, not of subjection and obedience; this I now leave to thee. Upon thee do I devolve both the Honour and Duty of being in my stead and room to her, as to all dear and tender Care over her.

John, *Behold thy Mother*; and as its affectionate, so its mutual, *verse 26*. And to his Mother he said, *Woman, behold thy Son*; not Mother, but Woman, intimating not only the change of state and conditions with him, but also the bequest he was making of her to the Disciple with whom she was to live as a Mother with a Son.

And all this he designs as a Pattern to others.

Thirdly, The season or time when his Care for his Mother so eminently manifested itself; was when his departure was at hand, and he could no longer be a comfort to her by his bodily presence; yea, his Love and Care then manifested themselves, when he was full of anguish to the very brim, both in his Soul and Body, yet all this makes him not in the least unmindful of so dear a Relation: Hence the Doctrinal Note is,

Doct. *That Christ's tender Care of his Mother, even in the time of his greatest distress; is an excellent Pattern for all gracious Children to the end of the World.*

There are three great Foundations or Bonds of relation on which all Family-government depends. Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants. The Lord hath planted in the Souls of Men, Affections suitable to these Relations, and to his People, he hath given Grace to regulate those Affections appointed, Duties to exercise those Graces, and Seasons to discharge those Duties. So that as in the motion of a Wheel every Spoke takes its turn, and bears a stress; in like manner in the whole round of a Christian's Conversation, every Affection, Grace, and Duty at one Season or other comes to be exercised.

But yet Grace hath not so far prevailed in the sanctification of any Man's Affections, but that there will be excesses or defects in the exercise of them towards our Relations, yea, and in this the most eminent Saints have been eminently defective. But the Pattern I set

Vol. I.

before you this day, is a perfect Pattern. As the Church finds him the best of Husbands, so to his Parents he was the best of Sons; and being the best and most perfect, is therefore the Rule and Measure of all others. Christ knew how those Corruptions we draw from our Parents, are returned in their bitter Fruits upon them again to the wounding of their very Hearts, and therefore it pleased him to commend Obedience and Love to Parents in his own Example to us.

It was anciently a Proverb among the Heathen, *in sola Sparta, expedit senescere*, It's good to be an old Man or Woman only in Sparta. The ground of it was the strict Laws that were among the Spartans to punish the rebellions and disobedience of Children to their aged Parents. And shall it not be good to be an old Father or Mother in England, where the Gospel of Christ is preached, and such an Argument as this now set before you urged; an Argument which the Heathen World was never acquainted with? Shall Parents here be forced to complain with the Eagle in the Fable, that they are smitten to the Heart, by an Arrow winged with their own feathers. Or as a Tree rived in pieces by the Wedges that were made of its own Body? God forbid.

To prevent such sad occasions of Complaints as these, I desire all that sustain the relation of Children, into whose hands Providence shall cast this Discourse, seriously to ponder this Example of Christ, proposed for their imitation in this Point. Wherein we shall first consider what Duties belong to the relation of Children: Secondly, how Christ's Example enforces those Duties, and then suitably apply it.

First, Let us examine what Duties pertain to the relation of Children. And they are as truly as commonly branched out into the following Particulars.

First, *Fear and Reverence* are due from Children to their Parents, by the express Command of God, *Lev. 19. 3*. Ye shall fear every Man his Mother and his Father. The Holy Ghost purposely inverts the Order, and puts the Mother first, because she by reason of her blandishments, and fond indulgence is most subject to the irreverence and contempt of Children. God hath clothed Parents with his Authority. They are intrusted by God with them, and are accountable to him for the Souls and Bodies of their Children. And he expects that you reverence them, although in respect of outward Estate, or Honour, you be never so much above them. *Joseph*, though Lord of Egypt, bowed down before his aged Father, with his Face to the Earth, *Gen. 48. 12*. *Solomon*, the most magnificent and glorious King that ever sway'd a Scepter, when his Mother came to speak with him for *Adonijah*, he rose up to meet her, and bowed himself to her, and caused a Seat to be set for the King's Mother, and set her upon his right hand, *2 Kings 2. 19*.

Secondly, *Dear and tender Love* is due from Children to their Parents. And to shew how strong and dear that Love ought to be, it's

X 2

joined with the Love you have for your own Lives. As appears in that Injunction to deny both for Christ's sake, *Matth. 10. 37.* The Bonds of Nature are strong and direct betwixt Parents and Children. What is a Child but a Piece of the Parent wrapt up in another Skin? O the Care, the Cost, the Pity, the Tenderness, the Pains, the Fears they have exprest for you. It's worse than Heathenish Ingratitude, not to return Love for Love. This filial Love is not only in it self a Duty, but to be the Root or Spring of all your Duties to them.

Thirdly, Obedience to their Commands is due to them, by the Lord's strict and special Command, *Eph. 6. 1. Children obey your Parents in the Lord, for this is right; Honour thy Father and thy Mother, which is the first Commandment with promise.* Filial Obedience is not only founded upon the positive Law of God, but also upon the Law of Nature. For though the Subjection of Servants to Masters came in by Sin, yet the Subjection of Children to Parents is due to them by natural Right, therefore saith the Apostle, *This is right, (i. e.) right both according to natural and positive Law.* However, this Subjection and Obedience is not absolute and universal. God hath not divested himself of his own Authority, to cloath a Parent with it. Your Obedience to them must be *in the Lord, (i. e.)* in such things as they require you to do in the Lord's Authority. In things consonant to that divine and holy Will, to which they, as well as you, must be subject; and therein you must obey them. Yea, even the Wickedness of a Parent exempts not from Obedience, where his command is not so. Nor on the other side, must the Holiness of a Parent sway you, where his Commands and God's are opposite. In the former case, the *Canons* have determined, that the Command must be distinguished from the Person. In the latter, it's a good Rule. My Parents must be loved, but my God must be preferred.

Officium à persona discernendum. A-mandus genitor, sed prap-nendus Creator.

Yield your selves therefore cheerfully to obey all that which they lawfully enjoin, and take heed that black Character, fixed on the Heathens, who know not God, be not found upon you, *disobedience to Parents, Rom. 1. 30.* Remember, your Disobedience to their just Commands rises higher, much higher, than an Affront to their Persons and Authority; it's Disobedience to God himself whose Commands second, and strengthen theirs upon you.

Fourthly, Submission to their Discipline, and rebukes, is also your Duty, *Heb. 12. 9. We had Fathers of our own flesh that corrected us, and we gave them reverence.* Parents ought not to abuse their Authority. Cruelty in them is a great Sin, but Wrath and Rebellion in a Child, against his Parents, is monstrous. It's storied of *Ælian*, that having been abroad, at his return, his Father asked him what he had learned since he went from him; he answer'd, you will know shortly. I have learned to bear your Anger quietly, and submit to what you please to inflict. Two Considerations should especially mould others into the like

Sævitas patris in filios grave peccatum, sed ira filii in patrem, grave monstrum.

frame, especially to their godly Parents. The end for which, and the manner in which they manifest their Anger to their Children. Their end is to save your Souls from Hell. They judge it better for you to hear the Voice of their Anger, than the terrible Voice of the Wrath of God. To feel their Hand than his. They know if you fall into the Hands of the living God, you will be handled in another manner.

And for the manner, in which they rebuke and chasten, it is with Grief in their Hearts, and Tears in their Eyes. Alas, it's no delight to them to cross, vex, or afflict you. Were it not meer Conscience of their Duty to God, and tender Love to your Souls, they would neither chide nor smite. And when they do, how do they afflict themselves, in afflicting you! When their Faces are full of Anger, their Bowels are full of Compassion for you; and you have no more reason to blame them for what they do, than if they cry out, and violently snatch at you, when they see you ready to fall from the top of a Rock.

Fifthly, Faithfulness to all their Interests due to them by the natural and positive Law of God. What in you lies, you are bound to promote, not to waste and scatter their Substance. To assist, not to defraud them. Who so robbeth his Father or Mother, and saith, it is no Transgression, the same is a Companion of a Destroyer, *Pro. 28. 24.* This, saith one, as far excels your wronging another as Parricide is a greater Crime than Man-slaughter, or as *Reuben's* Incest, was beyond common Fornication. God never meant you should grow up about your Parents as Suckers about a Tree to impoverish the Root. But for a Child, out of a covetousness after what his Parents have, secretly to wish their death, is a Sin so monstrous, as should not be once named, much less found, among Persons professing Christianity. To desire their death, from whom you had your life, is unnatural Wickedness, to dispose of their Goods, much more of your selves without their Consent is (ordinarily) the greatest injustice to them. Children are obliged to defend the Estates and Persons of their Parents with the hazard of their own. As Arrows are in the hand of a mighty Man, so are Children of the youth. Happy is the Man that hath his Quiver full of them. They shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the Enemy in the Gates, *Psal. 127. 5.*

Filius ante diem patrios inquit in anos.

Sixthly, And more especially, *requit* of all that Love, Care, and Pains they have been at for you, is your Duty so far as God enables you, and those things are requitable, *1 Tim. 5. 4. Let them learn to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents.* The word is *εὐσεβείαν* and signifies to play the Stork, to Imitate that Creature of whom it's said, that the young do tenderly feed the old ones, when they are no longer able to fly abroad and provide for themselves. Hence those that want Bowels of natural Affection to their Relations, are said to be *στεργαί, Rom. 1. 30.* worse than Storks. O 'tis a shame that Birds and Beasts should shew more Tenderness

derness to their Dams, than Children to their Parents.

It's a saying frequent among the Jews, A Child should rather labour at the Mill than suffer his Parents to want. And to the same sense is that other saying, Your Parents must be supplied by you, if you have it; if not, you ought to beg for them, rather than see them perish. It was both the comfort and honour of *Joseph*, that God made him an Instrument of so much succour and comfort to his aged Father, and distressed Family, *Gen. 47. 13.* And you are also to know, that what you do for them, is not in the way of an Alms, or common Charity. For the Apostle saith, it is but your requiting them, and that's Justice, not Charity. And it can never be a full requital. Indeed the Apostle tells us, *2 Cor. 12. 14.* That Parents lay up for their Children, and not Children for the Parents, and so they ought, but sure, if Providence blast them, and bless you, an honourable Maintenance is their due. Even Christ himself took care for his Mother.

Secondly, You have had a brief Account of the Duties of this Relation, next let us consider how Christ's Example, who was so subject to them in his Life, *Luke 2. 51.* and so careful to provide at his death, enforces all those Duties upon Children, especially upon gracious Children. And this it doth two ways, both as it hath the obliging Power of a Law; and as he himself will one day sit in Judgment to take an account how we have imitated him in these Things.

First, Christ's Example in this hath the Force and Power of a Law, yea, a Law of Love, or a Law lovingly constraining you to an imitation of him. If Christ himself will be your Pattern. If God will be pleased to take Relations like yours, and go before you in the discharge of your relative Duties; oh how much are you obliged to imitate him and tread in all his Footsteps! This was by him intended as a President or Pattern to facilitate and direct your Duties.

Secondly, He will come to take an account how you have answered the Pattern of Obedience, and tender Care he set before you in the days of his Flesh. What will the Disobedient plead in that day? He that heard the Groans of an afflicted Father or Mother, will now come to reckon with the Disobedient Child for them. And the glorious Example of Christ's own Obedience and Tendernefs of his Relations, will in that day condemn and aggravate, silence and shame such wretched Children, as shall stand guilty before his Bar.

Inference 1. Hath Jesus Christ given such a famous Pattern of Obedience and Tendernefs to Parents. Then there can be nothing of Christ in stubborn, rebellious, and careless Children, that regard not the good or comfort of their Parents. The Children of Disobedience cannot be the Children of God. If Providence direct this to the Hand of any that are so, my Heart's Desire and Prayer for them is, that the Lord would search their Souls by it, and discover their Evils to them;

whilest they shall read the following Queries.

First Query, Have you not been guilty of slighting your Parents by irreverent Words or Carriages, the old Man or Woman. To such I commend the Consideration of that Scripture, *Prov. 30. 17.* which methinks should be to them as the Hand-writing that appear'd upon the Plaster of the Wall, to *Belshazzar*. The eye that mocketh at his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother: The Ravens of the Valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it. That is, they shall be brought to an untimely end, and the Birds of the Air shall eat that Eye, that had never seen but for that Parent that was despised by it.

It may be you are vigorous and young, they decayed, and wrinkled with Age. But saith the Holy Ghost, *Despise not thy Mother when she is old*, *Prov. 23. 22.* Or when she is wrinkled, as the Hebrew signifies. It may be you are rich, they poor; own and honour them in their Poverty, and despise them not. God will requite it with his hand if you do.

Second Query, Have you not been Disobedient to the Commands of Parents? A Son of *Belial* is a Son of Wrath, if God give not Repentance to Life. Is not this the black Brand set upon the Heathens, *Rom. 1. 30.* Have not many repented this upon a Ladder, with an Halter about their Necks? Wo to him that makes a Father or Mother, complain as the Tree in the Fable, that they are cloven asunder with the Wedges that are cut out of their own Bodies.

Third Query, Have you not risen up rebelliously against, and hated your Parents for chastening your Bodies, to save your Souls from Hell? Some Children (saith one) will not take that from a Parent, which Beasts, yea, and Salvage Beasts too; Bears and Lyons will take from their Keepers. What is this but to resist an Ordinance of God for your Good? And in rebelling against them to rebel against the Lord? Well if they do not, God will take the Rod into his own Hand, and him you shall not resist.

Fourth Query, Have you not been unjust to your Parents, and defrauded them? First help to make them poor, and then despise them because they are poor. O horrid Wickedness! What a complicated Evil is this! Thou art in the Language of the Scripture a Companion with Destroyers, *Prov. 28. 24.* This is the worst of Theft in God's Account. You think you may make bold with them, but how bold do you make with Conscience, and the Command of God?

Fifth Query, Are you not, or have you not been ungrateful to Parents? Leaving them to shift for themselves in those Straights you have help'd to bring them into. O consider it, Children, this is an Evil which God will surely avenge, except ye repent. What! to be hardned against thine own Flesh! To be cruel to thine own Parents, that with so much Tendernefs fed thee, when else thou had'st perished! I remember *Luther* gives us a Story of

of one (and oh that it might be a warning to all that hear it) who having made over all he had to his Son, reserving only a maintenance for himself; at last his Son despised him, and grudge'd him the very Meat he eat; and one day the Father coming in when the Son and his Wife were at Dinner upon a Goose, they shuffled the Meat under the Table: But see the remarkable Vengeance of God, upon this ungracious, unnatural Son; the Goose was turn'd into a monstrous Toad which seiz'd upon this vile Wretch and kill'd him. If any of you be guilty of these Evils, to humble you for them, and reclaim them from you, I desire these six Considerations may be laid to heart.

First, That the Effects of your Obedience, or Disobedience will stick upon you and yours to many Generations. If you be obedient Children in the Lord, both you and yours may reap the Fruits of that your Obedience in multitudes of sweet Mercies for many Generations. So runs the Promise, *Eph. 6. 23. Honour thy Father and Mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.* You know what an Eye of Favour God cast upon the *Recabites* for this, *Jer. 35. 8. from the 14th to the 20th Verse*: And as his Blessings are by promise entail'd on the Obedient, so his Curses upon the Disobedient, *Prov. 20. 20. Whoso curseth his Father or his Mother, his Lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness*; (i. e.) the Lamp of his Life quench'd by Death, yea, say others, and his Soul also by the blackness of darkness in Hell.

Secondly, Though other Sins do, this Sin seldom escapes exemplary Punishment, even in this World. Our English History tells us of a Yeoman of *Leicestershire*, who had made over all he had to his Son, to prefer him in Marriage, reserving only a bare maintenance at his Son's Table. Afterward upon some discontent, the Son bid his Father get out of his House. The next day *Mr. Goodman* the Minister of the Parish, meeting the young Man, walking about his Ground, asked him how he did, he answered, very well; but before the Minister was gone far from him, his Bowels fell out, which he carried in his Hands, got to his House, sent for *Mr. Goodman*, bitterly bewailed his Sin against his Father, and so died. And *Dr. Taylor* in his great Exemplar tells us of another, that upon discontent with his Father, wish'd the House might be on fire, if ever he came any more into his Father's House. Afterwards coming in, it was fired indeed, and the wicked Son only consumed. I could multiply Instances of this nature. (for indeed the righteous Judgment of God hath multiplied them) But this only for a taste.

Thirdly, Heathens will rise up in Judgment against you, and condemn you. They never had such Precepts, nor Presidents as you, and yet some of the better natured Heathens would have rather chosen death, than to do as you do. You remember the Story of *Crasus* his dumb Son, whose dear Affections could make him speak when he saw *Crasus* in danger, though he never spake before, yet

then he could cry out, *O do not kill my Father!* But what speak I of Heathens, the Stork in the Heavens, yea, the Beasts of the Earth will condemn the Disobedience of Children.

Fourthly, These are Sins inconsistent with the true fear of God, in whomsoever they are found. That a Man is indeed, which he is in his Family, and among his Relations. He that is a bad Child, can never be a good Christian. Either bring Testimonials of your Godliness from your Relations, or it may be well suspected to be no better than Counterfeit. Never talk of your Obedience to God, whilst your Disobedience to the just Commands of Parents gives you the lie.

Fifthly, A parting time is coming, when Death will break up the Family; and when that time comes, oh how bitter will the remembrance of these Things be! When you shall see a Father or a Mother lying by the Wall, what a cut will it be to remember your Miscarriages and Evils? They are gone out of your reach, you cannot now if you would give them any Satisfaction for what you have done against them; but oh how bitter will the remembrance of these Things be, at such a time! surely this will be more insupportable to you than their death, if the Lord open your Eyes and give you Repentance; and if not, then,

Sixthly, What a terrible thing will it be to have a Father or Mother come in as Witnesses against you at Christ's Bar? As well as they loved you, and as dear as you were to them in this World, they must give evidence against you then. Now what a fearful thing is it for you but to imagine your Parents to come before the Lord, and say, Lord I have given this Child many hundred Reproofs for Sin; I have counselled, persuaded, and used all means to reclaim him, but in vain; he was a Child of Disobedience, nothing could work upon him! What think you of this?

Inference 2. Have you such a Pattern of Obedience and tender Love to Parents, *then Children imitate your pattern, as it becomes Christians; and take Christ for your example.* Whatsoever your Parents be, see that you carry it towards them becoming such as profess Christ.

First, If your Parents be *godly*, O beware of grieving them by any unbecoming Carriage. Art thou a Christian indeed, thou wilt then reckon thyself obliged in a double Bond, both of Grace and Nature to them. O what a mercy would some Children esteem it, if they had Parents that feared the Lord, as you have!

Secondly, If they be *corrupt*, walk circumspectly, in the most precise and punctual discharge of your Duties; for how know'st thou, O Child, but hereby thou may'st win thy Parents? would'st thou but humbly and seriously intreat, and persuade them to mind the ways of Holiness; speaking to them at fit Seasons, with all imaginable Humility and Reverence; insinuating your Devote to Duties, or Trouble for their Evils rather by relating some pertinent History, or proposing some excellent example;

ample; leaving their own Conscience to draw the Conclusion, and make Application, than to do it your selves: It's possible they may ponder your words in their Hearts, as Mary did Christ, *Luke 2. 49, 51.* And would you but back all this with your earnest Cries to Heaven for them, and your own daily example, that they may have nothing from your selves to retort upon you; and thus wait with patience for the desired effect: O what blessed Instruments might you be of their everlasting good!

Inference 3. To conclude, Let those that have such Children as fear the Lord, and endeavour to imitate Christ in these Duties, account them a singular Treasure and Heritage from the Lord, and give them all due encouragement to their Duties.

How many have no Children at all, but are as a dry Tree! And how many have such as are worse than none? The very reproaches, and break-hearts of their Parents,

that bring down their hoary Heads with sorrow to the Grave.

If God have given you the Blessing of godly Children, you can never be sufficiently sensible of, or thankful for such a favour. O that ever God should honour you to bring forth Children for Heaven! What a comfort must this be to you, what ever other Troubles you meet with abroad; when you come home among godly Relations, that are careful to sweeten your own Family to you by their Obedience? Especially what a comfort is it when you come to die, that you leave them within the Covenant! Entitled to Christ, and so need not be anxious how it shall be with them when you are gone. Take heed of discouraging, or damping such Children from whom so much glory is like to rise to God, and so much comfort to your selves. Thus let Christ's Pattern be improved, who went before you in such eminent Holiness in all his Relations, and left you an example that you should follow in his steps.

Serm. 32.

Opens the third of Christ's last words upon the Cross.

SERMON XXXII.

LUKE XXIII. 43.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

IN this Scripture you have the third excellent Saying of Christ upon the Cross, expressing the riches of free Grace to the penitent Thief. A Man that had spent his Life in wickedness, and for his Wickedness was now to lose his Life. His practice had been vile and profane; but now his Heart was broken for it; he proves a Convert, yea, the first Fruits of the Blood of the Cross. In the former Verse he manifests his Faith, *Lord remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom.* In this Christ manifests his Pardon and gracious Acceptance of him; *Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* In which Promise are considerable, the Matter of it, the Person to whom it is made, the Time set for its performance, and the Confirmation of it for his full satisfaction.

First, The Matter or Substance of the Promise made by Christ, *viz.* That he shall be with him in Paradise. By Paradise he means Heaven it self, which is here shadowed to us by a place of Delight and Pleasure. This is the Receptacle of gracious Souls when separated from their Bodies. And that Paradise signifies Heaven it self, and not a third place, as some of the Fathers fondly imagine, is evident from, *2 Cor. 12. 2, 4.* where the Apostle calls the same place by the names of the third Heaven, and the Paradise. This is the place

of Blessedness, designed for the People of God: So you find, *Rev. 2. 7.* *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God;* (i. e.) to have the fullest and most intimate Communion with Jesus Christ in Heaven. And this is the Substance of Christ's Promise to the Thief. Thou (i. e.) thou in Spirit, or thou in thy noblest part, thy Soul; which here bears the name of the whole Person, *Thou shalt be with me in Paradise.*

Secondly, The Person to whom Christ makes this excellent and glorious Promise. It was to one that had lived lewdly and profanely; a very vile and wretched Man in all the former part of his Time, and for his Wickedness now justly under Condemnation. Yea, to one that had reviled Christ, after that Sentence was executed on him. However, now at last the Lord gave him a penitent believing Heart. Now, almost at last gasp, he is loudly in an extraordinary way converted, and being converted, he owns and professes Christ amidst all the shame and reproach of his death. Vindicates his Innocency, and humbly supplicates for Mercy; *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom.*

Thirdly, The set Time for the performance of this gracious Promise to him. *To day,* this very day shalt thou be with me in Glory. Not

Not after the Resurrection, but immediately from the time of thy Dissolution thou shalt enjoy Blessedness. And here I cannot but detect the Cheat of those that deny an immediate state of Glory to Believers after death. Who (to the end this Scripture might not stand in full opposition to their as uncomfortable, as unfound Opinion) loose the whole frame of it, by drawing one Pin; yea, by transposing but a Comma, putting it at the word *day*, which should be at the word *thee*, and so reading it thus, *Verily I say unto thee to day*, referring the word *day* to the time that Christ made the Promise, and not to the time of its performance. But if such a liberty as this be yielded, what may not Men make the Scriptures speak? There can be no doubt, but Christ in this Expression, fixes the Time for his Happiness: *To day shalt thou be with me*.

Thirdly, and lastly, You have here the Confirmation and Seal of his most comfortable Promise to him, with Christ's solemn Affirmation: *Verily I say unto thee*. Higher Security cannot be given. I that am able to perform what I promise, and have not out-promised my self; for Heaven and the Glory thereof are mine. I that am faithful and true to my Promises, and never crack'd or strained my Credit with any; I say it, I solemnly confirm it; *Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*. Hence we have three plain obvious Truths, for our Instruction and Consolation.

Doct. 1. *That there is a future eternal state, into which Souls pass at death.*

Doct. 2. *That all Believers are at their death immediately received into a state of Glory, and eternal Happiness.*

Doct. 3. *That God may, though he seldom doth, prepare Men for this Glory, immediately before their dissolution by Death.*

These are the useful Truths resulting from this remarkable Word of Christ, to the penitent Thief. We will consider and improve them in the Order proposed.

Doct. 1. *That there is a future eternal State, into which Souls pass at death.*

This is a principal Foundation-stone to the hopes and happiness of Souls. And seeing our hopes must needs be as their foundation and ground-work is; I shall briefly establish this Truth by these five Arguments. The Being of a God evinces it; the Scriptures of Truth plainly reveal it; the Consciences of all Men have remembrances of it; the Incarnation and death of Christ is but a vanity without it; and the Immortality of humane Souls plainly discovers it.

Arg. 1. *The Being of a God undeniably evinces a future State for humane Souls after this Life*. For, if there be a God who rules the World which he hath made, he must rule it by Rewards and Punishments, equally and righteously distributed to good and bad. Putting a difference betwixt the obedient and disobedient; the righteous and the wicked. To make a Species of Creatures capable of moral Government, and not to rule them at all; is to make them in vain, and inconsistent with

his Glory who is the last End of all Things. To rule them, but not suitable to their Natures, consists not with that infinite Wisdom from which their Beings proceeded, and by which their Workings are ruled and ordered. To rule them, in a way suitable to their Natures, viz. by Rewards and Punishments, and not to perform, or execute them at all, is utterly incongruous with the Veracity and Truth of him that cannot Lye. This were to impose the greatest Cheat in the World upon Men; and can never proceed from the Holy and True God. So then, as he hath made a rational sort of Creatures, capable of moral Government, by Rewards and Punishments; so he rules them in that way which is suitable to their Natures, promising *it shall be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked*. These Promises and Threatnings can be no cheat, merely intended to scare and fright, where there is no danger; or encourage, where there is no real benefit: but what he promises, or threatens, must be accomplished, and every Word of God take place, and be fulfilled. But it's evident that no such distinction is made by the Providence of God, (at least ordinarily and generally) in this life: but *all things come alike to all: and as with the righteous, so with the wicked*. Yea, here it goes ill with them that fear God, they are oppressed. They receive their evil things, and wicked Men their good. Therefore we conclude, the righteous Judge of the whole Earth, will in another World, recompence to every one according as his Work shall be.

Arg. 2. *Secondly*, And as the very Being of God evinces it, so the Scriptures of truth plainly reveal it. These Scriptures are the *Pandect*, or *System* of the Laws, for the government of Men; which the wise and holy Ruler of the World, hath enacted and ordained for that purpose. And in them we find Promises made to the Righteous, of a full Reward for all their obedience, patience and sufferings in the next Life, or coming World. And threatnings made against the wicked, of eternal wrath and anguish, as the just recompence of their sin, in Hell for ever, *Rom. 2. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. Thou treasurest up to thy self wrath, against the day of wrath; and revelation of the righteous Judgment of God. Who shall render to every man according to his deeds. To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of Man that doth evil, &c. So 2 Thess. 1. 4, 5, 6, 7. So that we our selves glory in you, in the Churches of God, for your patience, and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations, that ye endure. Which is [a manifest token] of the righteous Judgment of God. That ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer. Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven in flaming fire, &c.* To these plain Testimonies, multitudes more might

might be added, if it were needful. Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but these words shall never pass away.

Arg. 3. *Thirdly*, As the Scriptures reveal it, so the Consciences of all men, have some resentments of it. Where is the Man whose Conscience never felt any impressions of hope, or fear from a future World? If it be said these may be but the effects and force of discourse, or education; we have read such things in the Scriptures, or have heard it by Preachers; and so raise up to our selves hopes, and fears about it. I demand, how the Consciences of the Heathens, who have neither Scriptures nor Preachers, came to be impressed with these things. Doth not the Apostle tell us, Rom. 2. 15. *That their Consciences in the mean while work upon these things?* Their thoughts with reference to a future state accuse, or else excuse, (i. e.) their hearts are cheered and encouraged by the good they do, and terrified with fears about the evils they commit. Whereas, if there were no such things, Conscience would neither accuse, nor excuse for good, or evil done in this World.

Arg. 4. *Fourthly*, The incarnation and death of Christ, is but a vanity without it. What did he propose to himself, or what benefit have we by his coming, if there be no such future state? Did he take our nature, and suffer such terrible things in it for nothing? If you say Christians have much comfort from it in this Life. I answer, the comforts they have are raised by faith and expectation of the happiness to be enjoyed as the purchase of his blood in Heaven. And if there be no such Heaven to which they are appointed; no Hell from which they are redeemed, they do but comfort themselves with a Fable, and bless themselves with a thing of nought. Their comfort is no greater than the comfort of a Beggar, that dreams he is a King, and when he awakes finds himself a Beggar still. Surely the ends of Christ's death were to deliver us from the wrath to come, 1 Thes. 1. 10. Not from an imaginary, but a real Hell, to bring us to God, 1 Pet. 3. 18. To be the Author of eternal Salvation to them that obey him, Heb. 5. 9.

Arg. 5. *Fifthly*, and lastly, The immortality of humane Souls puts it beyond all doubt. The Soul of a Man, vastly differs from that of a Beast, which is but a material form, and so wholly depending on, must needs perish with the Matter. But it is not so with us. Ours are reasonable Spirits, that can live and act in a separated state from the Body, Eccles. 3. 21. *Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of a beast that goeth downward to the earth.* So that look as if a Man dispute whether Man be rational, that his very disputing it, proves him to be so; so our disputes, hopes, fears, and apprehensions of eternity, prove our Souls immortal, and capable of that state.

Inference 1. Is there an Eternal State into which Souls pass after this Life. *How precious then is present time, upon the improvement whereof that State depends!* O what a huge weight hath God hanged upon a small wier!

Vol. I.

God hath set us here in a State of Trial; according as we improve these few hours, so will it fare with us to all Eternity. Every day, every hour, nay every moment of your present time hath an influence into your Eternity. Do ye believe this? What, and yet squander away precious time so carelessly, so vainly? How do these things consist? When Seneca heard one promise to spend a Week with a Friend that invited him, to recreate himself with him; he told him, he admired he should make such a rash promise; what (said he) cast away so considerable a part of your Life? How can you do it! Surely our Prodigality in the expence of time, argues we have but little sense of great Eternity.

Infer. 2. *How rational are all the difficulties and severities of Religion, which serve to promote and secure a future eternal Happiness?* So vast is the disproportion betwixt Time and Eternity; things seen, and not seen as yet, the present vanishing, and future permanent state, that he can never be justly reputed a wise Man, that will not let go the best enjoyment he hath on Earth, if it stand in the way of his eternal Happiness. Nor can that Man ever escape the just Censure of notorious Folly, who for the gratifying of his Appetite, and present accommodation of his Flesh, lets go an eternal Glory in Heaven. Darius repented heartily that he lost a Kingdom for a draught of Water. O, said he, *for how short a Pleasure have I sold a Kingdom!* It was Moses's Choice, and his Choice argued his Wisdom; he chose rather to suffer afflictions with the People of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, Heb. 11. 25. Men do not account him a Fool, that will adventure a Penny, upon a probability to gain ten thousand pounds. But sure the disproportion betwixt Time and Eternity is much greater.

Inference 3. If there certainly be such an Eternal State, into which Souls pass immediately after Death; *How great a change then doth Death make upon every Man and Woman!* O what a serious thing is it to die! It's your passage out of the swift River of Time, into the boundless and bottomless Ocean of Eternity. You that now converse with sensible Objects, with Men and Women like your selves, enter then into the World of Spirits. You that now see the continual Revolutions of Days and Nights, passing away one after another, will then be fix'd in a perpetual NOW. O what a serious thing is Death! You throw a Cast for Eternity, when you die. If you were to cast a Dye for your natural Life, oh how would your hand shake with fear, how it would fall? but what is that to this?

The Souls of Men are as it were asleep now in their Bodies; at Death they awake, and find themselves in the World of Realities. Let this teach you both how to carry your selves toward dying Persons when you visit them; and to make every day some Provision for that hour your selves. Be serious, be plain, be faithful with others that are stepping into Eternity; be so with your own Souls every day. O remember what a long wier

Y what

what an amazing thing Eternity is. Especially considering,

Doct. 2. *That all Believers are at their death, immediately received into a State of Glory and eternal Happiness.*

This day shalt thou be with me.

This the Atheist denies; he thinks he shall die, and therefore resolves to live as the Beasts that perish. *Beryllus* and some others after him, taught, that there was indeed a future State of Happiness and Misery for Souls, but that they pass not into it immediately upon Death and Separation from the Body, but shall sleep 'till the Resurrection, and then awake and enter into it. But is not that Soul asleep, or worse, that dreams of a sleeping Soul 'till the Resurrection? Are Souls so wounded and prejudiced by their separation from the Body, that they cannot subliſt or act ſeparate from it? Or have they found any ſuch conceit in the Scriptures? Not at all. The Scripture take notice of no ſuch Interval; but plainly enough denies it, *2 Cor. 5. 8. We are confident, I ſay, and willing rather to be abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord.* Mark it, no ſooner parted from the Body, but preſent with the Lord. So *Phil. 1. 23. I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.* If his Soul was to ſleep 'till the Reſurrection, how was it far better to be diſſolved, than to live? Sure *Paul's* ſtate in the Body had been far better, than his ſtate after Death, if this were ſo; for here he enjoyed much ſweet Communion with God by Faith, but then he ſhould enjoy nothing.

To confirm this Dream, they urge, *John 14. 3. If I go away, I will come again and receive you to my ſelf.* As if the time of Chriſt's receiving his People to himſelf ſhould not come, until his ſecond coming at the end of the World. But though he will then collect all Believers into one Body, and preſent them ſolemnly to his Father: Yet that hinders not, but he may, as indeed he doth receive every particular believing Soul to himſelf at Death, by the Miniſtry of Angels. And if not, how is it that when Chriſt comes to Judgment, he is attended with ten thouſands of his Saints, that ſhall follow him when he comes from Heaven? *Jude 14.* You ſee then the Scripture puts no Interval betwixt the diſſolution of a Saint, and his glorification. It ſpeaks of the Saints that are dead, as already with the Lord. And the Wicked that are dead, as already in Hell, calling them *Spirits in Priſon*, *1 Pet. 3. 19, 20.* aſſuring us that *Judas* went preſently to his own Place, *Acts 1. 25.* and to that ſenſe is the Parable of *Dives and Lazarus*, *Luke 16. 22.*

But let us weigh theſe four Things more particularly, for our full ſatisfaction in this Point.

Arg. 1. *Fiſt*, Why ſhould the Happineſs of Believers be deferred, ſince they are immediately capable of enjoying it, as ſoon as ſeparated from the Body? Alas, the Soul is ſo far from being aſſiſted by the Body, (as it is now) for the enjoyment of God; that it's either clog'd or hindred by it; ſo ſpeaks the

Apottle, *2 Cor. 5. 6, 8. Whileſt we are at home in the body, we are abſent from the Lord.* (i. e.) our Bodies prejudice our Souls, obſtruct and hinder the fulneſs and freedom of their Communion. When we part from the Body, we go home to the Lord. Then the Soul is eſcaped as a Bird out of a Cage or Snare. Here I am prevented by an excellent Pen, which hath judiciously opened this Point. To whoſe excellent Obſervations I only add this, That if the Intanglements, Snares, and Prejudices of the Soul are ſo great and many in its embodied Eſtate, that it cannot ſo freely dilate it ſelf and take in the Comforts of God, by communion with him, then ſurely the laying aſide of that Clog, or the freeing of the Soul from that Burden, can be no barr to its greater Happineſs, which it enjoys in its ſeparated ſtate.

Arg. 2. *Secondly*, Why ſhould the Happineſs and Glory of the Soul be deferred, unleſs God had ſome farther preparative Work to do upon it; before it be fit to be admitted into Glory? But ſurely there is no ſuch Work wrought upon it after its ſeparation by death. All that is done of that kind, is done here. When the *Compoſitum* is diſſolved, all means, duties, and ordinances are ceaſed. The working day is then ended, and night come, when no Man can work, *John 9. 3.* To that purpoſe are thoſe Words of *Solomon*, *Eccleſ. 9. 10. Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might; for there is no wiſdom, nor knowledge, nor device in the Grave whither thou goeſt.* So that our Glorification is not deferred, in order to our fuller preparation for Glory. If we are not fit when we die, we can never be fit. All is done upon us that ever was intended to be done. For they are called, *Heb. 12. 23.* The Spirits of the juſt made perfect.

Arg. 3. *Thirdly*, Again, why ſhould our Salvation ſlumber, when the Damnation of the Wicked doth not ſlumber? God defers not their Miſery, and ſurely he will not defer our Glory. If he be quick with his Enemies, he will not be ſlow and dilatory with his Friends. It cannot be imagined but he is as much inclined to Acts of Favour to his Children, as to Acts of Juſtice to his Enemies, theſe are preſently damned, *Jude 7. Acts 1. 25. 1 Pet. 3. 19, 20.* and what reaſon why Believers, all Believers as well as this in the Text, ſhould not be that very day in which they die, with Chriſt in Glory.

Arg. 4. *Fourthly*, And Laſtly, How do ſuch delays conſiſt with Chriſt's ardent deſires to have his People with him where he is? And with the vehement Longings of their Souls to be with Chriſt? You may ſee theſe reflected Flames of Love and deſire of mutual Enjoyment betwixt the Bridegroom and his Spouſe in *Rev. 22. 17, 20.* Delays make their Hearts ſick. The Expectation and Faith in which the Saints die, is to be ſatiſfied then; and ſurely God will not deceive them. I deny not but their Glory will be more compleat when the Body, their abſent Friend is reunited, and made to ſhare with them in their Happineſs. Yet that hinders not, but mean while

*Mr. Shaw
in his Ware-
net to Life.*

while the Soul may enjoy its Glory, whilst the Body takes its Rest, and sleeps in the Dust.

Inference 1. Are Believers immediately with God after their Dissolution, *then how surprisingly glorious will Heaven be to Believers!* Not that they are in it before they think of it, or are fitted for it, no they have spent many Thoughts upon it before, and been long preparing for it; but the suddenness and greatness of the change is amazing to our Thoughts. For a Soul to be now here in the Body, conversing with Men, living among sensible Objects, and within a few moments to be with the Lord. This hour on Earth, the next in the third Heavens. Now viewing this World, and anon standing among an innumerable Company of Angels, and the Spirits of the Just made perfect. O what a change is this! What! but wink and see God! Commend thy Soul to Christ, and be transferred in the Arms of Angels into the invisible World, the World of Spirits! To live as the Angels of God! To live without eating, drinking, sleeping! To be lifted up from a Bed of Sickness to a Throne of Glory! To leave a sinful troublesome World, a sick and pained Body, and be in a moment perfectly cured, and feel thyself perfectly well, and free from all Troubles and Distempers! You cannot think what this will be. Who can tell what Sights, what Apprehensions, what Thoughts, what Frames believing Souls have before the Bodies they left, are removed from the Eyes of their dear surviving Friends.

Inference 2. Are Believers immediately with God after their Dissolution? *Where then shall Unbelievers be, and in what State will they find themselves immediately after Death hath closed their Eyes!* Ah, what will the case of them be that go the other way?

To be pluck'd out of House and Body, from among Friends and Comforts, and thrust into endless Miseries into the dark Vault of Hell; never to see the Light of this World any more. Never to see a comfortable Sight. Never to hear a joyful Sound. Never to know the meaning of Rest, Peace, or Delight any more. O what a change is here! To exchange the Smiles and Honours of Men, for the Frowns and Fury of God. To be clothed with Flames, and drink the pure unmixed Wrath of God, who was but a few days since clothed in Silks, and fill'd with the Sweet of the Creature, how is the state of things altered with thee! It was the lamentable Cry of poor *Adrian* when he felt Death approaching. O my poor wandering Soul, alas, whither art thou now going! Where must thou lodge this night! Thou shalt never jest more, never be merry more!

Your term in your Houses and Bodies is out, and there is another Habitation provided for you; but 'tis a dismal one! When a Saint dies, Heaven above is as it were moved to receive and entertain him; at his coming he is received into everlasting Habitations. Into the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. When an Unbeliever dies, we may say of him, alluding to *Isa. 14. 9. Hell from beneath is moved for*

him to meet him at his coming, it stirreth up the dead for him. No more Sports nor Plays, no Cups of Wine, nor Beds of Pleasure. The more of these you enjoy'd here, the more intolerable will this change be to you. If Saints are immediately with God, others must be immediately with Satan.

Inference 3. *How little cause have they to fear Death, who shall be with God so soon after their Death?* Some there are that tremble at the Thoughts of Death. That cannot endure to hear its Name mentioned, That would rather stoop to any Misery here, yea, to any Sin, than die, because they are afraid of the exchange: But you that are interested in Christ, need not do so. You can lose nothing by the exchange. The words, *Death, Grave,* and *Eternity,* should have another kind of Sound in your Ears. And make contrary Impressions upon your Hearts. If your earthly Tabernacles cast you out, you shall not be found naked. You have a *building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.* And it is but a step out of this into that. O what fair, sweet, and lovely Thoughts should you have of that great and last change! But what speak I of your fearfulness of Death? Your Duty lies much higher than that far.

Inference 4. *If Believers are immediately with God, after their Dissolution, then it's their Duty to long for their Dissolution.* And cast many a longing look towards their Graves. So did Paul, *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* The Advantages of this exchange are unspeakable. You have Gold for Brass; Wine for Water; Substance for Shadow; solid Glory for very Vanity. O if the Dust of this Earth were but once blown out of your Eyes, that you might see the Divine Glory; how weary would you be to live? How willing to die? But then be sure your Title be found and good. Leave not so great a Concernment to the last. For though it is confessed God may do that in an hour, that never was done all your days, yet it is not common. Which brings us to our third and last Observation.

Doct. 3. *That God may, though he seldom doth, prepare Men for Glory, immediately before their Dissolution by Death.*

There is one Parable, and no more, that speaks of some that were called at the last hour, *Matth. 20. 9, 10.* And therefore is this one Instance in the Text, and no more; that gives us an account of a Person so call'd. We acknowledge God may do it, his Grace is his own, He may dispense it how, and where he pleaseth. We must always save Divine Prerogative. Who shall fix Bounds, or put Limits to free Grace, but God himself, what is it? If he do not ordinarily shew such Mercies to dying Sinners (as indeed he doth not) yet it is not because he cannot, but because he will not. Not because their Hearts are so hardened by long custom in Sin, that his Grace cannot break them; but because he most justly with-holds that Grace from them. When blessed Mr. *Bilney* the Martyr, heard a Minister preaching thus. O thou old Sinner, that hast lain these fifty Years rotting in thy Sin,

O animula
vaguula,
blandula,
heu quo
vadis?
nunquam
lucos dabis,
&c.

doſt thou think now to be ſaved? That the Blood of Chriſt ſhall ſave thee? O, ſaid Mr. *Bilney*, what preaching of Chriſt is this! If I had heard no other preaching than this, what had become of me? No, no old Sinners, or young Sinners, great, or ſmall Sinners are not to be beaten off from Chriſt, but encouraged to Repentance, and Faith. For who knows but the Bowels of Mercy may yearn at laſt upon one that hath all along rejected it? This Thief was as unlikely ever to receive Mercy but a few hours before he died, as any Perſon in the World could be.

But ſurely this is no encouragement to neglect the preſent Seaſons of Mercy, becauſe God may ſhew Mercy hereafter. To neglect the ordinary, becauſe God ſometimes manifeſts his Grace in ways extraordinary. Many I know have hardened themſelves in ways of Sin by this Example of Mercy. But what God did at this Time, for this Man, cannot be expected to be done ordinarily for us. And the Reaſons thereof are,

Reason 1. *Fiſt*, Becauſe God hath vouchſafed us the ordinary and ſtanding means of Grace, which he had not; and therefore we cannot expect ſuch extraordinary and unuſual Conversions as he had. This poor Creature never heard in all likelihood one Sermon preached by Chriſt, or any of the Apoſtles. He lived the Life of a High-way-Man, and concerned not himſelf about Religion; but we have Chriſt preached freely and conſtantly in our Aſſemblies. We have Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept. And when God affords the ordinary Preaching of the Goſpel, he doth not uſe to work Wonders. When *Iſrael* was in the Wilderneſs, then God baked their Bread in Heaven, and clave the Rocks to give them Drink; but when they came to *Canaan*, where they had the ordinary means of Subſiſtence, the *Manna* ceaſed.

Reason 2. *Secondly*, Such a Conversion as this may not be ordinarily expected by any Man, becauſe ſuch a time as that will never come again. It's poſſible if Chriſt were to die again, and thou to be Crucified with him, thou mighteſt receive thy Conversion in ſuch a miraculous and extraordinary way: But Chriſt dies no more. Such a day as that will never come again.

Mr. *Kenner* in his excellent Diſcourſe upon this Point, tells us, That as this was an extraordinary Time, Chriſt being now to be inſtalled in his Kingdom, and crowned with Glory and Honours; ſo extraordinary Things were now done; as when Kings are crowned; the Streets are richly hanged; the Conduits run with Wine; great Malefactores are then pardoned; for then they ſhew their Muſiſſence and Bounty; it is the day of the gladneſs of their Hearts. But let a Man come at another time to the Conduits, he ſhall find no Wine, but ordinary Water there. Let a Man be in the Goal at another time, and he may be hang'd; yea, and hath no reaſon but to expect and prepare for it. What Chriſt did now for this Man, was at an extraordinary Time.

Reason 3. *Thirdly*, Such a Conversion as this may not ordinarily be expected, for as

ſuch a Time will never come again, ſo there will never be the like Reaſon for ſuch a Conversion any more. Chriſt converted him upon the Croſs, to give an Inſtance of his Divine Power at that time when it was almoſt wholly clouded. Look as in that Day the Divinity of Chriſt brake forth in ſeveral Miracles, as the preternatural Eclipse of the Sun. The great Earthquake, the rending of the Rocks, and Vail of the Temple. So in the Conversion of this Man in ſuch an extraordinary way; and all to give evidence of the Divinity of Chriſt, and prove him to be the Son of God whom they crucified. But that is now ſufficiently confirmed, and there will be no more occaſion for Miracles to evidence it.

Reason 4. *Fourthly*, None hath Reaſon to expect the like Conversion, that enjoys the ordinary means; becauſe though in this Convert we have a Pattern of what free Grace can do, yet as Divines pertinently obſerve, it is a Pattern without a Promiſe. God hath not added any Promiſe to it, that ever he will do ſo for any other. And where we have not a Promiſe to encourage our Hope, our Hope can ſignify but little to us.

Inference 1. Let thoſe that have found Mercy in the Evening of their Life, admire the extraordinary Grace that therein hath appeared to them. O that ever God ſhould accept the Bran, when Satan hath had the Flour of thy days! The forementioned reverend Author tells us of one *Marcus Cajus Vidorius*, a very aged Man in the Primitive Times, who was converted from Heatheniſm to Chriſtianity in his old Age. This Man came to *Simplicianus* a Miniſter, and told him he heartily owned and embraced the Chriſtian Faith. But neither he nor the Church would truſt him for a long time. And the Reaſon was the unuſualneſs of a Conversion at ſuch an Age. But after he had given them good Evidence of the reality thereof, there were Acclamations and ſinging of Pſalms, the People every where crying, *Marcus Cajus Vidorius* is become a Chriſtian. This was written for a wonder. Oh, if God have wrought ſuch wondrous Salvations for any of you, what cauſe have you to do more for him than others! What, to pluck you out of Hell when one Foot was in! To appear to you at laſt when ſo hardened by long cuſtom in Sin, that one might ſay, *Can the Ethiopian change his hue, or the Leopard his ſpots?* O what riches of Mercy have appeared to you!

Inference 2. Let this convince and ſtartle ſuch as even to their gray Hairs remain in an unconverted State, who are where they were when they firſt came into the World, yea, rather farther off by much.

Bethink your ſelves, ye that are full of days, and full of Sin; whoſe time is almoſt done, and your great Work not yet begun. Who have but a few Sands more in the upper part of the Glaſs to run down, and then your Conversion will be impoſſible. Your Sun is ſetting, your Night is coming; the Shadows of the Evening are ſtretched out upon you; you have one Foot in the Grave, and the other

other in Hell. O think it all Sense and Tenderness be not withered up, as well as natural Verdure; think with your selves, how sad a case you are in. God may do Wonders, but they are not seen every day; then they would cease to be wondered at. O strive, strive while you have a little Time, and a few Helps and Means more. Strive to get that Work accomplished now that was never done yet. Defer it no longer, you have done so, too much already.

Semper
videtur.

It may be (to use *Seneca's* Expression) you have been these sixty, seventy, or eighty Years beginning to live, about to change your Practice; but hitherto you still continue the same. Do not you see how Satan hath gulled and cheated you with vain Purposes till he hath brought you to the very brink of the Grave and Hell? O 'tis time now to make a stand, and pause a little where you are, and to what he hath brought you. The Lord at last give you an Eye to see, and an Heart to consider.

Inference 3. Lastly, Let this be a call and caution to all young ones to begin with God betime, and take heed of delays 'till the last, so as many thousands have done before them to their eternal ruin. Now is your time, if you desire to be in Christ; if you have any sense of the weight and worth of eternal Things upon your Hearts. I know your Age is voluptuous, and delights not in the serious thoughts of Death and Eternity. You are more inclined to mind your Pleasures, and leave these grave and serious matters to old Age. But let me persuade you against that, by these Considerations.

First, Oh set to the Business of Religion

now, because this is the moulding Age. Now your Hearts are tender, and your Affections flowing. Now is the Time when you are most likely to be wrought upon.

Secondly, Now, because this is the freest Part of your Time. It is in the Morning of your Life, as in the Morning of the Day. If a Man have any Business to be done, let him take the Morning for it. For in the after part of the day a hurry of Business comes on, so that you either forget it, or want opportunity for it.

Thirdly, Now, because your Life is immediately uncertain. You are not certain that ever you shall attain the Years of your Fathers. There are Graves in the Church-yard just of your length. And Skulls of all sorts and fizes in *Golgotha*, as the Jews Proverb is.

Fourthly, Now, because God will not spare you because you are but young Sinners, little Sinners, if you die Christless. If you are not as you think old enough to mind Christ, surely if you die Christless, you are old enough to be damned. There's the snail spray, as well as great logs in the fire of Hell.

Fifthly, Now, because your Life will be the more eminently useful, and serviceable to God, when you know him betime, and begin with him early. *Austin* repented, and so have many thousands since him, that he began so late, and knew God no sooner.

Sixthly, Now, because your Life will be the sweeter to you, when the morning of it is dedicated to the Lord. The first Fruits sanctifie the whole Harvest. This will have a sweet Influence into all your days. Whatever Changes, Straights, or Troubles you may afterwards meet with.

Serm. 33.

Open the
fourth ex-
cellent say-
ing of
Christ
upon the
Cross.

SERMON XXXIII.

MATTH. XXVII. 46.

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani? that is to say, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Non igno-
ro quidem
verba hæc
et verba
et
summa ani-
mæ angus-
tia veritas
in effe.
Hinc in
lat.

THIS Verse contains the fourth memorable saying of Christ upon the Cross. Words able to rend the hardest Heart in the World. It is the Voice of the Son of God in an Agony. His Sufferings were great, very great before, but never in that Extremity as now, when this heaven-rending and heart-melting out-cry brake from him upon the Cross, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachtani?* In which words are considerable, the time, matter and manner of this his last Complaint.

First, The time when it was uttered; about the ninth hour, (i. e.) about three of the Clock

after Noon. For as the Jews divided the Night into four Quarters, or Watches: So they divided the Day in like manner into four Quarters, or greater Hours. Which had their Names from that Hour of the Day that closed the Quarter. So that beginning their account of their lesser Hours from six in the Morning, which with them was the first; their ninth Hour answer'd to our third after Noon. And this is heedfully mark'd by the Evangelists on purpose to shew us how long Christ hang'd in distress upon the Cross, both in Soul and Body, which at least was full three Hours. Towards the end of which his Soul

Soul was so filled, distressed, and overwhelmed; that this doleful Cry brake from his Soul, in bitter Anguish, *My God, my God, &c.*

Secondly, The matter of the Complaint. It is not of the cruel Tortures he felt in his Body, nor of the Scoffs and Reproaches of his Name; he mentions not a word of these, they were all swallowed up in the Sufferings within, as the River is swallowed up in the Sea, or the lesser Flame in the greater. He seems to neglect all these, and only complains of what was more burdensome than ten thousand Croffes. Even his Father's deserting him, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* It is a more inward Trouble that burdens him, Darknels upon his Spirit, the hidings of God's Face from him, an Affliction he was totally a Stranger to, 'till now. Here he lays his Hand in this Complaint. This was the pained Place, to which he points in this dolorous Out-cry.

Thirdly, The manner in which he utters his sad Complaint, and that was with a remarkable *Vehemency*, he cried with a loud Voice, not like a dying Man, in whom Nature was spent, but as one full of Vigour, Life, and Sense. He gathered all his Spirits together, stirred up the whole Power of Nature when he made this grievous Out cry. There is in it also an *emphatical Reduplication*, which shews with what vehemency it was uttered. Not singly, *my God*, but he doubles it, *my God, my God*, as distressed Persons use to do. So *Elisha*, when *Elijah* was separated from him by the Chariots and Horses of Fire, cries out, *my Father, my Father*.

Nay, moreover, to encrease the force and vehemency of this Complaint, here is an *affectionate Interrogation*: *Why hast thou forsaken me?* Questions, especially such as this, are full of Spirits. It is as if he were surprised by the strangeness of this Affliction: And rousing up himself with an unusual vehemency, turns himself to the Father, and cries, why so, my Father; O what do'st thou mean by this? What, hide that Face from me that was never hid before! What, and hide it from me now, in the depth of my Torments and Troubles! O what new, what strange things are these! Lastly, Here is an *observable Variation* of the Language in which this astonishing Complaint was uttered. For he speaks both *Hebrew* and *Syriack* in one Breath, *Eli, Eli, lama*, are all *Hebrew*, *Sabachani* is a *Syriack* word, used here for emphasis sake. Hence we observe,

Doct. That God in design to heighten the Sufferings of Christ to the uttermost, sought him in the time of his greatest Distress, to the unspeakable Affliction and Anguish of his Soul.

This Proposition shall be considered in three Parts. The Desertion it self. The Design or end of it. The Effect and influence it had on Christ.

First, The Desertion it self. Divine Desertion generally considered is God's withdrawing himself from any, not as to his Essence, that fills Heaven and Earth, and constantly remains the same. But it's the with-

drawment of his Favour, Grace, and Love. When these are gone, God is said to be gone. And this is done two ways, either *absolutely*, and wholly, or *respectively*, and only as to manifestation. In the first sense, Devils are forsaken of God. They once were in his Favour and Love, but they have utterly and finally lost it. God is so withdrawn from them, as that he will never take them into Favour any more. In the other sense he sometimes forsakes his dearest Children, (*i.e.*) he removes all sweet Manifestations of his Favour and Love for a time, and carries it to them as a Stranger, though his Love be still the same.

And this kind of Desertion which is respective, temporary, and only in regard of Manifestation, is justly distinguished from the various ends and designs of it, into *Probational*, *Cautional*, *Castigatory*, and *Penal*. *Probational* Desertions are only for the proof and trial of Grace. *Cautional* Desertions are designed to prevent Sin. *Castigatory* Desertions are God's Rods to chastize his People for Sin. *Penal* Desertions are such as are inflicted as the just reward of Sin, for the Reparation of that wrong Sinners have done by their Sins. Of this sort was Christ's Desertion. A part of the Curse, and a special part. And his bearing it was no small part of the Reparation, or Satisfaction he made for our Sins.

More particularly, to open the Nature of this Desertion of Christ by his Father, there being much of intricacy and difficulty in it. I shall proceed in the Explication of it *Negatively* and *Positively*.

First, Negatively, when Christ cries out of God's forsaking him, he doth mean that he had dissolved the personal Union of the two Natures. Not as if the marriage Knot which united our Nature to the Person of Christ was loosed, or a Divorce made betwixt them. No, for when he was forsaken of God, he was still true and real *God-man* in one Person.

Secondly, When Christ bewails the Father's forsaking him, he doth not mean that he pulled away the Prop of divine Support from him, by which he had 'till then endured the Tortures and Sufferings that oppressed him. No, though the Father deserted, yet he still supported him. And so much is intimated in these Words of Christ, *Eli, Eli*, which signifies my strong one, my strong one. God was with him by way of Support, when withdrawn as to Manifestations of Love and Favour. In respect of God's supporting Presence which was with Christ at this time; it's said, *Isa. 42. 1. Behold my Servant whom I uphold*, and *John 16. 32. I am not alone, but my Father is with me*. So that this cannot be the meaning of it.

Thirdly, Much less is it his meaning that God had left him, as to inherent Grace and Sanctification. Recalling that Spirit of Holiness which had anointed him above his Fellows. No, no: When he was forsaken he remained as holy as ever. He had indeed less comfort, but not less holiness than before. Such a Desertion had irritated and made void the

the very end of his Death. And his Sacrifice could never have yielded such a fragrant Odor to God as it did, *Eph. 5. 2.*

Fourthly, The Love of God was not so withdrawn from Christ, as that *the Father had now no Love for him*, nor Delight in him. That's impossible; he can no more cease to love Christ, than to love himself. His Love was not turned into Wrath. Though his Wrath only was now manifested to him as our Surety; and hid his Love from him, as his beloved Son.

Fifthly, Nor was Christ *forsoaken by his Father finally*, upon what account soever it was that he was forsaken. No, it was but for a few Hours that the dark Cloud dwelt over his Soul: It soon pass'd away. And the bright and glorious Face of God shone forth again, as bright as ever, *Psaln 22. 1, 24.* Compared.

Sixthly, And Lastly, It was *not a mutual Desertion* or a Desertion on both Parts; the Father forsook him, but he forsook not his Father. When God withdrew, he followed him, crying, *My God, my God.*

Yet to speak positively of it; though it did not dissolve the Personal Union, nor cut off Divine Supports, nor remove his Inherent Grace, nor turn his Father's Love into Hatred, nor continue for ever, nor yet was it on both Parts, Christ's forsaking God, as well as God forsaking Christ; yet I say it was,

First, A very sad Desertion, the like unto which in all respects never was experienced by any, nor can be to the end of the World. All his other Things were but small Things to this; they bare upon his Body, these upon his Soul. They came from the Hands of vile Men, this from the Hand of a dear Father. He suffered both in Body and Soul; but the Sufferings of his Soul, were the very Soul of his Sufferings. Under all his other Sufferings he opened not his Mouth, but this touch'd the Quick, that he could not but cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Secondly, As it was sad, so it was a Penal Desertion, inflicted on him for satisfaction for those Sins of ours, which deserved that God should forsake us for ever, as the damned are forsaken by him. So that this Cry (as one observes) was like the perpetual Shriek of them that are cast away for ever. This was that Hell, and the Torments of it which Christ our Surety suffered for us. For look as there lies a twofold Misery upon the damned in Hell, *viz. Pain of Sense, and Pain of Loss.* So upon Christ answerably there was not only an Impression of Wrath, but also a Substraction of withdraughtment of all sensible Favour and Love. Hence it's said by himself, *John 12. 27.* And now my Soul *troubles* me is troubled. The word signifies troubled as they that are in Hell are troubled. Though God did not leave his Soul in Hell, as others are; he having enough to pay the Debt which they have not, yet in the Torments thereof at this time he was. Yea, in Sufferings at this time in his Soul, equivalent to all that which our Souls should have suffered there, to all Eternity.

Thirdly, It was a Desertion that was real, and not fictitious. He doth not personate a deserted Soul, and speak as if God had withdrawn the comfortable sense and influence of his Love from him; but the thing was so indeed. The God-head restrained and kept back for this time, all its Joys, Comforts, and Sense of Love from the Man-hood; yielding it nothing but support. This bitter doleful Out-cry of Christ gives evidence enough of the reality of it. He did not feign but feel the burdenfomeness of it.

Fourthly, This Desertion fell out in the time of Christ's greatest need of Comfort, that ever he had in all the time of his Life on Earth. His Father forsook him at that time, when all earthly Comforts had forsaken him; and all outward Evils had broken in together upon him. When Men, yea, the best of Men, stood afar off, and none but barbarous Enemies were about him. When Pains and Shame, and all Miseries even weighed him down, then even then to compleat and fill up his Sufferings, God stands afar off too.

Fifthly, And Lastly, It was such a Desertion as left him only to the Supports of his Faith. He had nothing else now but his Father's Covenant and Promise to hang upon. And indeed as a judicious Author pertinently observes, the Faith of Christ did several ways act and manifest it self, in these very words of Complaint in the Text.

For though all comfortable Sights of God, and Sense of Love were obstructed, yet you see his Soul cleaves fiducially to God for all that. *My God, &c.* Though Sense and Feeling speak as well as Faith; yet Faith speaks first, *My God*, before Sense speaks a word of his forsaking. His Faith prevented the Complaint and Sense, and though Sense comes in afterward with a word of Complaint, yet here are two words of Faith, to one of Sense. It is, *My God, my God*, and but one word of forsaking. As his Faith spake first, so it spake twice when Sense and Feeling spake but once. Yea, and as Faith spake first, and twice as much as Sense, so it spake more confidently than Sense did. He lays a confident Claim to God as his God; *My God, my God*, and only Queries about his forsaking of him; *Why hast thou forsaken me?* This is spoken more dubiously, the former most confidently.

To be short, his Faith laid hold on God, under a most suitable Title, or Attribute, *Eli, Eli*, my strong one, my strong one, *q. d.* O thou with whom is infinite and everlasting Strength, thou that hast hitherto supported my Man-hood, and according to thy Promise upheld thy Servant; what wilt thou now forsake me? My strong one, I lean upon thee. To these Supports and Refuges of Faith this Desertion shut up Christ. By these Things he stood when all other visible and sensible Comforts slunk away both from his Soul and Body. This is the true, though brief Account of the Nature and Quality of Christ's Desertion.

Secondly, In the next place let us consider the Designs and Ends of it; which were principally

*Necesse
nec thea-
trix con-
queritur
à patre
derelictum.
Et quod
nonnulli
ex vulgi
opinione
hic locum
obtendunt,
infidum
est Cavi-
lum. Calv.*

*Mr. Cafe's
Correllum
Infirmitas,
p. 51, 52.*

capially Satisfaction and Sanctification. Satisfaction for those Sins of ours which deserved that we should be totally and everlastingly forsaken of God. This is the desert of every Sin, and the damned do feel it, and shall to all Eternity. God is gone from them for ever, not essentially; the just God is with them still, the God of Power is still with them, the avenging God is ever with them; but the merciful God is gone, and gone for ever. And thus would he have withdrawn himself from every Soul that sinned, had not Christ born that Punishment for us, in his own Soul; if he had not cried, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* We must have howled out this hideous Complaint in the lowest Hell for ever, O righteous God, O dreadful God, O terrible God, thou hast for ever forsaken me.

And as Satisfaction was design'd in this Desertion of Christ, so also was the Sanctification of all the Desertions of the Saints design'd in it. For he having been forsaken before us, and for us, when ever God forsakes us, that very forsaking of his is sanctified, and thereby turned into a Mercy to Believers. Hence are all the precious Fruits and Effects of our Desertions. Such are the earnest Excitations of the Soul to Prayer, *Psal.* 77. 2. *Psal.* 88. 1, 9. The antidoting the tempted Soul against Sin. The reviving of ancient Experiences, *Psal.* 77. 5. Enhaunting the value of the Divine Presence with the Soul, and teaching it to hold Christ faster than ever before, *Cant.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. These and many more are the precious Effects of sanctified Desertion; but how many or how good soever these Effects are, they do all owe themselves to Jesus Christ, as to the Author of them. Who for our sakes would pass through this sad and dark State, that we might find those Blessings in it. So then, the God-head's suspending of all the Effects of Joy and Comfort from the Humanity of Christ at this time, which had not ceased to flow into it an ineffable measure and manner till now, must needs be both a special part of Christ's Satisfaction for us, and consequently that which makes all our temporary Desertions rather Mercies and Blessings than Curses to us.

Thirdly, Let us in the next place consider the Effect and Influence this Desertion had upon the Spirit of Christ.

And though it did not drive him to despair as the Papists falsely charge Mr. Calvin to have affirmed; yet it even amazed him, and almost swallowed up his Soul in the Deep of Trouble and Conternation. This Cry is a Cry from the Deep; from a Soul oppressed even to Death. Never was the Lord Jesus so put to it before. It is a most astonishing Outcry.

Let but five Particulars be weighed, and you will say, Never was there any Darkeness like this. No Sorrow like Christ's Sorrow in his deserted State. For,

First, Apprehend, Reader, this was a new thing to Christ and that which he was never acquainted with before. From all Eternity until now, there had been constant and won-

derful Out-lets of Love, Delight, and Joy, from the Bosom of the Father, into his Bosom. He never missed his Father before. Never saw a Frown, or a Vail upon that blessed Face before. This made it an heavy Burden indeed, the words are words of wonderment and admiration; *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!* Thou that never did'st so before, hast forsaken me now.

Secondly, As it was a new thing to Christ, and therefore the more amazing; so it was a great thing to Christ, so great that he scarce knew how to support it. Had it not been a great Tryal indeed, so great a Spirit as Christ's was would never have so droop'd under it, and made so sad a Complaint of it. It was so sharp, so heavy an Affliction to his Soul; that it caused him who was meek under all other Sufferings as a Lamb, to roar under this like a Lion. For so much those Words of Christ signify, *Psal.* 22. 1. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from the voice of my roaring?* It comes from a Root that signifies to howl or roar as a Lion. And rather signifies the noise made by a wild Beast, than the Voice of a Man.

And it is as much as if Christ had said, O my God, no words can express my anguish. I will not speak, but roar, howl out my Complaint. Pour it out in Volleys of Groans. I roar as a Lion. It's no small matter will make that majestic Creature to roar. And sure so great a Spirit as Christ's, would not have roared under a slight Burden.

Thirdly, As it was a great Burden to Christ, so it was a Burden laid on in time of his greatest distress. When his Body was in Tortures, and all about him was black, dismal, and full of Horror, and Darknes. He fell into this Desertion at a time when he never had the like need of Divine Supports and Comforts, and that aggravated it.

Fourthly, It was a Burden that lay upon him long, even from the time his Soul began to be sorrowful and sore amazed in the Garden, till his very death. If you were but to hold your Finger in the Fire for two Minutes, you would not be able to bear it. But what is the Finger of a Man, to the Soul of Christ? Or what is material Fire, to the Wrath of the great God!

Fifthly, So heavy was this pressure upon Christ's Soul, that in all probability it hastened his death; for it was not usual for crucified Persons to expire so soon; and those that were crucified with him, were both alive after Christ was gone. Some have hanged more than a day and night, some two full days and nights in those Torments alive; but never did any feel inwardly, what Christ felt. He bare it till the ninth hour, and then makes a fearful Outcry, and dies. The Utes follow.

Inference 1. Did God forsake Christ upon the Cross, as a punishment to him for our Sins? Then it follows, that as often as we have sinned, so oft have we deserved to be forsaken of God. This is the just recompence and demerit of Sin. And indeed here lies the principal

pal evil of sin, that it separates betwixt God and the Soul. This separation is both the *moral* Evil that is in it, and the *penal* Evil inflicted by the righteous God for it. By Sin we depart from God, and as a due punishment of it, God departs from us. This will be the dismal Sentence in the last day, *Matthew 25. Depart from me, ye cursed.* Thenceforth there will be a Gulph fixed betwixt God and them, *Luke 19. 20.* No more friendly intercourses with the blessed God for ever. The eternal shriek of the damned is, *Woe, and alas, God hath forsaken us for ever more.* Ten thousand Worlds can no ways recompence the Loss of one God. Beware sinners how you say to God now, *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways,* lest he say, *Depart from me, you shall never see my Face.*

Inference 2. Did Christ never make such a sad Complaint and Outcry 'till God hid his Face from him? Then the *hiding of God's Face, is certainly the greatest Misery that can possibly befall a gracious Soul in this World.* When they scourged, buffeted, and smote Christ, yea, when they nailed him to the Tree, he opened not his Mouth; but when his Father hid his Face from him, then he cried out; yea, his Voice was the Voice of roaring; this was more to him than a thousand Crucifyings. And surely as it was to Christ, so it is to all gracious Souls the saddest stroke, the heaviest Burden that ever they felt. When *David* forbade *Absalom* to come to *Jerusalem* to see his Father, he complains in *2 Sam. 14. 32. Wherefore (said he) am I come from Gethur, if I may not see the King's face?* So doth the gracious Soul bemoan it self, wherefore am I redeemed, called, and reconciled; If I may not see the Face of my God?

It's said of *Tully*, when he was banished from *Italy*, and of *Demosthenes*, when he was banished from *Athens*, that they wept every time they looked towards their own Country. And is it strange that a poor deserted Believer should mourn every time he looks Heavenward? Say, Christian, did the Tears never trickle down thy Cheeks when thou looked'st toward Heaven, and could'st not see the Face of thy God as at other times? If two dear Friends cannot part, though it be but for a Season, but that parting must be in a shower: Blame not the Saints if they sigh and mourn bitterly when the Lord, who is the Life of their Life, departs; though but for a season from them; for if God depart, their sweetest Enjoyment on Earth, the very Crown of all their Comforts is gone, and what will a King take in exchange for his Crown? What can recompence to a Saint, the loss of his God! Indeed, if they had never seen the Lord, or tasted the incomparable Sweetness of his Presence, it were another matter; but the Darkness which follows the sweetest Light of his Countenance is double Darkness.

And that which doth not a little increase the horror of this darkness is, that when their Souls are thus benighted, and the Sun of their comfort is set; then doth Satan, like the wild Beasts of the Desert, creep out of his Den,

Vol. I.

and roars upon them with hideous Temptations. Surely this is a sad state, and deserves tender pity. Pity is a due debt to the distressed, and the World shews not a greater distress than this. If ever you have been in Troubles of this kind your selves, you will never slight others in the same case! Nay, one end of God's exercising you with Troubles of this Nature, is to teach you Compassion towards others in the same case. Do they not cry to you, as *Job 19. 21. Have pity, have pity upon me, O ye my Friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.* Draw forth Bowels of Mercy and tender Compassion to them, for either you have been, or are, or may be in the same case your selves; however, if Men do not, to be sure Christ that hath felt it before them, and for them, will pity them.

Inference 3. Did God really forsake Jesus Christ upon the Cross? Then from the Desolation of Christ's, singular Consolation springs up to the People of God; yea, manifold Consolation. Principally it's a support in these two Respects, As it is *preventive* of your final Desolation, and a comfortable pattern to you in your present sad Desertions.

First, Christ's Desolation is *preventive* of your final Desolation. Because he was forsaken for a time, you shall not be forsaken for ever. For he was forsaken for you. And God's forsaking him, though but for a few hours, is equivalent to his forsaking you for ever. It is every way as much for the dear Son of God, the darling delight of his Soul, to be forsaken of God for a time; as if such a poor inconsiderable Thing as thou art, should'st be cast off to Eternity. Now this being equivalent, and born in thy room, must needs give thee the highest security in the World, that God will never finally withdraw from thee. Had he intended to have done so, Christ had never made such a sad Outcry as you hear this day, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Secondly, Moreover, this sad Desolation of Christ becomes a comfortable pattern to poor deserted Souls in divers respects: And the proper Business of such Souls at such times, is to eye it believingly, in these six Respects.

First, Though God deserted Christ, yet at the same time he powerfully supported him. His omnipotent Arms were under him, though his pleased Face was hid from him. He had not indeed his Smiles, but he had his Supportations. So (Christian) just so shall it be with thee. Thy God may turn away his Face, he will not pluck away his Arm. When one asked of holy Mr. *Baines* how the case stood with his Soul, he answered, *Supports I have, though Sweetness I want.* Our Father in this deals with us, as we our selves sometimes do with a Child that is stubborn and rebellious. We turn him out of doors, and bid him be gone out of our sight; and there he sighs and weeps; but however, for the humbling of him we will not presently take him into House and Favour; yet we order, at least permit the Servants to carry him Meat and Drink. Here is fatherly care, and support; though

though no former smiles, or manifested delights.

Secondly, Though God deserted Christ, yet he deserted not God. His Father forsook him, but he could not forsake his Father, but followed him with this Cry, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

And is it not even so with you? God goes off from your Souls, but you cannot go off from him. No, your Hearts are mourning after the Lord. Seeking him carefully with Tears. Complaining of his absence as the greatest Evil in this World. This is Christ-like. So it was with the Spouse, *Cant. 3. 1, 2.* Her beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone; but was the content to part with him so? No such thing. *By night on my bed, I sought him whom my soul loveth; I sought him but I found him not; I will arise now, and go about the City, &c.*

Thirdly, Though God forsook Christ, yet he returned to him again. It was but for a time, not for ever. In this also doth his Desertion parallel yours. God may for several wife and holy Reasons hide his Face from you, but not so as it's hid from the damned; who shall never see it again. This Cloud will pass away. This Night shall have a bright Morning. For (saith thy God) *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wrath; for the Spirit shall fail before me, and the souls which I have made.* As if he should say, I may contend with him for a time, to humble him; but not for ever, lest instead of a sad Child, I should have a dead Child. Oh the Tenderness even of a displeased Father!

Fourthly, Though God forsook Christ, yet at that time he could justify God. So you read, *Psal. 22. 2, 3.* *O my God (saith he) I cry in the day time; but thou hearest not, and in the night season, and am not silent; but thou art holy.* Is not thy Spirit according to thy Measure, framed like Christ's in this; canst thou not say even when he writes bitter Things against thee, he is a holy, faithful, and good God for all this? I am deserted, but not wronged. There is not one drop of Injustice, in all the Sea of my Sorrows. Tho' he condemn me, I must and will justify him, this also is Christ-like.

Fifthly, Though God took from Christ all visible and sensible Comforts, inward as well as outward; yet Christ subsisted by Faith in the absence of them all. His Desertion put him upon the acting of his Faith. *My God, my God*, are words of Faith. The words of one that rolls upon his God. And is it not so with you too? Sense of Love is gone, sweet sights of God shut up in a dark Cloud; well, what then? Must thy hands presently hang down, and thy Soul give up all its hopes? What! is there no Faith to relieve in this case? Yes, Yes, and blessed be God for Faith. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servants, that walketh in darkness and hath no light; let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God, Isa. 50. 10.* To conclude,

Sixthly, Christ was deserted, a little before the glorious morning of Light and Joy dawn-

ed upon him. It was a little, a very little while, after this sad cry, before he triumphed gloriously. And so it may be with you. Heaviness may endure for a night, but Joy and Gladness will come in the morning. You know how Mr. Glover was transported with Joy, and cried out, as a Man in a Rapture, *O Austin*, he is come, he is come, he is come, meaning the Comforter, who for some time had been absent from his Soul.

But I fear I am absolutely and finally forsaken.

Why so? Do you find the Characters of such a Desertion upon your Soul? Be righteous Judges, and tell me, whether you find an Heart willing to forsake God? Is it indifferent now to you whether God ever return again or no? Are there no mournings, meltings, hankerings after the Lord? Indeed, if you forsake him, he will cast you off for ever. But can you do so? Oh no, let him do what he will, I am resolved to wait for him, cleave to him, mourn after him, though I have no present comfort from him, no assurance of my interest in him; yet will I not exchange my poor weak hopes, for all the good in this World.

Again, You say God hath forsaken you, but hath he *let loose the bridle before you*? To allude to *Job 30. 11.* Hath he taken away from your Souls, all conscientious Tenderness of sin, so that now you can sin freely, and without any regret? If so, it's a sad token indeed. Tell me, Soul, if thou judgest indeed God will never return in loving kindness to thee any more; why dost thou not then give thyself over to the Pleasures of sin, and fetch thy Comforts that way from the Creatures since thou canst have no Comfort from thy God? Oh no, I cannot do so. If I die in darkness and sorrow, I will never do so. My Soul is as full of fear and hatred of sin, as ever, tho' empty of joy and comfort. Surely these are no tokens of a Soul finally abandoned by its God.

Inference 4. Did God forsake his own Son upon the Cross? *Then the dearest of God's People may for a time be forsaken of their God.* Think it not strange when you that are the Children of Light, meet with Darkness, yea, and walk in it. Neither charge God foolishly. Say not he deals hardly with you. You see what befel Jesus Christ, whom his Soul delighted in. It's doubtless your concernment to expect, and prepare for days of Darkness. You have heard the doleful Cry of Christ, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* You know how it was with *Job, David, Heman, Asaph*, and many others the dear Servants of God. What heart melting Lamentations they have made upon this account. And are you better than they? Oh prepare for spiritual Troubles. I am sure you do enough every day to involve you in Darkness. Now if at any time this Trial befall you, mind these two seasonable *Admonitions*, and lay them up for such a time.

Admonition 1. First, *Exercise the Faith of adherence, when you have lost the Faith of Evidence.* When God takes away that, he leaves this.

this. That is necessary to the comfort, this to the life of his People. It's sweet to live in views of your interest, but if they be gone, believe and roll on God for an interest. Stay your selves on your God, when you have no Light, *Isa.* 50. 10. Drop this Anchor in the dark, and do not reckon all gone, when Evidence is gone. Never reckon your selves undone, whilst you can adhere to your God. Direct acts are noble acts of Faith, as well as reflexive ones. Yea, and in some respects to be preferred to them. For,

First, As your comfort depends on the Evidencing Acts of Faith, so your Salvation upon the adhering Act of Faith. Evidence comforts, assurance saves you. And sure Salvation is more than Comfort.

Secondly, Your faith of Evidence hath more sensible Sweetness, but your faith of adherence is of more Constancy, and Continuance. The former is as a flower in its Month, the latter sticks by you all the year.

Thirdly, Faith of evidence brings more joy to you, but Faith of adherence, brings more glory to God. For thereby you trust him when you cannot see him. Yea, you believe not only without, but against sense and feeling. And doubtless that which brings glory to God, is better than that which brings comfort to you. O then, exercise this, when you have lost that.

Admonition 2. *Secondly*, Take the right method to recover the sweet Light which you have sinned away from your Souls. Do not go about from one to another complaining; nor

yet set down desponding under your Burden. But.

First, Search diligently after the cause of God's withdrawalment. Urge him hard by Prayer to tell thee whereof he contends with thee, *Job* 10. 2. Say, Lord, what have I done that so offends thy Spirit? what Evil is it which thou so rebukest? I beseech thee shew me the cause of thine Anger; have I grieved thy Spirit in this thing, or in that? was it my neglect of duty, or my formality in duties? was I not thankful for the sense of thy Love, when it was shed abroad in my Heart? O Lord, why is it thus with me?

Secondly, Humble your Souls before the Lord for every Evil you shall be convinced of. Tell him it pierces your Hearts that you have so displeased him. And that it shall be a caution to you whilst you live, never to return again to folly. Invite him again to your Souls, and mourn after the Lord 'till you have found him. If you seek him, he will be found of you, *2 Cor.* 15. 2. It may be you shall have a thousand Comforters come about your sad Souls in such a time to comfort them. This will be to you instead of God, and that will repair your loss of Christ. Despise them all, and say, I am resolved to sit as a Widow 'till Christ return; he or none shall have my Love.

Thirdly, Wait on the use of Means 'till Christ return. O be not discouraged. Tho' he tarry, wait you for him, for blessed are all they that wait for him.

SERMON XXXIV.

JOHN XIX. 28.

After this, Jesus knowing that all things were accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I Thirst.

IT is as truly as commonly said, *Death is dry*: Christ found it so, when he died. When his Spirits laboured in the Agonies of death, then he said, *I thirst*.

This is the fifth word of Christ upon the Cross, spoken a little before he bowed the Head and yielded up the Ghost. It is only recorded by this *Evangelist*, and there are four Things remarkable in this Complaint of Christ, *viz.* The Person complaining. The Complaint he made. The Time when. And the Reason why he so complained.

First, The Person complaining. *Jesus said, I thirst*. This is a clear Evidence that it was no common suffering. Great and resolute Spirits will not complain for small Matters. The Spirit of a common Man will endure much, before it utters any Complaint. Let us therefore see,

Vol. I.

Secondly, The Affliction or Suffering he complains of; and that is *Thirst*. There are two sorts of Thirst. One natural and proper, another spiritual and figurative. Christ felt both at this time. His Soul thirsted in vehement desires and longings to accomplish and finish that great and difficult work he was now about. And his Body thirsted for reason of those unparellel'd Agonies it laboured under, for the accomplishing thereof. But it was the proper natural thirst he here intends, when he said, *I thirst*. No this natural Thirst of which he complains, is the raging of the Appetite for humid nourishment, arising from scorching up of the parts of the Body for want of moisture. And amongst all the pains and afflictions of the Body, there can scarcely be named a greater, and more intollerable one than extrem Thirst. The most mighty

Z 2

and

Serm. 34.

Opens the
fifth ex-
cellent say-
ing of
Christ
upon the
Cross.

*Sitis est
cupiditas
nutrimenti,
potissimum
humiditatis
ortu
one parti-
um corporis
animatis;
is; quæ
irrigatione
egent.
Kerkerus
Physicks.
p. 404.*

and valiant have stooped under it. Mighty Samson after all his Conquests and Victories, complains thus, *Jud. 15. 18. And he was fore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant, and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?* Great *Darius* drank filthy Water, defiled with the Bodies of the Slain, to relieve his Thirst; and protested, never any drink was more pleasant to him. Hence, *Isa. 41. 17. Thirst is put to express the most afflicted state. When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst: I the Lord will hear them, (i. e.) when my People are in extrem necessities under any extraordinary pressures and distresses; I will be with them, to supply and relieve them. Thirst causes a most painful compression of the Heart, when the Body like a Sponge sucks and draws forth moisture, and there is none. And this may be occasioned either by long abstinence from drink, or by the labouring and expence of the Spirits under grievous Agonies, and extrem Tortures; which like a fire within soon scorches up the very radical moisture.*

Now though we find not, that Christ tasted a drop of Liquor since he sat with the Disciples at the Table, after that no more refreshments for him in this World: Yet that was not the cause of this raging Thirst; but it is to be ascribed to the extrem Sufferings which he so long had conflicted with, both in his Soul and Body. These preyed upon him and drank up his very Spirits. Hence came this sad complaint, *I thirst.*

Thirdly, Let us consider the time when he thus complained. *When all things were now accomplished, saith the Text, (i. e.) when all things were even ready to be accomplished in his death. A little, a very little while before his expiration. When the trawling throws of death began to be strong upon him. And so it was both a sign of death at hand, and of his love to us which was stronger than death, that would not complain sooner, because he would admit of no relief, nor take the least refreshment till he had done his work.*

Fourthly, and Lastly, Take notice of the design and end of his complaint. *That the Scriptures might be fulfilled, he saith, I thirst, (i. e.) that it might appear for the Satisfaction of our Faith, that whatsoever had been predicted by the Prophets, was exactly accomplished, even to a circumstance in him. Now it was foretold of him, Psalm 69. 21. They gave me Gall for my meat, and in my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink; and herein it was verified.* Hence the Note is,

Doct. *That such were the Agonies and extrem Sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross, as drank up his very Spirits, and made him cry, I thirst.*

If I (said once) should live a thousand Years, and every Day die a thousand times, the same death for Christ, that he once died for me, yet all this would be nothing to the sorrows Christ endured in his death. At this time the Bridegroom Christ, might have borrowed the word of his Spouse, the Church, *Lam. 1. 12. Is it*

nothing to you, all ye that pass by? See, and behold, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me; where with the Lord hath afflicted me in the days of his fierce anger.

Here we are to enquire into and consider the Extremities and Agonies Christ laboured under upon the Cross, which occasioned this sad complaint of Thirst. And then make Application of it in the several Inferences of Truth deducible from it.

Now the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross were twofold, viz. His Corporeal and Spiritual Sufferings. We shall open them distinctly, and then shew how both these meeting together upon him in their fulness and extremity must needs consume his very radical Moisture, and make him cry, *I thirst.* To begin with the first,

First, His Corporeal and more external Sufferings were exceeding great, acute and extrem Sufferings: For they were sharp, universal, continual and unrelieved by any inward Comfort.

First, They were sharp Sufferings. For his body was racked or digged, in those parts where Sense more eminently dwells. In the hands and feet the veins and sinews meet, and there pain and anguish meet with them, *Psal. 22. 16. They digged my hands and my feet.* Now Christ by reason of his exact and excellent temper of Body had doubtless more quick, tender and delicate Senses than other Men. His body was so formed that it might be a capacious Vessel to take in more sufferings than any other body can. Sense is in some more delicate and tender, and in others dull, and blunt according to the temperament, and vivacity of the body and spirits. But in none as it was in Christ, whose body was miraculously formed on purpose to suffer unparalleled Miseries and Sorrows in. *A body hast thou fasted me, Heb. 10. 5.* Neither sin, or sickness had any way enfeebled or dulled it.

Secondly, As his pains were sharp, so they were universal, not affecting one, but every part. They seized every member. From head to foot, no member was free from torture. For as his head was wounded with thorns, his back with bloody lashes, his side with a spear, his hands and feet with nails; so every other part was stretched and distended beyond its natural length, by hanging upon that cruel Engine of torment, the Cross. And as every member, so every particular Sense was afflicted, his sight with vile wretches, cruel murderers that stood about him. His hearing with horrid blasphemies, belch'd out against him. His taste with Vinegar and Gall, which they gave to aggravate his Misery: His smell with that filthy Golgotha where he was crucified, and his feeling with exquisite pains in every part. So that he was not only sharply, but universal-ly tormented.

Thirdly, These universal pains were continual, not by fits, but without any intermission. He had not a moment's ease by the cessation of pains. Wave came upon wave, one grief driving on another, till all God's waves and billows had gone over him. To be in extremity of pain, and that without a moment's intermission,

Cujusmodi
voluptatis
hactenus
inexpertus
fui? Plat.

Corpus e-
jus fuit op-
time com-
plexiona-
tum, cum
formatum
fuit mira-
culose. A-
quin. pars
tertia.
Art. 6.

mission, will quickly pull down the stoutest Nature in the World.

Fourthly, And Lastly, As his Pains were sharp, universal, and continual; so they were altogether unrelieved by his understanding Part. If a Man have sweet Comforts flowing into his Soul from God, they will sweetly demulce and allay the Pains of the Body. This made the Martyrs shout amidst the Flames. Yes, even inferior Comforts and Delights of the Mind will greatly relieve the oppressed Body.

Nihil agis
dolor,
quamvis
in mole-
stus, non-
quam con-
fuebor te
esse malum

It's said of *Possidonius*, that in a great Fit of the Stone he solaced himself, with Discourses of Moral Vertue, and when the Pain twinged him, he would say, O Pain, thou do'st nothing, though thou art a little troublesome, I will never confesse thee to be Evil. And *Epicurus* in the Fits of the Cholick refreshed himself, *ob memoriam inventorum*, (i.e.) by his Invention in Philosophy.

But now Christ had no Relief this way in the least. Not a drop of Comfort came from Heaven into his Soul to relieve it, and the Body by it. But on the contrary, his Soul was filled up with Grief, and had an heavier Burden of its own to bear than that of the Body. So that instead of relieving, it increased unspcakably the Burden of its outward Man. For,

Secondly, Let us consider these inward Sufferings of his Soul, how great they were, and how quickly they spent his natural strength, and turned his moisture into the drought of Summer. And,

First, His Soul felt the Wrath of an angry God, which was terribly imprest upon it. The Wrath of a King is as the roaring of a Lyon; but what is that to the Wrath of a Deity? See what a Description is given of it in *Nahum* 1. 6. *Who can stand before his indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.* Had not the strength that supported Christ been greater than that of Rocks, this Wrath had certainly over-whelmed, and ground him to Powder.

Secondly, As it was the Wrath of God that lay upon his Soul, so it was the pure Wrath of God, without any allay or mixture. Not one drop of Comfort came from Heaven or Earth. All the Ingredients in his Cup were bitter ones. There was Wrath without Mercy; yea, Wrath without the least degree of sparing Mercy; for God spared not his own Son, *Rom.* 8. 32. Had Christ been abated or spared, we had not. If our Mercies must be pure Mercies, and our Glory in Heaven, pure and unmixed Glory; then the Wrath which he suffered, must be pure unmixed Wrath. Yea,

Thirdly, As the Wrath, the pure unmixed Wrath of God lay upon his Soul, so all the Wrath of God was poured out upon him; even to the last drop. So that there is not one drop reserved, for the Elect to feel. Christ's Cup was deep and large, it contained all the Fury and Wrath of an infinite God in it. And yet he drank it up. He bare it all; so that to

believing Souls, who come to make Peace with God through Christ; he saith, *Isa.* 27. 4. *Fury is not in me.* In all the Chastisements God inflicts upon his People, there is no vindictive Wrath. Christ bare it all in his own Soul and Body on the Tree.

Fourthly, As it was all the Wrath of God that lay upon Christ, so it was Wrath aggravated in divers Respects, beyond that which the damned themselves do suffer. That's strange you will say, can there be any Sufferings worse than those the damned suffer, upon whom the Wrath of an infinite God is immediately transfused! Who holds them up with the Arm of his Power, while the Arm of his Justice lies on eternally. Can any Sorrows be greater than these? Yes, Christ's Sufferings were beyond theirs in divers particulars.

First, None of the damned were ever so near and dear to God, as Christ was. They were estranged from the Womb; but Christ lay in his Bosom. When he smote Christ, he smote the man that was his fellow, *Zach.* 13. 7. But in smiting them, he smites his Enemies. When he had to do in a way of Satisfaction with Christ, he is said not to spare his own Son, *Rom.* 8. 32. Never was the fury of God poured out upon such a Person before.

Secondly, None of the damned had ever so large a Capacity to take in the full sense of the Wrath of God, as Christ had. The larger any ones Capacity is, to understand and weigh his Troubles fully, the more grievous and heavy is his Burden. If a Man casts Vessels of greater and lesser Quantity into the Sea, though all will be full, yet the greater the Vessel is, the more Water it contains. Now Christ had a Capacity beyond all meer Creatures, to take in the Wrath of his Father. And what deep and large Apprehensions he had of it, may be judged by the bloody Sweat in the Garden, which was the Effect of his meer Apprehensions of the Wrath of God. Christ was a large Vessel indeed. As he is capable of more Glory, so of more Sense and Misery than any other Person in the World.

Thirdly, The damned suffer not so innocently as Christ suffered, they suffer the just Demerit, and Recompence of their Sin. They have deserved all that Wrath of God which they feel, and must feel for ever. It is but that Recompence which was meet. But Christ was altogether innocent. He had done no Iniquity, neither was Guile found in his Mouth, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him. When Christ suffered, he suffered not for what he had done; but his Sufferings were the Sufferings of a Surety, paying the Debts of others. *The Messiah was cut off, but not for himself*, *Dan.* 9. 26. Thus you see what his external Sufferings in his Body, and his internal Sufferings in his Soul were.

Fourthly, In the last place it is evident that such extrem Sufferings as these, meeting together upon him, must needs exhaust his very Spirits, and make him cry, *I thirst*. For let us consider,

First,

First, What meer external Pains, and outward Afflictions can do. These prey upon, and consume our Spirits. So David complains, *Psalms 39. 11. When thou with rebukes, correctest*

Sicut enim uter fumo maceratur, & torrefit; ita animus affluens doloribus & continuo malorum aestu exhauritur & consumitur. Moller. in Loc.

man for iniquity; thou makest his beauty to consume away as a moth, (i. e.) look as a Moth frets and consumes the most strong and well-wrought Garment, and makes it feary and rotten without any noise; so afflictions waste and wear out the strongest bodies. They make bodies of the firmest Constitution, like an old rotten garment. They shrivel and dry up the most vigorous and flourishing body, and make it like a bottle in the smoke, *Psalms 119. 83.*

Secondly, Consider what meer internal troubles of the soul, can do upon the strongest body. These quickly spend its strength, and devour the spirits. So Solomon speaks, *Prov. 17. 22. A broken spirit drieth the bones, (i. e.)* it consumes the very marrow with which they are moistned. So *Psalms 32. 3, 4. My bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy on me; my moisture (or chief sap) is turned into the drought of summer.* What a spectacle of pity was Francis Spira become, meerly through the anguish of his spirit? A spirit sharpen'd with such troubles, like a keen Knife, cuts through the fleath. Certainly who ever hath had any acquaintance with troubles of soul, knows by sad experience, how like an internal flame it feeds and preys upon the very spirits; so that the strongest sloop, and quait under it. But,

Thirdly, When outward bodily pains shall meet with inward spiritual troubles, and both in extremity shall come in one day; how soon must the firmest body fail and wait away like a candle lighted at both ends! Now strength fails apace, and nature must fall flat under this load. When the Ship in which Paul sailed, fell into a place where two Seas met, it was quickly wrackt, and so will the best constituted body in the world, if it fall under both these troubles together. The soul and body sympathize with each other under trouble, and mutually relieve each other.

If the Body be sick and full of Pain, the Spirit supports, cheers, and relieves it by reason, and resolution all that it can. And if the Spirit be afflicted, the body sympathizes, and helps to bear up the spirit. But now, if the one be over-laid with strong pains, more than it can bear, and calls for aid from the other, and the other be oppressed with intolerable anguish, and cries out under a burden greater than it can bear, so that it can contribute no help, but instead thereof adds to its burden which before was above strength to bear. Now nature must needs fail, and the friendly union betwixt soul and body suffer a dissolution by such an over-whelming pressure as this. So it was with Christ, when outward and inward sorrows met in one day in their extremity upon him. Hence the bitter Cry, *I thirst.*

Inference 1. How horrid a thing is Sin! How great is that Evil of Evils! Which deserves that all these should be inflicted and suffered for the expiation of it!

The sufferings of Christ for sin, gives us the true account, and fullest representation of its Evil. "The Law (saith one) is a bright Glass wherein we may see the evil of sin; but there is the red Glass of the suffering of Christ; and in that we may see more of the evil of sin; than if God should let us down to Hell, and there we should see all the tortures, and torments of the damned. If we should see them, how they lie sweltering under God's wrath there, it were not so much as the beholding of sin, thro' this red Glass of the sufferings of Christ."

Suppose the bars of the bottomless Pit were broken up, and damned spirits should ascend from thence, and come up among us; with the chains of darkness rattling at their heels, and we should hear the groans, and see the gasty paleness, and tremblings of those poor creatures, upon whom the righteous God hath imprest his fury and indignation; if we could hear how their consciences are lashed by the fearful scourge of guilt, and how they shriek at every lash the arm of Justice gives them.

If we should see and hear all this, it is not so much as what we may see in this Text; where the Son of God under his sufferings for it, cries out, *I thirst.* For as I shewed you before, Christ's sufferings in divers respects were beyond theirs. O then, let not thy vain heart slight sin; as if it were but a small thing. If ever God shew thee the face of sin in this Glass, thou wilt say, there is not such another horrid representation to be made to a Man in all the world. Fools make a mock at sin, but wise Men tremble at it.

Inference 2. How afflictive and intolerable are inward troubles. Did Christ complain so sadly under them, and cry, *I thirst?* Surely then they are no such light matters as many are apt to make of them. If they so scorched the very heart of Christ, dried up the green tree, preyed upon his very spirits, and turned his moisture into the drought of Summer; they deserve not to be slighted, as they are by some. The Lord Jesus was fitted to bear and suffer as strong troubles as ever befel the nature of Man, and he did bear all other troubles with admirable patience; but when it came to this, when the flames of God's wrath scorched his Soul; then he cries, *I thirst.*

David's heart was for courage as the heart of a Lion; but when God exercised him with inward troubles for sin, then he roars out under the anguish of it. *I am feeble, and sore broken; I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. My heart panteth, my strength faileth me; as for the light of mine eyes, it is also gone from me.* *Psal. 38. 8, 10.* A wounded Spirit who can bear? Many have professed that all the torments in the world are but toys to it. The racking fits of the Gout, the grinding tortures of the Stone, are nothing to the wrath of God, set on upon the conscience. What is the Worm that never dies, but the efficacy of a guilty conscience? This Worm feeds and nibbles upon the very inwards, upon the tender and most sensible part of Man; and is the principal part of Hell's horror. In bodily pains, a Man may

Mr. J. B. in his Kell of Evils, p. 124.

may be relieved by proper medicines, here nothing but the blood of sprinkling relieves; in outward pains the body may be supported by the resolution and courage of the mind, here the mind it self is wounded. O let none despise these troubles, they are dreadful things.

Inference 3. How dreadful a place in Hell! Where this cry is heard for ever, I thirst. There the Wrath of the great and terrible God flames upon the damned for ever, in which they thirst and none relieve them. If Christ complained, *I thirst*, when he had conquered but a few hours with the Wrath of God; what is their state then, that are to grapple with it for ever! When Millions of Years are past and gone, ten thousand Mil-

Tunc edax flamma comburet, quos nunc carnalis delectatio polluit.
Tunc infinitum patens inferni barathrum.
Etc. Greg.

lions more are coming on. There's an everlasting Thirst in Hell, and it admits of no Relief. There are no full Cups in Hell, but an eternal unrelieved Thirst. Think on this ye that now add Drunkenness to Thirst, who tumble in all sensual Pleasures, and drown Nature in an excess of Luxury. Remember what *Drives* said in Luke 16. 24. *And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.* No Cups of Water, no Bowls of Wine in Hell. There that Throat will be parched with Thirst, which is now drowned with excess. The Songs of the Drunkard turned into Howlings. If Thirst in the extremity of it be now so unsufferable, what is that Thirst which is infinitely beyond this in measure, and never shall be relieved? Say not it's hard that God should deal thus with his poor Creatures. You will not think it so if you consider what he exposed his own dear Son to, when Sin was but imputed to him. And what that Man deserves to feel, that hath not only merited Hell, but by refusing Christ the Remedy, the hottest place in Hell.

An English Merchant living at Dantzick, related this story to a godly Minister, that a Friend of his (a Merchant also) went to a Convent, and dined with the Fryers there, their Entertainment was very humble, after he had dined and seen all, the Merchant fell to commending their pleasant Lives; yea, said one of the Fryers to him, we live gallantly indeed, had we any Body to go to Hell for us when we die. Mr. Firmin's Real Christianity.

In this thirst of Christ we have the liveliest emblem of the state of the damned, that ever was presented to Men in this World. Here you see a Person labouring in extremity under the infinite Wrath of the great and terrible God lying upon his Soul and Body at once, and causing him to utter this doleful Cry, *I thirst*. Only Christ endured this but a little while, the damned must endure it for ever. In that they differ. As also in the innocency and ability of the Person's suffering. And in the end for which they suffer. But surely such as this, will the cry of those Souls be that are cast away for ever. O terrible Thirst!

Inference 4. How much do nice and wanton Appetites deserve to be reproved! The Son of God wanted a draught of cold water to relieve him, and could not have it. God hath given us variety of refreshing Creatures to re-

lieve us, and we despise them. We have better things than a cup of Water to refresh and delight us when we are thirsty, and yet are not pleased. O that this complaint of Christ on the Cross, *I thirst*, were but believingly considered, it would make you bless God, for what you now despise. And beget contentment in you, for the meanest mercies and most common favours in this World. Did the Lord of all things cry, *I thirst*, and had nothing in his extremity to comfort him? and dost thou who hast a thousand times over forfeited all temporal, as well as spiritual mercies, contempt and slight the good Creatures of God! What despise a Cup of Water, who deserve nothing but a Cup of Wrath, from the hand of the Lord! O lay it to heart, and hence learn Contentment with any thing.

Inference 5. Did Jesus Christ upon the Cross cry, I thirst? Then Believers shall never thirst eternally. Their thirst shall be certainly satisfied.

There is a threefold thirst, *gracious, natural and penal*. The gracious thirst is the vehement desire of a spiritual Heart after God. Of this David speaks, *Psalms 42. 1, 2. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?* And this is indeed a vehement thirst, it makes the Soul break with the longings it hath after God, *Psalms 119*. It's a thirst proper to believers, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Natural thirst is (as before was noted) a desire of refreshment by humid nourishment, and it's common both to believers and unbelievers in this World. God's dear Saints have been driven to such extremities in this Life, that their Tongues have even failed for thirst. *When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, Isa. 41. 17.* And of the people of God in their Captivity it's said, *Lam. 4. 4. The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst. The young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them. They that feed delicately are desolate in the streets, they that were brought up in scarlet, embrace dunghills.* To this many that fear the Lord have been reduced.

A *Penal thirst* is God's just denying of all refreshment, or relief to sinners in their extremities, and that as a due punishment for their sin. This believers shall never feel, because when Christ thirsted upon the Cross, he made full satisfaction to God in their room. These sufferings of Christ, as they were ordained for them, so the benefits of them are truly imputed to them. And for the natural thirst, that shall be satisfied. For in Heaven we shall live without these necessities, and dependencies upon the Creature. We shall be equal with the Angels in the way and manner of living and subsisting, *Luke 20. 36.* And for the gracious thirsting of their Souls for God, it shall be fully satisfied. So it's promised, *Matth. 5. 6. Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.* They shall then depend no more upon the stream; but

but drink from the ever-flowing fountain it self, *Psalm 36. 8. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy House, and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light shall we see light.* There they shall drink and praise, and praise and drink for evermore. All their thirsty desires shall be filled with compleat satisfaction. O how desirable a state is heaven upon this account ! and how should we be restless till we come thither ; as the thirsty Traveller is until he meet that cool refreshing spring he wants, and seeks for.

This present state is a state of thirsting, that to come of refreshment and satisfaction. Some drops indeed come from that fountain by faith, but they quench not the Believer's thirst. Rather like water sprinkled on fire, they make it burn the more ; but there the thirsty Soul hath enough.

O blest God that Jesus Christ thirsted under the heat of his wrath once, that you might not be scorched with it for ever. If he had not cry'd, *I thirst*, you must have cry'd out of thirst eternally, and never be satisfied.

Inference 6. Lastly, Did Christ in the extremity of his sufferings, cry, *I thirst* ? Then how great beyond all compare is the love of God to sinners ; who for their sakes exposed the Son of his Love to such extreme sufferings ?

Three Considerations marvelously heighten that Love of the Father.

First, His putting the Lord Jesus into such a condition. There is none of us would endure to see a Child of his own lie panting, and thirsting in the extremity of Torments, for the fairest inheritance on Earth : Much less to have the Soul of a Child conflicting with the wrath of God, and making such heart-rending complaints as Christ made upon the Cross, if we might have the largest Empire in the World for it : Yet such was the strength of the Love of God to us, that he willingly gave Jesus Christ to all this misery and torture for us. What shall we call this Love ! O the height,

length, depth and breadth of that love which passeth knowledge ! The love of God to Jesus Christ was infinitely beyond all the love we have to our Children, as the Sea is more than a Spoonful of Water ; and yet, as dearly as he loved him, he was content to expose him to all this, rather than we should perish eternally.

Secondly, As God the Father was content to expose Christ to this extremity ; so in that extremity to hear his bitter cries, and dolorous complaints ; and yet not relieve him with the least refreshment till he fainted, and died under it. He heard the cries of his Son. That Voice, *I thirst*, pierced Heaven, and reach'd the Father's Ear ; but yet he will not refresh him in his Agonies, nor abate him any thing of the debt he was now paying, and all this for the love he had to poor sinners. Had Christ been relieved in his sufferings and spared, then God could not have pitied or spared us. The extremity of Christ's sufferings was an act of Justice to him ; and the greatest Mercy to us that ever could be manifested. Nor indeed (though Christ so bitterly complains of his thirst) was he willing to be relieved, till he had finished his work. O love unspeakable ! He doth not complain, that he might be relieved, but to manifest how great that sorrow was, which his Soul now felt upon our account.

Thirdly, And it should never be forgotten, that Jesus Christ was exposed to these extremities of sorrow, for sinners, the greatest of sinners, who deserved not one drop of Mercy from God. This commends the love of God singularly to us, in that *whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*, Rom. 5. 8. Thus the love of God in Jesus Christ still rises higher and higher in every discovery of it. Admire, adore and be ravished with the thoughts of this love.

Thanks be to God for his unspeakable Gift.

SER-

S E R M O N XXXV.

Serm. 35.
opens the
sixth excel-
lent saying
of Christ up-
on the Cross.

JOHN XIX. 30.

*When Jesus therefore had received the Vinegar, he said,
[It is finished,] and he bowed his Head, and gave up the
ghost.*

IT is finished. This is the sixth remarkable Word of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross, uttered as a triumphant shout when he saw the glorious issue of all his Sufferings now at hand.

It is but one Word in the Original, but in that one word is contained the sum of all Joy. The very spirits of all divine consolation. The ancient Greeks reckoned it their excellency to speak much in a little. To give a sea of matter, in a drop of Language. What they only sought, is here found. I find some variety (and indeed variety, rather than contrariety) among Expositors about the Relation of these Words.

Some are of opinion, that the Antecedent is the legal Types and Ceremonies; and so make this to be the meaning. *It is finished*: That is, all the Types and Prefigurations that shadowed forth the Redemption of

Souls by the blood of Christ, are now fulfilled & accomplished. And doubtless as this is in it self a truth, so it's such a truth as may not be excluded, as alien to the true scope and sense of this Place. And tho' it be objected, that many Types and Prefigurations remained at this time unsatisfied, even all that looked to the actual death of Christ, his continuance in the state of the dead, and his resurrection; yet it's easily removed, by considering that they are said to be finished, because they were just finishing, or ready to be finished. And it is as if Christ had said, I am now putting the last hand to it. A few moments of time more will compleat and finish it; I have the sum now in my hand, which will fully satisfy and pay God the whole Debt.

'Tis now but bow the Head, and the work is done, and all the Types therein fulfilled. So that this cannot exclude the fulfilling of the Types in the Death of Christ from their just claim to the Sense of this Place. But yet though we cannot here exclude this Sense, we cannot allow it to be the whole or principal Sense. For lo! a far greater Truth is contained herein, even the finishing or compleatment of the whole design and project of our Redemption, and therein of all the Types that prefigured it. Both these judicious Calvin conjoins; making the compleating of Redemption the Principal, and the fulfilling of

all the Types, the Collateral and less principal Sense of it.

Yet it must be observed, when we say Christ finished Redemption-work by his Death; the meaning is not that his Death alone did finish it: For his abode in the Grave, Resurrection and Ascension, had all of them their joint influence into it: But these being shortly to follow, are all included in the scope of this Place. According then to the principal Scope of the Place we observe,

Doct. That Jesus Christ hath perfected, and compleatly finished the great work of Redemption committed to him by God the Father.

To this great Truth the Apostle gives a full Testimony, *Heb. 10. 14. By one offering he hath perfected for ever, them that are sanctified.* And to the same purpose speaks, *John 17. 4. I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work thou gavest me to do.* Concerning this work and the finishing thereof by Jesus Christ upon the Cross, we shall enquire, What this Work was; How Christ finished it; and, What evidence can be produced for the finishing of it.

First, What was the Work which Christ finished by his Death?

It was the fulfilling the whole Law of God in our room, and for our Redemption as a Sponsor, or surety for us. The Law is a glorious thing. The holiness of God, that fiery Attribute, is engraven or stamp upon every part of it. *Deut. 33. 2. From his right hand went a fiery Law.* The jealousy of the Lord watched over every point and tittle of it, for his dreadful and glorious Name was upon it. It cursed every one that continued not in all things contained therein, *Gal. 3. 10.* Two things therefore were necessarily required in him that should perfectly fulfil it, and both found in our Surety, and in him only; viz. a subjective and effective perfection.

First, A subjective Perfection. He that wanted this, could never say, *It is finished.* Perfect working always follows a perfect being. That he might therefore finish this great Work of Obedience, and therein the glorious design of our Redemption; lo! in what shining and perfect Holiness was he produced? *Luke 1. 35. That holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God:* And indeed, *such an*

A a

High.

Vol. I.

Docet in ejus morte totum salutis nostrae complementum, & singulas partes contineri. Huic doctrinae nunc a est omnium legis rituum abrogatio. *Calv.*

Factum dicit, quod jam in eo fuit, & potest factum esse. *Cam.*

High-priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, Heb. 7. 26. So that the Law could have no exception against his Person. Nay, it was never so honoured since its first promulgation, as it was by having such a perfect and excellent Person as Christ, to stand at its Bar, and give it due reputation.

Secondly, There must be also an *effective Perfection*, or a perfection of working, and obeying, before it could be said, *it is finished*. This Christ had; for he continued in all things, written in the Law, to do them. He fulfilled all righteousness, as it behoved him to do. *Matth. 3. 15.* He did all that was required to be done. And suffered all that was requisite to be suffered all that was commanded, or threatened; in such perfection of Obedience, both active and passive, that the pure eye of Divine Justice could not find a flaw in it. And so finished the VWork his Father gave him to do. And this work finished by our Lord Jesus Christ, was both a *necessary, difficult, and precious* VWork.

First, It was a *necessary work*, which Christ finished upon the Cross. Necessary upon a threefold account.

Opus necessarium ex parte Patris.

It was necessary on the Father's account. I do not mean, that God was under any necessity from his Nature of redeeming us this, or any other way. For our Redemption is *opus liberi consilii*, an affect of the free Counsel of God; but when God had once decreed and determined to redeem and save poor Sinners by Jesus Christ; then it became necessary that the Counsel of God should be fulfilled. *Acts 4. 28. To do whatsoever thy hand, and counsel had before determined to be done.*

Ex parte Filii.

Secondly, It was necessary with respect to Christ. Upon the account of that previous compact that was betwixt the Father and himself. *Luke 22. 22. Truly the Son of Man goeth as it was determined, (i. e.) as it was fore-agreed, and covenanted under the necessity of fulfilling his engagement to the Father, he came into the World; and being come, he still minds his engagement, John 9. 3. I must work the works of him that sent me.*

Ex parte nostri.

Thirdly, Yea, and it was no less necessary upon our account that this work should be finished. For had not Christ finished this Work, Sin had quickly finished all our Lives, Comforts and Hopes. Without the finishing this Work, not a Son or Daughter of Adam could ever have seen the face of God. Therefore it's said, *John 3. 14, 15. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so [must] the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life.* On all these accounts the finishing of this Work was necessary.

Secondly, As it was *necessary* this work should be finished, so the finishing of it, was *exceeding difficult*. It cost many a cry, many a groan, many a tear, many a hard tug, before Christ could say, *it is finished*. All the Angels in Heaven were not able by their united strength to lift that Burden one inch from the ground, which Christ

bare upon his Shoulders, yea, and bare it away. But how heavy a Burden this was, may in part appear, by his prostration in the Garden, and the bitter out-cries he made upon the Cross, which in their proper places have been opened.

Thirdly, and Lastly, It was a most *precious* Work which Christ finished by his Death. That Work was dispatched, and finished in few hours, which will be the matter of everlasting Songs and Triumphs to the Angels and Saints to all Eternity. O it was a precious VWork. The Mercies that now flow out of this Fountain, *vis.* Justification, Sanctification, Adoption, &c. are not to be valued. Besides the endless Happiness and Glory of the Coming-world, which cannot enter into the Heart of Man to conceive. If the Angels sang when the foundation Stone was laid, what shouts, what triumphs, should there be among the Saints when this Voice is heard, *It is finished?*

Secondly, Let us next inform our selves how, and in what manner Jesus Christ finished this glorious VWork. And if you search the Scriptures upon that account, you will find, that he finished it, *obedientially, freely, diligently and fully.*

First, This blessed VWork was finished by *Obedientia* Jesus Christ most *obediently*, *Phil. 2. 8. He became obedient to death, even the death of the Cross.* His obedience was the obedience of a Servant, though not servile Obedience. So it was foretold of him, before he touched this VWork. *Isa. 50. 5. The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away my back, (i. e.) my Father told me the very word of it. He told me what hard and heavy things I must undergo, if ever I finished this design of Redemption; and I was not rebellious, (i. e.) I heartily submitted to, and accepted all those Difficulties. For there is a *Meiosis* in the words. I was content to stoop to the hardest and most ignominious part of it, rather than not finish it.*

Secondly, As Christ finished it *obediently*, so he finished it *freely*. Freedom and Obedience in acting are not at all opposite to, or exclusive of each other. *Moses* his Mother nursed him in obedience to the command of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, yet most freely, with respect to her own delight, and contentment in that VWork. So it's said of Christ, and that by his own Mouth, *John 10. 17, 18. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my self; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this commandment have I received of my Father.* He liked the VWork for the ends sake. VWhen he had a prospect of it from Eternity, then were his delights with the Sons of Men. Then he rejoiced in the habitable parts of the Earth, *Prov. 8. 30, 31. And when he came into the VWorld about it, with what a full and free consent did his Heart echo to the voice of his Father calling him to it? Just as you shall sometimes hear an echo, answering your voice two or three times over, Psalm 40. Lo, I come; I delight*

to do thy will; thy Law is within my heart. He finished the Work freely.

Thirdly, As he finished it freely, so he finished it diligently. He wrought hard from the morning of his Life to the end of it; he was never idle wherever he was, but went about doing good, Acts 10. 38. Sometimes he was so intent upon his Work, that he forgot to eat bread, Joh. 4. 30, 31. As the Life of some Men is but a diversion from one trifle to another, from one Pleasure to another; so the whole Life of Christ was spent and eaten up betwixt one Work or another. Never was a Life so filled up with labour. The very moments of his time, were all employ'd for God, to finish this Work.

Fourthly, and Lastly, he finished it completely and fully. All that was to be done by way of impetration, and meritorious Redemption, is fully done. No hand can come after his. Angels can add nothing to it. That is perfected to which nothing is wanting and to which nothing can be added. Such is the work Christ finished. Whatever the Law demanded, is perfectly paid. Whatever a sinner needs, is perfectly obtained, and purchased. Nothing can be added to what Christ hath done. He put the last hand to it, when he said, it is finished. Thus you see what the work was, and how Christ finished it.

Thirdly, In the last place, let us consider what assurance, or evidence we have that Christ hath so finished Redemption-work. And if you pursue that inquiry, you will find these among other plain evidences of it.

First, When Christ died, Redemption-work must needs be finished, in as much as the obedience and blood of Christ, was of infinite value and efficacy, sufficiently able to accomplish all the end for which it was shed. And that not by divine acceptance, but upon the account of its proper value. This effect, viz. the finishing Redemption-work meritoriously by Christ, doth not exceed the power of the cause to which we assign it; viz. the death of Christ. And if there be a sole sufficient cause in act, what hinders but the effect should follow? There was certainly enough in Christ's Blood, to satisfy the utmost demand of Justice: when that therefore is actually shed Justice is fully paid, and consequently the Souls for whom, and in whose names its paid, fully redeemed from the Curse by the Merit thereof.

Secondly, Its apparent that Christ finished the Work, by the discharge or acquittance God the Father gave him, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand. If Christ the sinners Surety, be as such discharged by God the Creditor; then the debt is fully paid. Now Christ was justified, and cleared at his Resurrection, from all charges and demands of Justice. Therefore its said, 1 Tim. 3. 16. that he was justified in the spirit, (i.e.) openly discharged, by that very act of the Godhead, his raising him from the dead. For when the Grave was opened and Christ rose, it was to him as the opening of the Prison doors, and setting a Surety at liberty, who was clapt up for another Man's debt. To the same sense Christ speaks of his Ascension.

Vol. I.

on, John 16. 10. The Spirit (saith he) shall convince the world of righteousness, (i.e.) of a compleat and perfect righteousness in me, imputable to sinners for their perfect Justification. And whereby shall he convince and satisfy them that it is so? Why, by this, because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more. There's a great deal of force and weight in those Words, because you see me no more. For it amounts to this much, by this you shall be satisfied I have fully and compleatly performed all righteousness, and that by my active and passive obedience I have so fully satisfied God for you, as that you shall never be charged or condemned; because when I go to Heaven, I shall abide there in glory with my Father, and not be sent back again, as I should, if any thing had been omitted by me. And this the Apostle gives you also in so many plain words, Heb. 10. 12, 13, 14. After he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God. And what doth he infer from that but the very truth before us, verse 14. that by one offering he hath perfected for ever, them that are sanctified.

Thirdly, Its evident Christ hath finished the Work, by the blessed Effects of it, upon all that believe in him. For by virtue of the compleateness of Christ's Work finished by his Death; their Consciences are now rationally pacified, and their Souls at death actually received into Glory. Neither of which could be, if Christ had not in this World finished the Work. If Christ had done his Work imperfectly, he could not have given rest and tranquility to the labouring and burdened Souls that come to him, as now he doth, Matth. 11. 28. Conscience would still be hesitating, trembling and unsatisfied. And had he not finished his Work, he could not have entrance through the veil of his Flesh, into Heaven; as all that believe in him have, Heb. 10. 19, 20. If he had but almost done that Work, we had been but almost saved, that is, certainly damned. And thus you see briefly the evidences, that the work is finished.

Inference 1. Hath Christ perfected and compleatly finished all his Work for us, how sweet a relief is this to us that believe in him, against all the defects and imperfections of all the works of God, that are wrought by us? There's nothing finished that we do. All our duties are imperfect duties, they come off lamely, and defectively from our hands. Its Christ's charge against the Church of Sardis, Rev. 3. 2. I have not found thy Works perfect, or filled up before God. O there is much emptiness, and vanity in the best of our Duties: But here's the grand relief, and that which answers to all the grounds of our Doubts and Fears upon that account, Jesus Christ hath finished all his Work though we can finish none of ours. And so, though we be defective, poor imperfect Creatures in our selves, yet notwithstanding, we are compleat in him, Col. 2. 9, 10. though we cannot perfectly obey, or fulfil one command of the Law, yet is the righteousness of the Law fulfilled in us that believe, Rom. 8. 4. Christ's compleat

A 2 2

Perfectum est, cui nihil deest, & cui nihil addi potest.

Non ex divina acceptance, sed ex proprio valore.

pleat obedience being imputed to us, makes us compleat, and without fault before God.

It is true, we ought to be humbled for our defects, and troubled for every failing in obedience; but we should not be discouraged, though multitudes of weaknesses be upon us, and many infirmities compass us about in every duty we put our hand to. Though we have no righteousness of our own, yet of God, Christ is made unto us righteousness; and that righteousness of his, is infinitely better than our own. Instead of our own we have his; (*i. e.*) we have Gold for Dung. O blessed be God, for Christ's perfect righteousness.

Inference 2. Did Christ finish his work with his own hand? *How dangerous and dishonourable a thing is it, to join any thing of our own, to the righteousness of Christ, in point of justification before God!* Jesus Christ will never endure this. It reflects upon his work dishonourably. He doth not (in this case) affect *social* Glory. Not I, and my God; I, and my Christ did this: He will be all, or none in your Justification. If he have finished the Work, what need of our Additions? And if not, to what purpose are they? Can we finish that which Christ himself could not? But we would fain be sharing with him in this honour, which he will never endure. Did he finish the Work by himself, and will he ever divide the glory and praise of it with us? No, no; Christ is no half Saviour. O it's an hard thing to bring these proud Hearts to live upon Christ for Righteousness. We would fain add our Penny to make up Christ's summing. But if you will have it so, or have nothing to do with Christ, you and your Penny must perish together, *Isa. 50. ult.* God gives us the Righteousness of Christ, as he gave *Manna* to the *Israelites* in the Wilderness. It's said, *Deut. 8. 16.* *That he fed them with Manna in the wilderness, that he might humble them.* The quality of the Food was not humbling, for it was Angels Food; but the manner of giving it was so. They must live by Faith upon God for it, from day to day. This was not like other Food, produced by their own labour. Certainly God takes the right way to humble proud Nature, in calling sinners wholly off from their own Righteousness, to Christ for their Justification.

Inference 3. Did Christ finish his Work for us? Then there can be no doubt, *but he will also finish his work in us.* As he begun the Work of our Redemption, and finished it; so he that hath begun the good Work in you will also finish it upon your souls. And of this the Apostle saith, *He is confident, Phil. 1. 6.* Jesus Christ is not only called the *Author*, but also the *finisher* of our Faith, *Heb. 12. 2.* If he begin it, no doubt but he will finish it. And indeed the finishing of his own Work of Redemption without us, gives full evidence that he will finish his Work of Sanctification within us: And that because these two Works of Christ, have a respect and relation to each other: And such a Relation, that the Work he finished by his own Death, Resurrection and Ascension, would be in vain to us, if the Work of Sanctification in us should not in like manner be finished. Therefore as he presented a per-

fect sacrifice to God, and finished Redemption-work; so will he present every man perfect and compleat, for whom he here offered up himself. For he will not lose the end of all his sufferings at last. To what purpose would his meritorious Impetration be, without compleat and full Application? Be not therefore discouraged at the defects and imperfections of your inherent grace. Be humbled for them, but be not dejected by them: This is Christ's Work, as well as that. That Work is finished, and so will this.

Inference 4. Is Christ's Work of Redemption a compleat and finished Work? *How excellent and comfortable beyond all compare, is the method and way of Faith!* Surely the way of believing is the most excellent way in which a poor sinner can approach God, for it brings before him a compleat, intire, perfect Righteousness, and this must needs be most honourable to God, most comfortable to the Soul that draws nigh to God. O what a compleat, finished perfect thing is the Righteousness of Christ! The sharp eye of the holy and jealous God cannot find the least flaw, or defect in it. Let God or Conscience look upon it. Turn it every way, view it on every side, thoroughly weigh and examine it; it will appear a pure, a perfect piece, containing in it, whatsoever is necessary for the reconciling of an angry God, or pacifying of a distressed and perplexed Soul. How pleasing therefore and acceptable to God must be that Faith, which presents so compleat and excellent an atonement to him! Hence the acting of our Faith upon Christ for Righteousness, the approaches of Faith to God with such an acceptable present, is called the work of God: That is, the most grateful, acceptable and well pleasing work to God, that a Creature can perform, *John 6. 29.* *This is the work of God, that ye believe.* One act of faith pleases him more, than if you should toil and drudge all your lives at a task of obedience to the Law. As it's more for God's Honour, and thy comfort to pay all thou owest him at one round payment, in one full Summ, than to make a dribbling payment by a Penny a day, and never be able to make full payment, or see the Bond cancelled. This perfect Work, only produces perfect Peace.

Inference 5. Did Christ work, and work out all that God gave him to do; till he had finished his Work? *How necessary then is a laborious working Life, to all that call themselves Christians?* The Life of Christ you see was a laborious Life. Shall he work, and we play? Shall a zealous, active, working Christ, be reproached with idle negligent and lazy Followers? O work, and *work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. 2. 12.*

But if Christ wrought so hard, we may sit still. If he finished the Work, nothing remains for us to do.

Nothing of that Work which Christ did, remains for you to do. It's your commendation and duty to leave all that to Christ; but there's other work for you to do: Yea, store of Work lying upon your hands. You must work as well as Christ, though not for the same ends Christ did. He wrought hard to

fittishe

faristie the Law, by fulfilling all Righteousness. He wrought all his life long, to work out a righteousness to justify you before God. This Work falls to no hand but Christ's, but you must work to obey the commands of Christ, into whose right ye are come by Redemption. You must work to testify your thankfulness to Christ, for the work finished for you. You must work to glorify God by your Obedience. *Let your light so shine before men.* For these and divers other such ends and reasons, your life must be a working life. God preserve all his People from the gross and vile opinions of *Antinomian Libertines*, who cry up Grace; and decry Obedience. Who under specious pretences of exalting a naked Christ upon the Throne, do indeed strip him naked of a great part of his Glory and vilely dethrone him. My Pen shall not English, what mine eyes have red. Tell it not in *Gath*.

Da mihi
Christum,
non quero
donā grati-
æ, sed
Christum.
Non quero
promissio-
nes, sed
Christum.

Non quero sanctificationem, sed Christum. Ne mihi narra fabulem de mediatore, & officio; narra mihi de Christo. *Commentarius de statu Ecclesie Brit. p. 45.*

But for thee, Reader, be thou a follower of Christ: Imitate thy Pattern. Yea, let me persuade thee as ever thou hopest to clear up thine interest in him, imitate him in such particulars as these that follow.

First, Christ began early to work for God. He took the morning of his life, the very top of the morning to work for God. *How is it* (said he to his Parents when he was but a Child of about twelve years) *that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* Reader, if the morning of thy Life be not gone, oh devote it to the work of God, as Christ did. If it be, ply thy Work the closer in the afternoon of thy Life. If a Man have any great and necessary business to do, its good doing it in the morning; afterwards a hurry of business and diversion comes on.

Secondly, As Christ began betime, so he followed his work close. He was early up, and he wrought hard, so hard, that he forgot to eat bread, John 4. 31, 32. So zealous was he, in his Father's Work, that his Friends thought he had been besides himself, Mark 3. 21. So zealous, that the zeal of God's house eat him up. He flew like a *Seraphim*, in a flame of zeal, about the work of God. O be not ye like Snails. What *Augustus* said of the young *Roman*, well becomes the true Christian; Whatsoever he doth, he doth it to purpose.

Thirdly, Christ often thought upon the shortness of his time, and wrought hard because he knew his working time would be but little. So you find it, John 9. 4. *I will work the works of him that sent me whilst it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work.* O in this be like Christ. Rouze your hearts, to diligence with this consideration. If a Man have much to write, and be almost come to the end of his Paper; he will write close, and pack much matter in a little room.

Fourthly, He did much work for God, and made little noise. He wrought hard, but did not spoil his work when he had wrought it, by

vain ostentation. When he had expressed his Charity in his acts of Mercy and Bounty to Men, he would humbly steal up the glory of it, with this charge, *See ye tell no man of it*, Matth. 8. 4. He affected not popular air. All the Angels in Heaven could not do what Christ did, and yet he called himself a *worm*, for all that, *Psalms* 22. 6. O imitate your pattern. Work hard for God, and let not pride blow upon it when you have done. Its hard for a man to do much, and not value himself for it too much.

Fifthly, Christ carried on his Work for God resolutely. No discouragements would beat him off, though never any work met with more from first to last. How did Scribes and Pharisees, Jews, Gentiles, yea Devils, set upon him, by Persecutions, and Reproaches, violent Oppositions and subtil temptations; but yet, on he goes with his Father's Work for all that. He is deaf to all discouragements. So it was foretold of him, *Isa. 42. 4. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged.* O that more of this Spirit of Christ were in his People. O that in the strength of love to Christ, and zeal for the glory of God, you would pour out your Hearts in service, and like a River sweep down all discouragements before you.

Sixthly, He continued working, whilst he continued living. His Life, and labour ended together. He tainted not in his VWork. Nay, the greatest VWork he did in this VWorld, was his last VWork. O be like Christ in this, be not weary of well doing. Give not over the work of God, while you can move hand or tongue to promote it. And see that your last works be more than your first. O let the motions of your Soul after God be as all natural motions are, swiftest when nearest the Center. Say not it is enough, whilst there is any capacity of doing more for God. In these things Christians be like your Saviour.

Inference 6. Did Christ finish his Work? Look to it Christians, that ye also finish your work, which God hath given you to do. That you may with comfort say when death approaches, as Christ said, John 17. 4. *I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work, thou gavest me to do; and now O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self.* Christ had a work committed to him, and he finished it; you have a work also committed to you. O see that you be able to say, it's finished, when your time is so. O work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling: And that I may persuade you to it, I beseech you lay these Considerations close to Heart.

First, If your work be not done, before you die, it can never be done, when you are dead. *There's no work nor knowledge, nor device in the grave, whither thou goest*, Eccles. 9. 5, 10. They that go down to the Pit, cannot celebrate the name of God, *Isa. 38. 18.* Death binds up the hand from working any more; strikes dumb the tongue, that it can speak no more: for then the composition is dissolved. The body which is the Soul's tool to work by, is broken, and thrown aside. The Soul it self presented immediately before the Lord, to give an

an account of all its Works. O therefore feeling the night cometh, when no Man can work, as Christ speaks, *John 9. 4.* make haste and finish your Work.

Secondly, If you finish not your Work, as the season of working, so the season of Mercy, will be over at death. Do not think, you that have neglected Christ all your Lives, you that could never be persuaded to a laborious Holy Life, that ever your cries and entreaties shall prevail with God for Mercy, when your season is past. No, no, it's too late. *Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him? Job 27. 9.* The Season of Mercy is then over; as the tree falls so it lies. Then he that is holy shall be holy still, and he that is filthy shall be filthy still. Alas, poor Souls you come too late. *The Master of the House is risen up, and the doors are shut, Luke 19. 42.* the Season is over. Happy had it been if ye had known the day of your Visitation.

Lastly, If your Work be not finished when you come to die, you can never finish your lives with comfort. He that hath not finished his work with care, can never finish his course with joy. Oh what a dismal case is that Soul in, that finds it self surprized by death in an unready posture! To lie shivering upon the brink of the Grave, saying, Lord, what will become of me! O I cannot, I dare not die! For the poor Soul to shrink back into the body, and cry; *Oh it were better for me to do any thing than die.* Why what's the matter? Oh, I am in a Christless state, and dare not go before that awful Judgment-seat. If I had in season made Christ sure, I could then die with peace. Lord, what shall I do? How dost thou like this, Reader? Will this be a comfortable close? When one asked a Christian that constantly spent fix hours every day in Prayer, why he did so? He answered, *O I must die, I must die.* Well then, look to it that you finish your work as Christ also did his

Serm. 36

S E R M O N XXXVI.

LUKE XXIII. 46.

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the Ghost.

THese are the last of the last words of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross, with which he breatheth out his Soul. They were *David's* words before him, *Psaln 31. 5.* and for substance *Stephen's* after him. *Acts 7. 57.* They are words full both of Faith, and Comfort. Fit to be the last breathings of every gracious Soul in this World. They are resolvable into these five particulars.

The Person *depositing*, or committing. The Lord Jesus Christ, who in this as well as in other things acted as a common Person, as the Head of the Church. This must be remarked carefully, for therein lies no small part of a believers consolation. When Christ commends his Soul to God, he doth as it were bind up all the Souls of the Elect in one bundle with it, and solemnly presents them all with his, to his Father's acceptance. To this purpose one aptly renders it.

Non privato sui respectu commendat patri animam, sed omnium fidelium suorum animas quasi uno fasciculo complexas, ut simul cum sua serventur. D. Pareus.

This commendation made by Christ turns to the singular profit and advantage of our Souls; in as much as Christ, by this very Prayer, hath delivered them into his Father's hand, as a precious treasure, when ever the

time comes that they are to be loosed from the bodies which they now inhabit. Jesus Christ neither lived nor dyed for himself, but for Believers. VVhat he did in this very Act, refers to them as well as to his own Soul. You must look therefore upon Christ in this last and solemn act of his Life, as gathering all the Souls of the Elect together, and making a solemn tender of them all, with his own Soul to God.

rum nostrarum commodum cedebat. Quippe quas ille a corpore quod inhabitaverant absolutas, quasi quoddam depositum, in Dei veneris manu, ex oratione tradebat, *Vid. Antioch in Mark 9.*

Secondly, The *depository*, or Person to whom he commits this precious treasure, and that was his own Father. *Father, into thy hands I commit.* Father is a sweet encouraging assuring Title. VVell may a Son commit any concernment, how dear soever, into the hands of a Father. Especially such a Son, into the hands of such a Father. By the hands of the Father into which he commits his Soul, we are not to understand the naked or meer power, but the Fatherly acceptance and protection of God.

Thirdly, The *depositum*, or thing committed into this hand, [*my Spirit*] (i. e.) my Soul, now instantly departing, upon the very point of separation from my body. The Soul is the most precious of all treasures, it's call'd

Hic Christ. i. commendatio, in anima.

Manus hæc patris alias Dei potentiam significat, hic vero paternum Dei prædium, &c. Pareus.

the

the darling, *Psaln 37. 17.* Or the only one, *i.e.* that which is most excellent, and therefore most dear and precious. A whole world is but a trifle, if weighed for the price of one Soul, *Matt. 16. 26.* This inestimable treasure he now commits into his Father's Hands.

Fourthly, The Ad by which he puts it into that faithful Hand of the Father, *παρέδωκεν*

παρέδωκεν, *i. e.* *con-*
cepit. *Erasmus* commenda-
bo etiam, *Psal. 111. 6.*
Unde petita sunt hæc verba
Christi. *Legitur* futuro tem-
pore, *Be.*

I commend. We rightly render it in the present Tense, though the word be future. For with these words he breathed out his Soul. This word is of the same import with *concepit*, *I present* or render it into thy

Hands. It was in Christ an Act of Faith. A most special and excellent Act, intended as a Preident for all his People.

Fifthly, And lastly, the last thing observable is, the manner in which he uttered these words, And that was with a loud voice. He spake it that all might hear it, and that his Enemies who judged him now destitute and forsaken of God, might be convinced that he was not so. But that he was dear to his Father still, and could put his Soul confidently into his hands; *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.* Taking then these words, not only as spoken by Christ the Head of all Believers; and so commending their Souls to God with his own, but also as a Pattern, teaching them what they ought to do themselves, when they come to die. We observe,

Doct. That dying believers are both warrant- ed, and encouraged by Christ's example, believingly to commend their precious Souls into the hands of God.

Thus the Apostle directs the Faith of Christians, to commit their Souls to God's tuition and fatherly protection when they are either going into Prisons, or to the Stake for Christ, *1 Pet. 4. 19.* *Let them (faith he) that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

This Proposition we will consider in these two main Branches of it, *sc.* what is implied and carried in the Soul's commending it self to God by Faith, when the time of separation is come. And what warrant or encouragement gracious Souls have for their so doing.

First, What is implied in this Act of a Believer, his commending or committing his Soul into the Hands of God at Death?

And if it be thoroughly weighed, you will find these six things at least carried in it.

First, It implies this evident-

ly in it, That the Soul that out-
lives the Body, and fails not as to
its being, when its Body fails. It
feels the house in which it
dwelt, dropping into ruins, and
looks out for a new Habitation
with God. Father, into thy hands

I commend my Spirit. The Soul understands it self a more noble being than that corruptible Body, to which it was united; and is now to leave in the dust. It understands its relation to the Father of Spirits, and from him it expects protection and provision in its un-

bodied state; and therefore into his hands it puts it self. If it vanished or breathed into air, and did not survive the Body; if it were annihilated at death, it were but a mocking of God to say when we die, *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.*

Secondly, It implies the Soul's true Rest to be in God. See which way its Motions and Tendencies are, not only in Life, but in death also. It tends to its God. It rolls, it even puts it self upon its God and Father: *Father, into thy hands.* God is the Center of all gracious Spirits. While they tabernacle here, they have no rest but in the bosom of their God. When they go hence, their expectation and earnest desires are to be with him. It had been working after God by gracious desires before, it had cast many a longing look to Heaven-ward before, but when the gracious Soul comes near it's God (as it doth in a dying hour) then it even throws it self into his arms. As a River that after many turnings and windings, at last is arrived to the Ocean; it

pours it self with a central force into the bosom of the Ocean, and there finishes its weary Course. Nothing but God can please it in this World, and nothing but God can give it Content when it goes hence. It is

not the amenity of the place, whither the gracious Soul is going, but the bosom of the blessed God who dwells there, that it so vehemently pants after. Not the Father's house, but the Father's arms and bosom. *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And on Earth is none that I desire in comparison of thee.* *Psaln 73. 24, 25.*

Thirdly, It also implies the great value be- lievers have for their Souls. That's the precious treasure. And their main solicitude and chief Care is to see it secured in a safe hand. *Father, into thy hands I commit my Spirit,* they are words speaking the believers care for his Soul. That it may be safe, whatever becomes of the vile Body. A believer when he comes nigh to death, spends but few thoughts about his body; whether it shall be laid, or how it shall be disposed of: He trusts that in the hands of Friends; but as his great Care all along was for his Soul, so he expresses it in these his very last breathings, in which he com- mends it into the Hands of God. It is not, *Lord Jesus receive my body, take care of my Dust, but receive my Spirit.* Lord, secure the Jewel, when the Casket is broken.

Fourthly, These words imply the deep sense that dying believers have of the great change that is coming upon them by death, when all visible and sensible things are shrinking away from them, and failing. They feel the world, and the best comforts in it failing. Every Creature and Creature-comfort failing. For at Death we are said to fall, *Luke 16. 9.* Hereupon the Soul clasps the closer about its God, clings more close than ever to him. *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.* Not that a meer necessity puts the Soul upon God; or that it cleaves to God, because it hath then nothing else to take hold on. No, no, it chose
God.

Ruere in
amplexus.

Locus nequiquam valet
neq; coeli amoenitas ipsa,
per se beatorum spirituum
bestitudinem augeat; nisi
quâ Dei habitatio est.
*Parker de descensu, Lib. 2.
p. 132.*

Quisquis in Christum
credet, non effabit in æ-
rem animam moriens, sed
ad fidelem depositarium
confugiet, qui tato conser-
vet quicquid subtraditum
est. *Calv.*

God for its portion when it was in the midst of all its outward enjoyments, and had as good security as other Men have for the long enjoyment of them; but my meaning is, that although gracious Souls have chosen God for their portion, and do truly prefer him to the best of their Comforts; yet in this compounded State, it lives not wholly upon its God; but partly by Faith, and partly by Sense. Partly upon things seen, and partly upon things not seen. The Creatures had some interest in their Hearts, alas, too much: But now all these are vanishing, and it sees they are so. I shall see Man no more, with the inhabitants of the World, (said sick *Hzekiah*;) hereupon it turns itself from them all, and casts it self upon God for all its subsistence. Expecting now to live upon it's God intirely, as the blessed Angels do. And so in Faith they throw themselves into his Arms. *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.*

Fifthly, It implies the attonement of God, and his full Reconciliation to Believers, by the Blood of the great Sacrifice. Else they durst never commit their Souls into his Hands. For it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, Heb. 12. 29. (i. e.) of an absolute God, a God unattoned by the offering up of Christ. The Soul dare no more cast it self into the hand of God without such an attoning Sacrifice, than it dares approach to a devouring Fire. And indeed, the Reconciliation of God; for we are made accepted in the beloved. So it's plainly carried in the order or manner of the reconciled Souls committing it self to him; for it first casts it self into the Hands of Christ, then into the Hands of God by him. So *Stephen*, when dying, *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit.* And by that hand it would be put into the Father's Hands.

Sixthly, And lastly, It implies both the efficacy, and excellency of Faith in supporting and relieving the Soul at a time when nothing else is able to do it. Faith is its conduct, when it is at the greatest loss, and distress that ever it met with. It secures the Soul when it is turned out of the Body. When heart and flesh fail, this leads it to the rock that fails not. It sticks by that Soul till it see it safe through all the territories of Satan, and safe landed upon the shore of Glory; and then is swallowed up in vision. Many a favour it hath shewen the Soul while it dwelt in its Body. The great service it did for the Soul was in the time of its espousals to Christ. This is the marriage knot. The blessed Bond of union betwixt the Soul and Christ. Many a relieving fight, secret and sweet support it hath received from its faith since that; but surely its first and last works are its most glorious works. By Faith it first ventured it self upon Christ. Threw it self upon him in the deepest sense of its own vileness, and utter unworthiness, when sense, reason and multitudes of Temptations flooded by contradicting and discouraging the Soul. By faith it now casts it self into his Arms, when it's lanching out into vast eternity.

They are both noble acts of Faith, but the first no doubt is the greatest and most difficult. For when once the Soul is interested in Christ, it's no such difficulty to commit it self into his hands, as when it had no interest at all in him. It's easier for a Child to cast himself into the Arms of its own Father in distress, than for one that hath been both a stranger and enemy to Christ, to cast it self upon him that he may be a Father, and a Friend to it.

And this brings us upon the second enquiry I promised to satisfy, *fc.*

Secondly, What warrant, or encouragement have gracious Souls to commit themselves at death, into the hands of God? I answer, much every way: All things encourage and warrant its so doing. For,

First, This God upon whom the Believer rolls himself at death, is its Creator. The Father of its Being. He created and inspired it, and so it hath relation of Creature to a Creator, yea, of a Creature now in distress, to a faithful Creator, 1 Pet. 4. 19. *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing; as to a [faithful Creator.]* Its very true, this single relation in its self gives little ground of encouragement; unless the Creature had conserved that integrity in which it was originally created. And they that have no more to plead with God for acceptance, but their relation to him as Creatures, to a Creator; will doubtless find that word made good to their little Comfort, *Isa. 27. 11. It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them, will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them, will shew them no favour.* But now, grace brings that relation into repute. Holiness ingratiate us again, and revives the remembrance of this relation. So that Believers only can plead this.

*Hastus ex
divino Ori-
gine.*

Secondly, As the gracious Soul is his Creature, so it is his redeemed creature. One that he hath bought, and that with a great price. Even with the precious Blood of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 1. 18. This greatly encourages the departing Soul, to commit it self into the hands of God; so you find *Psalms 31. 5. Into thy hands do I commend my Spirit, thou hast redeemed it, O Lord God of truth.* Surely this is mighty encouragement, to put it self upon God in a dying hour. Lord, I am not only thy Creature, but thy redeemed Creature. One that thou hast bought with a great price. O I have cost thee dear. For my sake Christ came from thy Bottom, and is it imaginable that after that thou hast in such a costly way, even by the expence of the precious Blood of Christ redeemed me, thou shouldst at last exclude me? Shall the ends both of Creation, and Redemption of this Soul be lost together? Will God form such an excellent creature as my Soul is, in which are so many wonders of the Wisdom and Power of it's Creator? Will he be content when sin had marr'd the frame, and defaced the glory of it, to recover it to himself again by the death of his own dear Son, and after all this cast it away, as if there were nothing in all this? *Father into thy hands, I com-*
mend

mend my Spirit. I know thou wilt have a respect to the work of thy hands. Especially to a redeemed creature, upon which thou hast been out so great sums of Love; which thou hast bought at so dear a rate.

Thirdly, Nay, that's not all; the gracious Soul may confidently and securely commit it self into the hands of God when it parts with its Body at death; not only because it is his Creature, his redeemed Creature, but because it is his *renewed Creature also*. And this lays a firm ground for the Believer's confidence of acceptance, not that it is the proper Cause or Reason of its acceptance, but as it is the Soul's best Evidence, that it is accepted with God, and shall not be refused by him, when it comes to him at death. For in such a Soul there is a double workmanship of God, both glorious pieces, though the last exceeds in Glory. A *Natural Workmanship*, in the excellent Frame of that Noble Creature the Soul. And a *Gracious Workmanship* upon that again. A new Creation upon the old. Glory upon Glory. *We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus*, Eph. 2. 10. The Holy Ghost came down from Heaven on purpose to create this new Workmanship. To frame this new Creature. And indeed it is the Top and Glory of all God's works of wonder in this World. And must needs give the believer encouragement to commit it self to God, whether at such a time, it shall reflect either upon the end of the Work, or upon the end of the Workman; both which meet in the Salvation of the Soul so wrought upon, the end of the Work is our Glory. By this we are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Light, Col. 1. 12. It is also the design and end of him that wrought it, 2 Cor. 5. 5. *Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing, is God.* Had he not designed thy soul for Glory, the Spirit should never have come upon such a sanctifying design as this. Surely it shall not fail of a reception into Glory, when it's cast out of this Tabernacle. Such a Work was not wrought in vain, neither can it ever perish. When once Sanctification comes upon a Soul, it so roots it self in the Soul, that where the Soul goes, it goes. Gifts indeed, thy die. All natural excellency and beauty, that goes away at death, Job 4. ult. But Grace ascends with the Soul. It is a sanctified, when a separate Soul. And can God shut the door of Glory upon such a Soul, that by Grace is made meet for the inheritance? O it cannot be!

Fourthly, As the gracious Soul is a renewed Soul, so it is also a *sealed Soul*. God hath sealed it in this World for that Glory, into which it is now to enter at death. All gracious Souls are sealed *objectively*, i. e. they have those Works of Grace wrought on their Souls, which do (as but now was said) ascertain and evidence their Title to Glory. And many are sealed *formally*. That is, the Spirit helps them clearly to discern their Interest in Christ, and all the Promises. This both secures Heaven to the Soul in it self, and becomes also an Earnest or Pledge of that Glory in the unspeakable Joys and Comforts that it breeds in the Soul. So you find, 2 Cor. 1. 22. *Who bath*

Vol. I.

sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts. God's sealing us gives high Security. His *objective* Seal makes it sure in it self, his *formal* Seal makes it so to us. But if over and above all this, he will please, as a Fruit of that his sealing, to give us those heavenly unexpressible Joys and Comforts which are the Fruit of his formal Sealing-Work, to be an Earnest, a Foretast and Handful of that Glory, how can the Soul that hath found all this, doubt in the least of a rejection by its God, when at death it comes to him? Surely if God have sealed, he will not refuse you. If he have given his earnest, he will not shut you out. God's Earnest is not given in jest.

Fifthly, Moreover, every gracious Soul may confidently cast it self into the arms of its God when it goes hence, with *Father, into thy hands I commit my Spirit*. For as much as every gracious Soul is a Soul in covenant with God, and God stands obliged by his Covenant and Promise to such not to cast them out when they come unto him. As soon as ever thy Soul became his by Regeneration, that Promise became its own, Heb. 13. 5. *I will never leave you, nor forsake you.* And will he leave the Soul now at a pinch, when it never had more need of a God to stand by it than it hath then? Every gracious Soul is entitled to that Promise, John 14. 3. *I will come again and receive you to my self.* And will he fail to make it good, when the time of the Promise is come, as at death it is? It cannot be. Multitudes of Promises, the whole Covenant of Promises give Security to the Soul against the fears of rejection, or neglect by God. And the Soul's dependance upon God, and hanging upon a Promise, its very rolling its self upon God from the Encouragement the Word gives it, adds to the engagement upon God. When he sees a poor Soul that he hath made, redeemed, sanctified, sealed and by solemn Promise engaged himself to receive, coming to him at Death, rolling it self upon his faithfulness that promised, saying, as David, 2 Sam. 23. 5. *Thou Lord, there be many deteets in me, yet thou hast made a Covenant with me, well ordered in all things, and sure; and this is all my Salvation, and all my Hope.* Lord, I am resolved to send out my Soul in an Act of Faith. I will venture it upon the credit of thy Promise. How can God refuse such a Soul? How can he put it off when it so puts it self upon him?

Sixthly, But this is not all, the gracious Soul sustains many intimate and dear relations to that God into whose hands it commends it self at death. It's his Spouse, and the Consideration of such a day of Epousals, may well encourage it to cast it self into the bosom of Christ, its Head and Husband. It is a Member of his Body, Flesh and Bones, Eph. 5. 30. It is his Child, and he its everlasting Father, Isa. 9. 6. It is his Friend. Henceforth saith Christ, *I call you not servants, but Friends*, Joh. 15. 15. What confidence may these and all other the dear Relations Christ owns to the renewed Soul beget in such an hour as this is! What Husband can throw off the dear Wife

B b

of

of his bosom, who in distresses calls her self into his Arms! What Father can shut the door upon a dear Child that comes to him for Refuge, saying, Father, Into thy hands I commit my self!

Seventhly, and Lastly, The unchangeableness of God's Love to his People gives confidence they shall in no wise be cast out. They know Christ is the same to them at last, he was at first. The same in the pangs of death, as he was in the comforts of Life. Having loved his own which were in the World, he loved them to the end, *Joh. 13. 1.* He doth not love as the World loves, only in prosperity. But they are as dear to him when their beauty and strength is gone, as when it was in the greatest flourish. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live, or die; we are the Lord's, *Rom. 14. 8.* Take in all these things and weigh them both apart, and together, and see whether they amount not to a full evidence of the truth of this point, that dying Believers are both warranted and encouraged to commend their Souls into the hands of God. Whether they have not every one of them cause to say as the Apostle did, *2 Tim. 1. 12.* *I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* The improvements of all this you have in the following practical Deductions.

Deduction 1. Are dying believers only warranted and encouraged thus to commend their Souls into the hands of God? What a sad strait then must all dying unbelievers be in about their Souls? Such Souls will fall into the hands of God, but that's their Misery, not their Privilege. They are not put by Faith into the hands of Mercy, but fall by Sin, into the hands of Justice. Not God, but the Devil, is their Father, *John 8. 4.* Whither should the child go, but to its own Father? They have not one of those forementioned encouragements to cast themselves into the hands of God, except the naked relation they have to God as their Creator, and that's as good as none, without the new Creation. If they have nothing but this to plead for their Salvation, the Devil hath as much to plead as they. It's the new Creature that brings the first Creation into repute again with God.

O dismal! O deplorable case! A poor Soul is turning out of house and home, and knows not where to go. It departs and immediately falls into the hands of Justice. The Devil stands by waiting for such a Soul whom God will throw to him, as a Dog for a crust. Little, ah little do the friends of such a one think whilst they are honouring his dust by a splendid and honourable Funeral, what a case that poor Soul is in that lately dwelt there; and what fearful straits and extremities it is now exposed to. They will cry indeed, Lord, Lord, open to us, *Matth. 7. 22.* But to how little purpose are their vain cries? Will God hear him when he cries, *Joh. 27. 9.* It's a lamentable case.

Deduction 2. Will God graciously accept, and faithfully keep what the Saints commit to him

at death? how careful then should they be to keep what God commits to them, to be kept from him while they live. You have a great trust to commit to God when you die, and God hath a great trust to commit to you whilst you live; you expect that he should faithfully keep what then you shall commit to his keeping; and he expects you should faithfully keep, what he now commits to your keeping. O keep what God commits to you, as you expect he should keep your Souls when you commit them unto him. If you keep his truths, he will keep your Souls. *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee, &c. Rev. 3. 10.* Be faithful to your God, and you shall find him faithful to you. None can pluck you out of his hand, see that nothing wrest his truths out of your hands. *deny him, he also will deny us, 2 Tim. 2. 12.* Take heed lest those estates you have gotten as a blessing attending the Gospel, prove a temptation to you to betray the Gospel. Religion (faith one) brings forth Riches, but the Daughter devours the Mother. How can you expect acceptance with God, who have betrayed his truth, and dealt perfidiously with him?

Deduction 3. If Believers may safely commit their Souls into the hands of God, How confidently may they commit all lesser interests, and lower concerns into the same hand. Shall we trust him with our Souls, and not with our lives, liberties or comforts? Can we commit the treasure to him, and not a trifle? Whatever you enjoy in this World, is but a trifle to your Souls. Sure if you can trust him for eternal Life for your Souls, you may much more trust him, for the daily Bread for your Bodies. I know it is objected, that God hath made over temporal things to his People upon conditional promises, and an absolute faith can never be grounded upon conditional promises.

But what means this Objection? Let your Faith be but suitable to these conditional Promises, that is, believe they shall be made good to you, so far as God sees them good for you. Do you but labour to come up to those Conditions required in you, and thereby God will have more glory, and you more comfort. If your Prayers for these things proceed from pure ends, the glory of God, not the satisfaction and gratification of your Lusts. If your desires after them be moderate as to the measure, content with that proportion the infinite wisdom sees fittest for you. If you take God's way to obtain them, and dare not strain Conscience, or commit a Sin, though you should perish for want. If you can patiently wait God's time for enlargements from your straits, and not make any sinful haste; you shall be surely supplied. And he that remembers your Souls, will not forget your Bodies. But we live by Sense and not by Faith. Present things strike our Affections more powerfully than the invisible things that are to come. *The Lord humble his People for this.*

Deduction 4. Is the privilege of believers, that they can commit their Souls to God in a dying hour?

Religio perit divitiis, sed filia devorat matrem

hour? then how precious, how useful a Grace is Faith to the People of God both living and dying?

All the Graces have done excellently, but Faith excels them all. Faith is the *Phoenix Grace*, the Queen of Graces. Deservedly it is filled *precious Faith*, 2 Pet. 1. 1. The Benefits and Privileges of it in this Life are unspeakable; and as there is no comfortable living, so no comfortable dying without it.

First, While we live and converse here in the world, all our comfort and safety is from it; for all our union with Christ, the fountain of mercies and blessings is by Faith, *Eph. 3. 17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by Faith*. No Faith, no Christ. All our Communion with Christ is by it. He that cometh to God must believe, *Heb. 11. 6*. The Soul's Life is wrapt up in this Communion with God; and that Communion in Faith. *All Communications* from Christ depend upon Faith; for look as all Communion is founded in Union, so from our Union and Communion, are all our Communications. All Communications of Quicknings, Comforts, Joy, Strength and whatsoever serves to the well-being of the Life of Grace, are all through that Faith which first knit us to Christ, and still maintains our Communion with Christ, believing we rejoice, 1 Pet. 1. 8. The inner Man is renewed whilst we look to the things that are not seen, 2 Cor. 4. 18.

Secondly, And as our Life, and all the Supports and Comforts of it here are dependant on Faith; so you see our death, as to the safety and comfort of our Souls, then depends upon our Faith. He that hath no Faith, cannot commit his Soul to God, but rather shrinks from God. Faith can do many sweet Offices for your Souls upon a death-bed, when the Light of this World is gone, and all Joy ceases on Earth. It can give us fights of things invisible in the other World, and those fights will breathe Life into your Souls amidst the very pangs of death.

Reader, do but think what a comfortable foresight of God, and the Joys of Salvation, will be to thee, when thine Eye-strings are breaking. Faith cannot only see that beyond the Grave, which will comfort, but it can cling about its God, and clasp Christ in a promise when it feels the ground of all sensible comforts trembling and sinking under thy feet.

My heart and my flesh faileth, but God is the Strength (or Rock) of my heart, and my portion for ever. *Reeds* fail, but the Rock is firm footing. Yea, and when the Soul can no longer Tabernacle here, it can carry the Soul to God, cast it upon him, with, *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit*. O precious Faith!

Deduction 5. Do the Souls of dying Believers commend themselves into the hands of God? Then let not the surviving relations of such sorrow as Men that have no hope. A Husband, a Wife, a Child, is rent by death out of your Arms, well, but consider into what arms, into what bosom they are commended. Is it not better for them to be in the bosom of God, than in yours? Could they be spared so long from Heaven, as to come back again to you but an hour, how would they be displeased to see your tears, and hear your cries and sighs for them! They would say to you, as Christ said to the Daughters of Jerusalem, *Weep not for me, but weep for your selves, and for your Children*. I am in a safe hand, I am out of the reach of all Storms and Troubles. O did you but know what their state is, who are with God, you would be more than satisfied about them.

Deduction 6. Lastly, I will close all with a Word of Counsel. Is this the privilege of dying Believers, to commend their Souls into the hands of God? *Then as ever you hope for comfort or peace in your last hour, see that your Souls be such as may be then fit to be commended into the hands of an holy and just God. See that they be holy souls*. God will never accept them, if they be not holy. *Without holiness no man shall see God*, *Heb. 12. 24*. *He that hath this hope (viz. to see God) purifieth himself even as he is pure*, 1 John 3. 3. Endeavours after Holiness are inseparably connected with rational expectations of blessedness. Will you put an unclean filthy defiled thing into the pure hand of the most holy God? O see they be holy, and already accepted in the beloved, or wo to them when they take their leaves of those tabernacles they now dwell in. The gracious Soul may confidently say then, *Lord Jesus, into thy hand I commend my Spirit*. O let all that can say so then, now say,

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

Serm. 37.

Treats of
Christ's Fu-
neral, open-
ing the man-
ner, reasons,
and excel-
lent ends
thereof.

S E R M O N XXXVII.

JOHN XIX. 40, 41, 42.

Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linnen cloaths, with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a Garden, and in the Garden a new Sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews preparation-day, for the Sepulchre was nigh at hand.

YOU have heard the last Words of dying Jesus, commending his Spirit into his Father's hands: And now the Life of the World hangs dead upon a Tree. The Light of the World for a time muffled up in a dismal Cloud: The Sun of Righteousness set in the Region and Shadow of Death. The Lord is dead, and he that wears the Keys of the Grave at his Girdle, is now himself to be lock'd up in the Grave.

All you that are the Friends and Lovers of Jesus, are this Day invited to his Funeral. Such a Funeral as never was since Graves were first digged. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. There are fix remarkable particulars about this Funeral in these three Verses.

1. The Preparations that were made for it, and that was mainly in two Particulars, viz. The *begging and perfuming* of the Body. His Body could not be buried, till by begging, his Friends had obtained it as a favour from his Judge. The dead Body was by Law in the Power of Pilate who adjudged it to death, as the Bodies of those that are hanged, are in the power of the Judge to dispose of them as he pleases. And when they had gotten it from Pilate, they wind it in fine Linnen Cloaths with Spices. But what need of Spices to perfume that blessed Body? his own Love was Perfume enough, to keep it sweet in the Remembrance of his People to all generations: However, by this they will manifest, as they are able, the dear affection they have for him.

2. The Bearers that carried his Body to its grave, *Joseph of Arimathea* and *Nichodemus*, two secret Disciples. They were both Men of Estate and Honour. None could imagine that these would have appeared at a time of so much danger, with such boldness for Christ. That ever they would have gon openly and boldly to manifest their Love to Christ when dead, who were afraid to come to him (except by Night) when he was living. But now a Spirit of Zeal and Courage is come upon them, when those that made greater and more open confessions of him are gon.

3. The Attendants who followed the Hearse,

were the Women that followed him out of Galilee. Among whom the two *Mary's*, and the Mother of *Zebedees* Children (whom *Mark* calls *Salome*) are only named.

4. The Grave or Sepulchre where they laid him. It was in *Joseph's* new Tomb, which he had prepared in the Garden near unto *Golgotha*, where our Lord died. Two things are remarkable about this Tomb. It was another's Tomb, and it was a new Tomb. It was another's. For he had not an House of his own, to lay his Body in when dead. As he lived in other Mens Houses, so he lay in another Man's Tomb. And it was a new Tomb, wherein never Man was yet laid. Doubtless there was much of Providence in this, for had any other been laid there before him, it might have proved an occasion both to shake the Credit, and slur the Glory of his Resurrection, by pretending it was some former Body, and not the Lord's, that rose out of it. In this also divine Providence had a respect to that Prophecy, *I/a. 53. 9.* which was to be fulfilled at his Funeral: *He made his grave with the rich, because he had done no violence, &c.*

5. The disposition of the Body in that Tomb. 'Tis true, there is no mention made of the Groans and Tears, with which they laid him in his Sepulchre, yet we may well presume they were not wanting in plentiful expressions of their sorrow that way. For as they wept, and smote their Breasts when he dyed, *Luke 23. 48.* So no doubt they laid him with melting Hearts, and flowing eyes in his Tomb, when dead.

6. And lastly, the last remarkable particular in the Text, is the solemnity, with which his Funeral Rites were performed, and they were all suitable to his humbled State. It was, indeed a Funeral as decently order'd as the straits of time and state of things would then permit: But there was nothing of Pomp or outward State at all observed. Few Marks of Honour set by Men upon it. Only the Heavens adorned it with divers miraculous works, which in their proper place will be spoken to. Thus was he laid in his grave, where he continued

tinued for three incomplete days and nights in the territories of Death, in the land of darkness and forgetfulness. Partly to correspond with *Jonah* his Type, and partly to ascertain the world of the reality of his Death. Whence our observation is,

Doeſt. That the dead body of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt was decently interr'd, by a ſmall number of his own Diſciples, and continued in the ſtate of the Dead for a time.

This Observation containing matter of fact, and that ſo plainly and faithfully delivered to us by the Pens of the ſeveral Evangelists; we need do no more to prepare it for our uſe, than to ſatisfie theſe two inquiries; Why had Chriſt any funeral at all, ſince his Reſurrection was ſo ſoon to follow his Death? And what manner of funeral Chriſt had.

Fiſt, Why had Chriſt any Funeral at all, ſince he was to riſe again from the dead within that ſpace of time that other Men commonly have to lie by the wall before their interment; and had it continued longer unburied, it could ſee no corruption, having never been tainted by ſin? Why, though there was no need of it at all upon that account, that a Funeral is needful for other bodies; yet there were theſe four weighty Ends and Reaſons of it.

Reason 1. Fiſt, It was neceſſary Chriſt ſhould be buried, to *ascertain his Death*, elſe it might have been looked upon as a Cheat. For, as they were ready enough to impoſe ſo groſs a Cheat upon the world at his Reſurrection, *That the Diſciples came by night and ſtole him away*: much more would they have denied at once the reality both of his Death and Reſurrection, had he not been ſo perfumed and interr'd: But this cut off all pretensions. For in this kind of embalming, his mouth, ears, noſtrils, were all filled with their Spices and Oudours. Bound up in Linnen, and laid long enough in the Tomb to give full aſſurance to the world of the certainty of his Death. So that there could be no latent Principle of Life in him. Now ſince our eternal Life is wrapt up in Chriſt's Death, it can never be too firmly eſtabliſhed. To this therefore we may well ſuppoſe Providence had ſpecial reſpect in his Burial, and the manner of it.

Reason 2. Secondly, He muſt be buried to fulfil the Types, and Prophecies that went before. His abode in the Grave was prefigured by *Jona's* abode three days and nights in the belly of the Whale, *Matth. 12. 40*. So muſt the Son of Man be three days, and three nights in the heart of the earth. Yea, the Prophet had deſcribed the very manner of his Funeral, and long before he was born foretold in what kind of Tomb his Body ſhould be laid, *Iſa. 53. 9*. *He made his Grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death*. Pointing by that expreſſion at this Tomb of *Joſeph*, who was a rich Man, and the Scriptures cannot be broken.

Reason 3. Thirdly, He muſt be buried to compleat his humiliation; this being the loweſt ſtep he could poſſibly deſcend

in his abated ſtate. *They have brought me to the duſt of Death*. Lower he could not be laid, and ſo low he muſt lay his bleſſed head, elſe he had not been humbled to the loweſt.

Reason 4. Fourthly, But the great end and reaſon of his interment was the conquering of Death in its own dominion and territories; which victory over the Grave furniſheth the Saints with that triumphant *Antion* ſong of deliverance, *1 Cor. 15. 55*. *O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Deſtruction!* Our Graves would not be ſo ſweet and comfortable to us, when we come to lie down in them, if Jeſus had not lain there before us, and for us. Death is a Dragon, the Grave its Den; a place of dread and terror: But Chriſt goes into its Den, there grapples with it, and for ever overcomes it. Diſarms it of all its terror, and not only makes it ceaſe to be *enemical*, but to become exceeding *beneficial* to the Saints. A Bed of reſt, and a perfumed Bed. They do but go into Chriſt's Bed, where he lay before them. For theſe ends he muſt be buried.

Secondly, Next let us inquire what manner of Funeral Chriſt had.

And if we intently obſerve it, we ſhall find many remarkable properties in it.

Fiſt, We ſhall find it to be a very obſcure and private Funeral. Here was no external pomp or gallantry. Chriſt affected it not in his Life, and it was no way ſuitable to the ends and manner of his death. Humiliation was deſigned in his Death. And State is inconſiſtent with ſuch an end. Beſides, he died upon the Tree, and Perſons ſo dying don't uſe to have much ceremony and ſtate at their Funerals. Three things ſhew it to be a very humble and obſcure Funeral, as to what concerned outward glory, with which the great ones of the earth are uſually interr'd. For,

Fiſt, The dead body of the Lord was not brought from his own Houſe, as other Mens commonly are; but from the Tree. They beg'd it of his Judge. As who ſhould ſay, *go bring the Corps from Tyburn*. Had they not obtained this favour from *Pilate*, it muſt have been buried in *Golgotha*. It had been tumbled into a pit, digged under the Croſs.

Secondly, As it was firſt beg'd, then buried; ſo it was attended with a very poor Train. A few ſorrowful Women followed the Bier. Other Men are accompanied to their Graves by their Relations, and Friends. The Diſciples were all ſcattered from him. Afraid to own him dying, and dead.

Thirdly, And theſe few that were reſolved to give him a Funeral, are forced, by reaſon of the ſtraights of time, to do it in ſhuffling haſte. Time was ſhort, they take the next Sepulchre they can get, and hurry him away that evening into it. For the preparation for the Paſſover was at hand. This was the obſcure Funeral which the body of the Lord had. Thus was the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, who hath the Keys of Death and Hell, laid into his Grave.

Secondly, Yet though Men could beſtow little honour upon it, the Heavens beſtowed ſeveral

Who ever weighed Christ in a pair of Balances (saith another) who hath seen the foldings and pyles, the heights, and depths of that glory which is in him? O for such a Heaven, as but to stand afar off and see, and love and long for him, while times thread be cut, and this great work of Creation dissolved! — O if I could yoke in among the thick of Angels, and Seraphims, and now glorified Saints, and could raise a new Love-song of Christ, before all the world. I am pained with wondring at new-opened Treasures in Christ. If every finger, member, bone and joint were a torch burning in the hottest fire in hell; I would they could all send out love-praises, high songs of praise for ever more to that Plant of Renown, to that Royal and high Prince, Jesus my Lord. But alas, his love swelled in me, and finds no vent. — I mar his praises, nay, I know no comparison of what Christ is, and what he is worth. All the Angels, and all the glorified, praise him not so much as in halves. Who can advance him, or utter all his praise?

O if I could praise him, I would rest content to die of Love for him. O would to God I could send in my praises to my incomparable well-beloved, or cast my Love-songs of that matchless Lord Jesus over the Walls, that they might light in his lap, before Men and Angels. — But when I have spoken of him till my head rive, I have said just nothing. I may begin again. A God-head, a God-head is a World's wonder. Set ten thousand thousand new-made Worlds of Angels and Elect Men, and double them in Number ten thousand thousand times, let their hearts and tongues be ten thousand times more agile and large than the hearts and tongues of the Seraphims, that stand with fix wings before him; when they have said all for the glorifying and praising of the Lord Jesus; they have spoken little or nothing. O if I could wear this Tongue to the Lump in extolling his highness! But it is my daily sorrow that I am confounded with his incomparable Love.

Thus have his enamoured friends faintly expressed his excellencies, and if they have therein done any thing, they have shewn the impossibility of his due praises.

Come and see, believing Souls, look upon dead Jesus in his winding sheet, by Faith; and say, Lo, this is he of whom the Church said, *My beloved is white and ruddy*; his ruddiness is now gone, and a death-pale hath prevailed over all his body: but still as lovely as ever, yea, altogether lovely.

If David lamenting the death of Saul and Jonathan, said, *Daughters of Jerusalem weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights; who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel*; much rather may I say, *Children of Zion, weep over Jesus, who clothed you with righteousness, and garments of salvation*.

This is he who quitted the Throne of Glory, left the Bosom of unspeakable Delights, came in a body of Flesh, produced in perfect holiness, brake through many and great impediments, (thy great Unworthiness, the Wrath

of God and Man) by the strength of Love; to bring Salvation home to thy Soul. Can he that believingly considers this, do less than faint at the sense of that Love that brought him to the dust of death, and cry out with that Father, *My Lord was crucified*? But I will insist no longer upon generals, but draw down the Particulars of Christ's Funeral to your use in the following Corollaries.

Corollary 1. Was Christ buried in this manner? *Then a decent and mournful Funeral (where it can be had) is very laudable among Christians.*

I know the Souls of the Saints have no concernment for their Bodies, nor are they solicitous how the Body is treated here; yet there is a respect due to them, as they are the Temples wherein God hath been served and honoured, by those Holy Souls that once dwelt in them. As also upon the account of their relation to Christ, even when they lie by the Walls. And the Glory that will be one day put upon them, when they shall be changed, and made like unto Christ's glorious Body. Upon such special accounts as these, their bodies deserve an honourable treatment, as well as upon the account of Humanity, which owes this honour to, on the Bodies of all Men.

To have no Funeral, is accounted a Judgment, *Ecclef. 7. 4.* Or to be tumbled into a Pit without any to lament us, is lamentable. We read of many solemn and * mournful Funerals in Scripture, wherein the People of God have affectionately paid their respects and Honours to the Dust of the Saints; as Men that were deeply sensible of their worth, and how great a loss the World sustains by their remove. Christ's Funeral had as much of decency and solemnity in it, as the time would permit; though he was a stranger to all pomp, both in life and death.

Corol. 2. Did Joseph and Nicodemus so boldly appear, at a time of so much danger, to beg the body, and give it a Funeral? *Let it be for ever a caution to strong Christians not to despise, or glory over the weak.* You see here a couple of poor, low-spirited and timorous Persons; that were afraid to be seen in Christ's company, when the other Disciples professed their readiness to die with him: Yet those feeble, and these appear for him, when the trial comes indeed. If God desert the strong, and assist the weak; the feeble shall be as David, and the strong as Tow. I speak not this to discourage any Man from striving to improve inherent Grace to the utmost. For it's ordinarily found in experience, that the degrees of assisting Grace, are given out according to the measures of inherent Grace: But I speak it to prevent a sin incident to strong Christians, which is to despise the weak, which God corrects by such instances and examples as this before us.

Corol. 3. Hence we may be assisted in discerning the depths of Christ's Humiliation for us. And see from what, to what his Love brought him. It was not enough, that he who was in the form of God, became a Creature; which was an infinite stoop, nay, to be made a Man, an inferior Order of Creatures. Nay, to be a poor

* Gen. 23. 2.
Gen. 35. 19.
Gen. 50. 10.
Num. 20. 29
2 Chr. 35. 24
Job. 11. 31.
Aps. 8. 2.

poor Man, to spend his days in Poverty and Contempt. But also to be a dead Corps for our sake. *O what manner of love is this!*

Now the deeper the humiliation of the Son of God was, the more satisfactory to us it must needs be. For as it shews us the hainousness of sin that deserves all this, so the fulness of Christ's satisfaction whereby he makes up that breach. O it was a deep humiliation indeed. How unlike himself is he now become! Doth he look like the Son of God? What, the Son of God whom all the Angels adore, to be shuffled by three or four Persons into his Grave in an evening. To be carried from *Golgotha* to the Grave in this manner! And there lie as a captive to Death for a time! Never was the like change of conditions, never such an abasement heard of in the world.

Coroll. 4. From this funeral of Christ results the purest and strongest consolation and encouragement to believers, against the fears of Death and the Grave. If this be so, that Jesus hath lain in the Grave before you; let me say then to you as the Lord spake to *Jacob*, Gen. 46. 2, 3. *Fear not to go down to Egypt, for I will go down with thee, and will surely bring thee up thence.* So here, fear not Believer to go down to the Grave, for God will be with thee there, and will surely bring thee up thence. This consideration that Jesus Christ hath lain in the Grave himself, gives manifold encouragements to the People of God, against the terrors of the Grave.

First, the Grave received, but could not destroy Jesus Christ. Death swallowed him, as the Whale did *Jonah* his Type; but could not digest him when it had swallowed him, but quickly delivered him up again. Now Christ lying in the Grave, as the common Head and representative of Believers, what comfort should this inspire into their Hearts? For as it fared with Christ's personal, so it shall with Christ's mystical. It could not retain him, it shall not for ever retain them. This Resurrection of Christ out of his, is the very ground of our hope for a Resurrection out of our Graves. *Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that sleep,* 1 Cor. 15. 20.

Secondly, As the union betwixt the Body of Christ and the divine Nature was not dissolved; when that Body was laid in the Grave; so the union betwixt Christ and Believers is not, cannot be dissolved when their Bodies shall be laid in their Graves. It's true, the natural union betwixt his Soul and Body was dissolved for a time, but the *Hypostatical* union was not dissolved, no, not for a moment. That Body was the Body of the Son of God when it was in the Sepulchre. In like manner, the natural union betwixt our Souls and Bodies, is dissolved by death, but the mystical union betwixt us and Christ, yea betwixt our very dust and Christ, can never be dissolved.

Thirdly, As Christ's Body when it was in the Grave, did there rest in hope, and was assuredly a partaker of that hope. So it shall fare with the dead Bodies of the Saints when they lay them down also in the dust. *My flesh also shall rest in hope,* saith Christ, *Psal. 16.*

9, 10, 11. In like manner, the Saints commit their Bodies to the dust in hope. *The righteous hath hope in his death,* Prov. 14. 32. And as Christ's hope was not a vain hope, so neither shall their hope be in vain.

Fourthly, And lastly, Christ's lying in the Grave before us, hath quite changed and altered the nature of the Grave. So that it is not what it was. It was once a part of the Curse, *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return,* was a part of the threatening and curse for Sin. The Grave had the nature and use of a Prison, to keep the Bodies of Sinners against the great Altizes; and then deliver them up into the hands of a great and terrible God. But now it's no Prison, but a Bed of rest. Yea, and a perfumed Bed, where Christ lay before us. Which is a sweet consideration of the Grave indeed: *They shall enter into Peace, they shall rest in their Beds,* Isa. 57. 2. O then let not Believers stand in fear of the Grave. He that hath one foot in Heaven, need not fear to put the other into the Grave. *Though I go down to the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me,* Psal. 23.

Indeed, the Grave is a terrible place to them that are out of Christ. Death is the Lord's Serjeant to arrest them. The Grave is the Lord's Prison to secure them. When death draws them into the Grave, it draws them thither as a Lyon doth his prey into the den to devour it. So you read, *Psal. 49. 14. Death shall feed (or prey) upon them.* Death there reigns over them in its full power, *Rom. 5. 14.* And tho' at last it shall render them again to God, yet it were better for them to lie everlastingly where they were, than to rise to such an end. For they are brought out of their Graves, as a condemned Prisoner out of the Prison, to go to Execution. But the case of the Saints is not so. The Grave (thanks be to our Lord Jesus Christ) is a privileged place to them while they sleep there; and when they awake, it will be with singing. When they awake, they shall be satisfied with his likeness.

Coroll. 5. Lastly, Since Christ was laid in the Grave, and his people reap such privileges by it, as ever you expect rest or comfort in your Graves, see that you get Union with Christ now.

It was an ancient custom of the Jews, to put rich treasures into the Graves, with their Friends, as well as to bestow much upon their Sepulchres. It's said, *Hicarnus* opened *David's* Sepulchre, and took out of it three thousand Talents of Gold and Silver. And to this sense many interpret that act of the *Chaldeans*, Jer. 8. 1. *At that time, saith the Lord, they shall bring out the bones of the Kings of Judah, and the bones of his Princes; &c. And they shall spread them before the Sun and Moon, &c.* This is rather conceived to be an act of Covetousness than Cruelty. They shall ransack their Graves for the Treasure that is hid there among their Bones. It's possible the case so stands with many of you, that you have no great matter to bestow upon your Funerals, nor are they like to be splendid; no stately Monuments, no hidden Treasures; but if Christ be yours, you carry that with you

you to your Graves, which is better than all the Gold and Silver in the World. What would you be the better if your Coffin were made of beaten Gold, or your Grave-stone set thick with glittering Diamonds? But if you die in the Lord, *i. e.* interested in, and united to the Lord; you shall carry six grounds of Comfort with you to your Graves, the least of which is not to be purchased with the wealth of both Indies.

First, The first Ground of Comfort which a Believer carries with him to the Grave is, that the Covenant of God holds firmly with his very Dust, all the days of its appointed time in the Grave. So much Christ tells us, *Matth. 22. 31, 32. I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but the God of the Living, q. d. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*, are naturally dead, but in as much as God long after their deaths, proclaimed himself their God still; therefore they are all alive, *federally* alive to God. They live, that is, their Covenant-relation lives still. *Whether we live, or whether we die (saith the Apostle) we are the Lords*, *Rom. 14. 7, 8, 9.* Now, what an encouragement is here! I am as much the Lord's in the state of the dead, as I was in the state of the living. Death puts an end to all other Relations and bonds, but the bond of the Covenant rots not in the Grave. That dust is still the Lord's.

Secondly, As God's Covenant with our very Bodies is indissoluble; so God's Love to our very dust, is inseparable. *I am the God of Abraham*: God looks down from Heaven into the Graves of his Saints with delight, and looks on that pile of dust with complacency, which those that once loved it, cannot behold without loathing. The Apostle is express, *Rom. 8. 33.* That Death separates not the Believer from the Love of God. As at first it was not our natural comeliness or beauty that drew or engaged his Love to us; so neither will he cease to love us when that beauty is gone, and we become objects of loathing to all Flesh. When a Husband cannot endure to see a Wife, or a Wife her Husband; but faith of them that were once dear and pleasant, as *Abraham* of his beloved *Sarah*, *Bury my dead out of my sight*. Yet then the Lord delights in it as much as ever. The Gold-smith doth not value the Dust of his Gold, as God values the Dust of his Saints, for all these precious Particles are united to Christ.

Thirdly, As God's Love will be with you in the Grave, so God's Providence shall take order about your Graves. When it shall be digged for you. And be sure he will not dig your

Graves, till you are fit to be put into them. He will bring you thither in the best time, *Job 5. 26. Thou shalt come to thy Grave as a flock of Corn in its Season.* You shall be ripe and ready before God house you there. It's said of *David*, that after he had served his generation by the will of God, he fell asleep, *Acts 13. 36.* O what a holy and wise Will is that Will of God, that so orders our death! And how equal is it that our Will should be concluded by it?

Fourthly, If you be in Christ, as God's Covenant holds with you in the Grave, his love is inseparable from your Dust, his Providence shall give order when it shall be digged for you; so in the next Place, his Pardons have loosed all the bonds of guilt from you, before you lie down in the Grave. So that you shall not die in your sins. Ah Friends, what a Comfort is this? That you are the Lord's free-men in the Grave! Sin is a bad Bed-fellow, and a worse Grave-fellow. It's a grievous threatening, *John 8. 24. Ye shall die in your sins.* Better be cast alive into a Pit among Dragons and Serpents, than dead into your Graves among your sins. O what a terrible word is that, *Job 20. 11. His bones are full of the sins of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust.* But from the company of sin in the Grave, all the Saints are delivered. God's full, free and final Pardons have shut guilt out of your Graves.

Fifthly, Whenever you come to your Graves, you shall find the enmity of the Grave slain by Christ. It is no enemy; nay, you will find it friendly, a privileged place to you. It will be as sweet to you that are in Christ, as a soft Bed in a still quiet Chamber, is to one that's weary and sleepy. Therefore it's said, *1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. Death is yours*: Yours as a Privilege: Your Friend. There you shall find sweet rest in Jesus. Be hurried, pained, troubled no more.

Sixthly, To conclude, if in Christ; know this for your comfort, that your own Lord Jesus Christ keeps the Keys of all the Chambers of death; and as he unlocks the door of Death, when he lets you in; so he will open it again for you, when you awake to let you out; and from the time he opens to let you in, till he opens to let you out, he himself wakes and watches by you while you sleep there. ——— *I (saith he) have the Keys of Death.* O it's comfortable to hear the Keys jingle in his hand, *Rev. 1. 18.* O then, as you expect Peace or Rest in the Chambers of Death, get Union with Christ. A Grave with Christ is a comfortable Place.

SERMON XXXVIII.

Serm. 38.

Wherein
four weighty
ends of
Christ's hu-
miliation
are opened
and parti-
cularly ap-
plied.

ISAIAH LIII. II.

He shall see the Travel of his Soul and be satisfied.

WE are now arrived at the last Particular which we design'd to speak to in Christ's State of Humiliation, namely, the Designs and blessed Ends for which he was so deeply abased. It's inconsistent with the Prudence of a common Agent to be at vast expences of time Time, Pains and Coit; and not to propound to himself a design worthy of all those Expences. And it is much less imaginable that Christ would so stupendiously abase himself, by stooping from the bosom of his Father to the state of the dead, where our last Discourse left him, if there had not been some excellent and glorious thing in his Eye, the attainment whereof might give him a content and satisfaction equivalent to all the sorrows and abasements he endured for it.

And so much is plainly carried in this Scripture. *He shall see the Travel of his Soul and be satisfied.* In which Words three things fall under our Consideration.

First, The travelling Pangs of Christ. So the Agonies of his Soul, and Torments of his Body are fitly call'd; not only because of the sharpness, and acuteness of them, being in that respect like the birth-pangs of a travelling Woman, for so this Word signifies; But also because they forerun and make way for the Birth, which abundantly recompenses all those Labours. I shall not here insist upon the Pangs and Agonies endured by Christ in the Garden, or upon the Cross, which the Prophet styles *the travail of his Soul*; having in the former Sermons opened it largely in its particulars; but pass to the

Second Thing considerable in these Words, and that is the *assured Fruits*, and effects of this his Travail. *He shall see the travail of his Soul.* By seeing, understand the fruition, obtaining, or enjoyment of the ends of his sufferings. He shall not shed his Blood upon an Hazard. His Design shall not miscarry, but he shall certainly see the Ends he aimed at accomplished.

And Thirdly, This shall yield him great Satisfaction, as a Woman forgets her sorrow, for joy that a Man is born into the world, John 16. 21. He shall see it, and be satisfied. As God when he had finished the Work of Creation, viewed that his work with pleasure and satisfaction; so doth our exalted Redeemer with great contentment, behold the happy issues of his hard Sufferings. It affords pleasure to a Man to see great Affairs, by orderly Conduct, brought to happy Issues. Much more

doth it yield delight to Jesus Christ, to see the results of that most profound Wisdom and Love wherein he carried on Redemption-work. All runs into this;

Doct. That all the blessed designs and ends for which the Lord Jesus Christ humbled himself to the death of the Cross, shall certainly be attained, to his full content and satisfaction.

My present business is not to prove, that Christ shall certainly obtain what he died for, nor to open the great satisfaction and pleasure which will rise to him out of those Issues of his Death; but to point at the principal ends of his Death, making some brief improvements, as we pass along.

First, Then let us enquire into the designs and ends of Christ's humiliation, at least, the main and principal ones: And we shall find, that as the sprinkling of the Typical Blood in the Old Testament, was done for four weighty Ends or uses; answerably the precious and invaluable Blood of the Testator and Surety of the New Testament, is shed for four weighty Ends also.

First, That Blood was shed and applied to deliver from danger, Exod. 12. 13. *And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. And the Plague shall not be upon you, to destroy you when I smite the Land of Egypt.*

Secondly, That Blood was shed to make an atonement betwixt God and the People, *Lev. vii. 4. 20. And he shall do with the Bullock, as he did with the Bullock for a Sin offering; so shall he do with this; and the Priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.*

Thirdly, That Blood was shed to purify persons from their ceremonial pollutions, *Lev. Septies fig. 14. 6. 7. He shall dip the Cedar wood, and the Scarlet, and Hyssop with the living bird in the blood of the bird that was kill'd over the running water, and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the Leprosy seven times; and shall pronounce him clean, and lacer. Num. xix. 18. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*

Fourthly, That Blood was shed to ratify and confirm the Testament or Covenant of Grace God with the People, *Exod. 24. 8. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people and said, behold the blood of the Covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning these words. These were the four main ends of shedding and sprinkling that Typical blood.*

Suitably, mine. *Act. xix.*

Suitably, there are four principal Ends of shedding and applying Christ's Blood. As that Typical Blood was shed to deliver from danger, so this was shed to deliver from wrath, *even the wrath to come*. That was shed to make an atonement, so was this. That was shed to purify Persons from uncleanness, so was this. That was shed to confirm the Testament, so was this, As will appear in the particulars more at large.

First, One principal design and end of shedding the Blood of Christ was *to deliver his people from danger, the danger of that wrath which burns down to the lowest Hell*. So you find, *1 Thes. 1. 10. Even Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come*. Here our misery is both specified, and aggravated. Specified in calling it *wrath*, a word of deep and dreadful signification. The damned best understand the importance of that word. And aggravated in calling it *wrath to come*, or coming wrath. Wrath to come, implies both the *futurity*, and *perpetuity* of this Wrath. It's wrath that shall certainly and inevitably come upon Sinners. As sure as the night follows the day. As sure as the Winter follows the Summer; so shall wrath follow sin, and the pleasures thereof. Yea, it's not only certainly future, but when it comes it will be abiding wrath, or wrath still coming. When millions of Years and Ages are past and gone, this will still be *wrath to come*. Ever-coming, as a River over-flowing.

Now from this *wrath to come*, hath Jesus delivered his People by his Death. For that was the price laid down for their Redemption from the wrath of the great and terrible God, *Rom. 5. 9. Much more then being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him*. The Blood of Jesus was the price that ransomed Man from this wrath. And it was shed not only to deliver them from *wrath to come*, but to deliver them freely, fully, distinguishingly, and wonderfully from it.

First, *Freely*, by his own voluntary interposition and susception of the mediatorial office, moved thereunto by his own Bowels of compassion; which yearned over his Elect in their misery. The Saints were once a lost generation, that had sold themselves, and their inheritance also; and had not wherewithal to redeem either: But they had a near Kinsman (even their elder Brother by the Mothers side) to whom the right of Redemption did belong; who being a mighty Man of wealth, the heir of all things, undertook to be their *Goell*; and out of his own proper substance to redeem both them and their inheritance. Them to be his own inheritance, *Eph. 1. 10*. And Heaven to be theirs, *1 Pet. 1. 4*. All this he did most freely, when none made supplication to him. No sighing of the Prisoners came before him. He design'd it for us before we had a being. And when the purposes of his Grace were come to their parturient fulness, then did he freely lay out the infinite treasures of his Blood to purchase our deliverance from wrath.

Secondly, Christ by death hath delivered his People *fully*. A full deliverance it is, both

in respect of *Time* and *Degrees*. A full deliverance in respect of *Time*. It was not a *Reprieve*, but a *Deliverance*. He thought it not worth the shedding of his Blood to respite the execution for a while. Nay, in the procurement of their eternal deliverance from wrath, and in the purchase of their eternal inheritance, he hath but an even bargain, not a jot more than his Blood was worth. Therefore is he become the *Author* of [*Eternal Salvation*] to them that obey him, *Heb. 5. 9*. And as it is full in respect of *Time*, so likewise in respect of *Degrees*. He did not to procure a mitigation or abatement of the rigor or severity of the sentence, but to rescue his People fully from all degrees of wrath. So that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, *Rom. 8. 1*. All the wrath of God to the last drop, was squeezed out into that bitter cup which Christ drank off, and wrung out the very dregs thereof.

Thirdly, This deliverance obtained for us by the death of Christ, is a *special* and distinguishing deliverance. Not common to all, but peculiar to some; and they by nature no better than those that are left under wrath. Yea, as to natural disposition, moral qualifications and external endowments oftentimes far inferior to them that perish. How often do we find a moral righteousness, an harmless innocency, a pretty ingenuity, a readiness to all offices of love; in them that are notwithstanding left under the dominion of other Lusts, and under the damning sentence of the Law; whilst on the other side, proud, peevish, sensual, morose, and unpolish'd natures, are chosen to be the subjects of this Salvation. *Now see your calling brethren, 1 Cor. 1. 26*.

Fourthly, And lastly, it is a *wonderful* Salvation. It would weary the arm of an Angel to write down all the wonders that are in this Salvation. That ever such a Design should be laid, such a project of Grace contrived in the Heart of God; who might have suffered the whole species to perish. That it should only concern Man, and not the Angels, by nature more excellent than us; that Christ should be pitch'd upon to go forth upon this glorious Design. That he should effect it in such a way, by taking our nature and suffering the penalty of the Law therein. That our deliverance should be wrought out and finish'd when the Redeemer and his design seem'd both to be lost and perished. These with many more are such wonders as will take up eternity it self to search, admire, and adore them.

Before I part from this first end of the Death of Christ, give me leave to deduce two useful Corollaries from it, and then proceed to a second.

Coroll. 1. Hath Christ by Death delivered his People from the wrath to come? *How ingrate and disingenuous a thing must it be then for those that have obtain'd such a deliverance as this, to repine and grudge at these light afflictions they suffer for a moment upon Christ's account in this world!*

Alas! What are these sufferings, that we should grudge at them? Are they like those

which the Redeemer suffered for our deliverance? Did ever any of us endure for him, what he endured for us? Or is there any thing you can suffer for Christ in this world, comparable to this *wrath to come*, which you must have endured, had he not by the price of his own Blood rescued you from it?

Compare. Reader, wilt thou but make the comparison in thine own thoughts in the following particulars, and then pronounce when thou hast duly compared.

The Nature. First, What is the wrath of Man, to the wrath of God? What is the Arm of a Creature, to the anger of a Deity? Can Man thunder with an arm like God?

Subjects. Secondly, What are the sufferings of the vile body here, to the tortures of a Soul and Body in Hell? The torments of the Soul, are the very Soul of torments.

Duration. Thirdly, What are the troubles of a moment, to that wrath which after millions of Years are gone, will still be call'd *wrath to come*? O what compare betwixt a point of hasty time, and the interminable duration of vast Eternity?

Continuity. Fourthly, What compare is there betwixt the intermitting Sorrows and Sufferings of this Life, and the continued uninterrupted *wrath to come*? Our troubles here are not constant, there are gracious relaxations, lucid intervals here; but the *wrath to come* allows not a moments ease, or mitigation.

Design. Fifthly, What light and easie troubles are those which being put into the rank and order of adjuvant causes, work under the influence and blessing of the first cause to the everlasting good of them that love God, compared with that *wrath to come*, out of which no good effects or issues are possible to proceed to the Souls on which it lies?

And Comparisons. Sixthly, And lastly, how much more comfortable is it, to suffer in fellowship with Christ and his Saints for righteousness sake, than to suffer with Devils and Reprobates for wickedness sake? Grudge not then O ye that are delivered by Jesus from *wrath to come*, at any thing ye do suffer or shall suffer from or for Christ, Christ in this world.

Coroll. 2. If Jesus Christ hath delivered his People from the *wrath to come*, how little comfort can any Man take in his present enjoyments and accommodations in the world, whilst it remains a question with him, whether he be deliver'd from the *wrath to come*? It's well for present, but will it be so still? Man is a prospecting Creature, and it will not satisfy him, that his present condition is comfortable, except he have some hope it shall be so hereafter. It can afford a Man little content that all is easie and pleasant about him now; whilst such passages and terrible hints of *wrath to come* are given him by his own conscience daily. Oh methinks such a thought as this, what if I am reserved from the *wrath to come*? Should be to him as the fingers appearing upon the Plaster of the Wall were to

Sir R. Barkley, in the Felicity of Man, p. 12, 13.

Belshazzar in the height of a Frolick. It's a custom with some of the Indians, when they have taken a Prisoner (whom they intend not presently to eat) to bring him with great Tri-

umph into the Village, where he dwelleth that hath taken him; and placing him in the House of one that was slain in the Wars, as it were to re-celebrate his Funerals, they give him his Wives or Sisters to attend on him, and use at his Pleasure. They apparel him gorgeously, and feed him with all the dainty Meats that may be had; affording him all the Pleasure that can be devised; when he hath past certain Months in all these Pleasures, and like a Capon is made fat with delicate fare, they assemble themselves upon some Festival Day, and in great Pomp bring him to the place of Execution, where they kill, and eat him.

Such are all the Pleasures and Enjoyments of the wicked; which feed them for the day of Slaughter. How little Stomach can a Man have to those Dainties that understand the end and meaning of them! Give not sleep therefore to thine Eyes, Reader, till thou have got good evidence, that thou art of that number whom *Jesus hath delivered from wrath to come*. Till thou canst say, he is a Jesus to thee. This may be made out to thy satisfaction three ways.

First, If *Jesus have delivered thee from sin*, the cause of *wrath*, thou mayest conclude he hath delivered thee from *wrath*, the effect and fruits of sin. Upon this account the sweet name of *Jesus* was imposed upon him, *Matth. 1. 21.* Thou shalt call his name *Jesus*, for he shall save his people from their sins. Whilst a Man lies under the dominion and guilt of sin, he lies exposed to *wrath to come*; and when he is delivered from the guilt and power of sin, he is certainly delivered from the danger of this coming *wrath*. Where sin is not imputed, *wrath* is not threatened.

Secondly, If thy soul do set an inestimable value on *Jesus Christ*, and be endeared to him upon the account of that inexpressible grace manifested in his deliverance, it's a good sign thy soul hath a share in it. Mark what an Epithite the Saints give Christ upon this account, *Col. 1. 12, 13.* Give thanks to the Father, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the Kingdom of his [dear] Son. Christ is therefore dear and dear beyond all compare to his saved Ones. I remember it's storied of the poor enthralled Grecians, that when *Titus Flaminii* had restored their ancient Liberties, and proclamation was to be made in the Market-place by an Herald; They so prest to hear it, that the Herald was in great danger of being stifled and prest to death among the People; but when the Proclamation was ended, there were heard such shouts, and joyful Acclamations, that the very Birds of the Air fell down astonished with the noise, while they continued to cry, *swing ours*, a Saviour, a Saviour: And all the following night they continued dancing and singing about his Pavilion.

If such a deliverance so endeared them to *Titus*: How should the great deliverance from *wrath to come*, endear all the redeemed to love their dear *Jesus*? This is the native effect of mercy on the Soul that hath felt it.

Thirdly, To conclude, a disposition and readiness of mind to do, or endure any thing for Christ's sake upon the account of this deliverance

*Plurarch in
vita. T.
Flaminii.*

ance from the wrath to come; is a good evidence you are so delivered, Col. 1. 10, 11. That we may walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work. There's readiness to do for Christ. Strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness. There's a cheerful readiness to endure any thing for Christ. And how both these flow from the sense of this great deliverance from wrath, the 12. verse will inform you, which was but now cited. Oh then be ferocious and assiduous in the resolution of this grand case. Till this be resolved, nothing can be pleasant to thy Soul.

End 2. As the Typical Blood was shed and sprinkled to deliver from danger, so it was shed to make atonement, Levit. 4. 20. He shall expiate (we translate atone) the sin. The Word imports both. And the true meaning is, that by the Blood of the Bullock, all whose efficacy stood in its relation to the Blood of Christ signified and shadowed by it; the People for whom it was shed, should be reconciled to God by the expiation & remission of their Sins. And what was shadowed in this Typical Blood, was really designed and accomplished by Jesus Christ in the shedding of his Blood.

Reconciliation of the Elect to God, is therefore another of those beautiful Births which Christ travailed for. So you find it expressly, Rom. 5. 10. *If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* This [if.] is not a word of doubting, but argumentation. The Apostle supposes it as a known truth, or principle yielded by all Christians; that the death of Christ was to reconcile the Elect to God. And again he affirms it with like clearness. Col. 1. 20. *And having made peace by the blood of his Cross, by him to reconcile all things.* And that this was a main and principal end designed both by the Father and Son in the humiliation of Christ, is plain from 2 Cor. 5. 18, 19. *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.* God filled the humanity with Grace and Authority. The Spirit of God was in him to qualify him. The Authority of God was in him by Commission, to make all he did valid. The grace and love of God to mankind was in him, and one of the principal effects in which it was manifested, was this design upon which he came, viz. To reconcile the world to God. Upon which ground Christ is called the propitiation for our Sins, 1 John 2. 2. Now, Reconciliation or atonement is nothing else but the making up of the ancient friendship betwixt God and Men which sin had dissolved, and so to reduce these Enemies into a state of Concord and sweet Agreement. And the means by which this blessed Design was effectually compassed, was by the death of Christ which made compleat satisfaction to God for the wrong we had done him. There was a Breach made by Sin betwixt God and Angels, but that Breach is never to be repaired or made up. Since as Christ took not on him their nature, so he never intended to be a Mediator of Reconciliation betwixt God and them. That will be an eternal Breach. But that which

Christ designed as the end of his death was to reconcile God and Man. Not the whole species but a certain number whose names were given to Christ. Here I must briefly open. 1. How Christ's death Reconciles. 2. Why this Reconciliation is brought about by his death, rather than any other way. 3. What are the Articles according to which it's made. And 4. What manner of Reconciliation this is.

First, How Christ reconciles God and Men by his Death. And it must needs be by the satisfaction his Death made to the Justice of God for our sins. And so, reparation being made, the enmity ceases. Hence it's said, *IJa. 53. 5. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his Stripes we are healed.* That is (as our English Annotators well sense it.) He was chastized to procure our Peace by removal of our sins that set God and us asunder, the guilt thereof being discharged with the price of his Blood.

Now this Reconciliation is made and continued betwixt God and us, three ways; namely, by the *oblation* of Christ which was the price that procured it, and so we were *virtually* or *meritoriously* reconciled. By the *application* of Christ and his benefits to us through Faith, and so we are *actually* reconciled. And by the virtual *continuation* of the Sacrifice of Christ in Heaven, by his potent and eternal *intercession*, and so our state of Reconciliation is *confirmed*, and all future Breaches prevented. But all depends as you see, upon the death of Christ. For had not Christ died, his death could never be applied to us, nor pleaded in favour for us. How the death of Christ meritoriously procures our Reconciliation, is evident from that fore cited Scripture, Rom. 5. 10. *When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* (i. e.) Christ's death did meritoriously or virtually reconcile us to God, who as to our state were enemies long after that Reconciliation was made. That the application of Christ to us by Faith, makes that virtual Reconciliation to become actual is plain enough from Eph. 2. 16, 17. *And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby. And came and preached peace to you that were afar off, and to them that were nigh.* Now therefore (as it is added, ver. 19.) *Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-Citizens with the Saints, &c.* And that this state of Friendship is still continued by Christ's intercession within the veil so that there can be no Breaches made upon the state of our peace notwithstanding all the daily provocations we give God by our sins; is the comfortable truth which the Apostle plainly asserts, after he had given a necessary caution to prevent the abuse of it, in 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. *My little children, these things I write unto you that ye sin not; and if any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation, &c.* Thus Christ reconciles us to God, by his Death.

Secondly, And if you enquire why this Reconciliation was made by the death of Christ, rather

Reconcili-
are nihil
aliud est
quam ami-
citiarum of-
fensione
aliqua gra-
vi diremp-
tam refarci-
re; & sic
inimicos in
pristinum
concordiam
reducere. B. De-
ven in Col.
1. 20.

rather than any other way; satisfaction is at hand in these two Answers.

First, That we can imagine no other way by which it could be compassed. And,

Secondly, If God could have *Reconciled* us as much by another way, yet he could not have *obliged* us so much by doing it in another way, as he hath by doing it this way. Surely none but he that was God manifest in our Flesh, could offer a sacrifice of sufficient value to make God amend for the wrong done him by One Sin, much less for All the Sins of the Elect. And how God should (especially after a peremptory threatening of Death for Sin) readmit us into favour without full satisfaction, cannot be imagined. He is indeed inclin'd to acts of Mercy, but none must suppose him to exercise one Attribute, in prejudice to another. That his *Justice* must be *Eclipsed*, whilst his *Mercy* shines. But allow the infinite Wisdom could have found out another means of Reconciling us as much, can you imagine, that in any other way he could oblige us as much, as he hath done by Reconciling us to himself by the Death of his own Son? It cannot be thought possible. This therefore was the most effectual, just, honourable, and obliging way to make up the peace betwixt him and us.

Thirdly, This Reconciliation purchased by the Blood of Christ, is offered unto Men by the Gospel, upon certain *Articles* and *Conditions*; upon the *Performance* whereof, it actually becomes theirs; and without which, notwithstanding all that Christ hath done and suffered, the Breach still continues betwixt them and God. And let no Man think this a derogation from the freeness and riches of Grace, for these things serve singularly to illustrate and commend the Grace of God to sinners.

As he consulted his own *Glory*, in the terms on which he offers us our peace with him; so 'tis his Grace which brings up Souls to those terms of Reconciliation. And surely he hath not suspended the Mercy of our Reconciliation upon unreasonable or impossible Conditions. He hath not said, if you will do as much for me, as you have done against me, I will beat Peace with you: But the two grand *Articles* of Peace with God, are *Repentance* and *Faith*. In the first, we lay down Arms against God, and 'tis meet it should be so, before he re-admits us into a state of Peace and Favour; in the other, we accept Christ and Pardon through him with a thankful Heart, yielding up our selves to his Government. Which is equally reasonable.

These are the terms on which we are actually reconciled to God. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* So Rom. 5. 1. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.* And surely it would not become the Holy God to own as his Friend and Favourite, a Man that goes on perversely and impenitently in the way of Sin; nor so much as acknowledging, or once bewailing the wrong he

hath done him, purposing to do so no more; or to receive into amity one that slights and rejects the Lord Jesus, whose precious Blood was shed to procure, and purchase Peace and Pardon for Sinners.

But if there be any poor Soul, that faith in his Heart, it repents me for sinning against God, and is sincerely willing to come to Christ upon Gospel-terms, he shall have Peace. And that Peace,

Fourthly, Is no common Peace. The Reconciliation which the Lord Jesus died to procure for broken-hearted Believers, it is,

First, A firm well bottom'd Reconciliation, putting the reconciled Soul beyond all possibility of coming under God's wrath any more, *Isa. 54. 10. Mountains may depart, and hills be removed, but the Covenant of this peace cannot be removed.* Christ is a surety by way of *Caution*, to prevent new Breaches, *2 John 1. 2.*

Secondly, This Reconciliation with God, is the Fountain out of which all our other Comforts flow to us; this is plainly carried in those words of *Eliphaz to Job*, Chap. 22. 21. *Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee.* As Trade flourishes, and Riches come in when Peace is made betwixt States and Kingdoms: So all Spiritual and Temporal Mercies flow into our Bosoms, when once we are reconciled to God. What the Comfort of such a Peace will be in a day of straits and dangers, and what it will be valued at in a dying day, who but he that feels it can tell? And yet such an one cannot fully declare it, for it passes all understanding, *Phil. 4. 7.* We shall now make some improvement of this, and pass on to the third end of the Death of Christ.

Infer. 1. If Christ died to Reconcile God and Man: How horrid an evil then is Sin! And how terrible was that breach made betwixt God and the Creature by it, which could no other way be made up but by the death of the Son of God! I remember I have read, that when a great chasm or breach was made in the earth by an Earthquake, and the Oracle was consulted how it might be closed; this answer was returned, That Breach can never be closed, except something of great worth to be thrown into it. Such a Breach was that which Sin made, it could never be reconciled but by the Death of Jesus Christ, the most excellent thing in all the Creation.

*Infer. 2. How sad is the state of all such as are not comprized in the Articles of Peace with God! The impenitent Unbeliever is excepted. God is not Reconciled to him: And if God be his Enemy, how little avails it, who is his Friend? For, if God be a Man's Enemy, he hath an Almighty Enemy in him, whose very frown is destruction, *Deut. 32. 40, 41, 42. I lift up my hand to Heaven and say, I live for ever. If I rebet my glittering sword, and my hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to my enemies, and I will reward them that hate me. I will make mine Arrows drunk with blood, (and my sword shall devour flesh) and that with the blood of the Slain and the Captives, from the beginning of Revenge upon the Enemy.**

Yea,

Yea, he is an *unavoidable* Enemy. Fly to the utmost parts of the Earth, there shall his Hand reach thee, as it is, *Psal. 139. 10.* The wings of the Morning cannot carry thee out of his reach. If God be your Enemy, you have an immortal Enemy, who lives for ever to avenge himself upon his Adversaries. And what wilt thou do when thou art in *Saul's* case, *1 Sam. 28. 15, 16.* Alas, whither wilt thou turn? To whom wilt thou complain? But what wilt thou do when thou shalt stand at the Bar, and see that God, who is thine Enemy, upon the Throne? Sad is their Case indeed, who are not comprehended in the Articles of Peace with God.

Infer. 3. If Christ died to Reconcile us to God, give diligence to clear up to your own Souls, your interest in this Reconciliation. If Christ thought it worth his Blood to purchase it, it's worth your care and pains to clear it. And what can better evidence it than your conscientious tenderness of Sin, lest you make new Breaches. Ah, if Reconciled, you will say, as *Ezra. 9. 14.* And now our God, seeing thou hast given us such a deliverance as this, should we again break thy Commandments? If Reconciled to God, his Friends will be your Friends, and his Enemies your Enemies. If God be your Friend, you will be diligent to please him, *Joh. 15. 10, 14.* He that makes not Peace with God, is an Enemy to his own Soul. And he that is at Peace, but takes no pains to clear it, is an Enemy to his own Comfort. But I must pass from this to the third End of Christ's Death.

End 3. You have seen two of those beautiful Births of Christ's Travail, and lo, a third cometh, namely, *The Sanctification of his People.* Typical Blood was shed, as you heard, to purify them that were unclean, and so was the Blood of Christ shed to purge away the Sins of his People; so speaks the Apostle expressly, *Eph. 5. 25, 26.* Christ gave himself for the Church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it. And so he tells us himself, *Joh. 17. 19.* And for their sakes I sanctify myself, (i. e.) consecrate or devote my self to death, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Upon the account of this benefit received by the Blood of Christ, is that *Doxology*, which in a lower strain is now sounded in the Churches, but will be matter of the Lambs Song in Heaven, *Rev. 1. 5, 6.* To him that loved us and washed us from our Sins, in his own Blood—be Glory and Honour for ever. Now, there is a two-fold evil in Sin, the guilt of it, and the pollution of it. Justification properly cures the former, Sanctification the latter; but both Justification and Sanctification flow unto sinners out of the Death of Christ. And though it's proper to say the Spirit sanctifies, yet it is certain it was the Blood of Christ that procured for us the Spirit of Sanctification. Had not Christ died the Spirit had never come down from Heaven upon any such Design.

The pouring forth of Christ's Blood for us, obtained the pouring forth of the Spirit of Holiness upon us. Therefore the Spirit is said to *Come in his name, and to take of his*

and shew it unto us. Hence it's said, *1 Joh. 5. 6.* He came both by Blood and by Water, by Blood washing away the Guilt, by Water purifying from the Filth of Sin. Now this Fruit of Christ's Death, even our Sanctification, is a most incomparable Mercy. For, do but consider a few particular Excellencies of Holiness.

First, Holiness is the Image and Glory of God. His Image, *Col. 3. 10.* and his Glory, *Exod. 15. 11.* Who is like unto thee, O Lord, glorious in Holiness? Now, when the guilt and filth of Sin is washed off, and the Beauty of God put upon the Soul in Sanctification, O what a Beautiful Creature is the Soul now. So lovely in the Eyes of Christ, even in its imperfect Holiness, that he saith, *Cant. 6. 5.* Turn away thine Eyes from me, for they have overcome me. So we render it, but the Hebrew word signifies, they have made me proud, or puffed me up. It's a Beam of Divine Glory upon the Creature, enamouring the very Heart of Christ.

Secondly, As it's the Souls highest beauty, so it's the Souls best evidence for Heaven. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God, *Mat. 5. 8.* And without Holiness no man shall see God, *Heb. 12. 14.* No gifts no duties, no natural endowments will evidence a right in Heaven, but the least measure of true Holiness will secure Heaven to the Soul.

Thirdly, As Holiness is the Souls best evidence for Heaven, so it's a continual spring of Comfort to it in the way thither. The purest and sweetest Pleasures in this World, are the results of Holiness. Till we come to live Holily we never live comfortably. Heaven is Epitomized in Holiness.

Fourthly, And to say no more; It is the peculiar mark by which God hath visibly distinguished his own, from other Men, *Psal. 4. 3.* The Lord hath set apart him that is Godly for himself, q. d. this is the Man, and that the Woman, to whom I intend to be good for ever. This is a Man for me. O Holiness, how surpassingly glorious art thou!

Infer. 1. Did Christ die to Sanctify his People, how deep then is the pollution of Sin, that nothing but the Blood of Christ can cleanse it! All the Tears of a Penitent Sinner, should be shed as many as there have fallen drops of Rain since the Creation, to this day, cannot wash away one sin. The everlasting burnings in Hell, cannot purify the flaming Conscience from the least sin. O guests at the wound by the largeness and length of this Tent that follows the mortal Weapon, Sin.

Infer. 2. Did Christ die to sanctify his People? Behold then the Love of a Saviour. He loved us, and washed us from our Sin in his own Blood. He did not shed the Blood of Beasts, as the Priests of old did, but his own Blood, *Heb. 9. 12.* And that no common, but precious Blood, *1 Pet. 1. 19.* The Blood of God; one drop of which out-values the Blood that runs in the veins of all Adams Posterity. And not some of that Blood, but all; to the last Drop. He bled every vein dry for us; and what remain'd lodg'd about the Heart of dead Jesus, was let out by that Bloody Spear which pierced

pierced the *Pericardium*: So that he bestowed the whole Treasure of his Blood upon us. And thus liberal was he of his Blood to us when we were Enemies. This then is that Heavenly *Pelican* that feeds his young with his own Blood. O what manner of Love is this! But I must hasten.

End 4. As Christ died to sanctify his People: So he dyed also to confirm the New Testament to all those sanctified ones. So it was in the Type, *Exod.* 24. 8. And so it is in the Text. *This is the New Testament in my Blood*, *Mat.* 26. 28. (i. e.) ratified and confirmed by my Blood. For, where a Testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the Testator, *Heb.* 9. 16. so that now all the blessings and benefits bequeathed to Believers in the last Will and Testament of Christ, are abundantly confirmed and secured to them by his Death. Yea, he died on purpose to make that Testament in force to them. Men make their Wills and Testaments, and Christ makes his. What they bequeath, and give in their Wills, is a free and voluntary act, they cannot be compelled to do it. And what is bequeathed to us in this Testament of Christ, is altogether a free and voluntary donation. Other Testators use to bequeath their Estates to their Wives and Children, and near Relations; so doth this Testator, all is settled upon his Spouse the Church. Upon Believers, his Children. A stranger intermeddles not with these Mercies. They give all their goods and estates that can that way be conveyed to their Friends that survive them. Christ giveth to his Church in this New Testament three sorts of Goods.

First, All Temporal good things, *1 Tim.* 6. 1. *Mat.* 6. 33. (i. e.) the Comfort and Blessing of all, though not the possession of much. As having nothing, and yet possessing all things, *2 Cor.* 6. 10.

Secondly, All Spiritual good things are bequeathed to them in this Testament, as *Remission* of Sin, and Acceptation with God, which are contained in their Justification, *Rom.* 3. 24, 25, 26. *Sanctification* of their Natures, both initial and progressive, *1 Cor.* 1. 30. Adoption into the family of God, *Gal.* 3. 26. The Ministry of Angels, *Heb.* 1. 14. Interest in all the Promises, *2 Pet.* 1. 4. Thus all spiritual good things are in Christ's Testament conveyed to them. And as all Temporal, and Spiritual, so

Thirdly, All eternal good things. Heaven, Glory, and eternal Life, *Rom.* 8. 10, 11. No such bequests as these were ever found in the Testaments of Princes. That which Kings and Nobles settle by Will upon their Heirs, are but trifles to what Christ hath conferred in the New Testament upon his People. And all this is confirmed and ratified by the death of Christ, so that the Promise is sure, and the Estate indefeasible to all the Heirs of Promise.

How the Death of Christ confirmed the New Testament is worth our enquiry. The *Socinians* as they allow no other end of Christ's Death, but the confirmation of the New Testament, so they affirm he did it only by way of

Testimony, or witness bearing in his death. But this is a vile derogation from the efficacy of Christ's Blood, to bring it down into an equality with the Blood of Martyrs. As if there were no more in it, than was in their Blood.

But know, Reader, Christ died not only or principally to confirm the Testament by his Blood, as witness to the Truth of those Things, but his Death ratified it as the death of a Testator, which makes the New Testament irrevocable. And so Christ is called in this Text. Look as when a Man hath made his Will, and is Dead, that Will is presently in force, and can never be recalled. Besides, the Will of the Dead is sacred with Men. They dare not cross it. It's certain the last Will and Testament of Christ is most sacred, and God will never annul, or make it void. Moreover, it is not with Christ as with other Testators, who die, and must trust the performance of their Wills with their Executors, but as he died to put it in force, so he lives again to be the Executor of his own Testament. And all power to fulfil his Will, is now in his own hands, *Rev.* 1. 18.

Infer. 1. Did Christ die to confirm the New Testament, in which such Legacies are bequeathed to Believers. How are all Believers concerned then, to prove the Will of dead Jesus! My meaning is, to clear their Title to the Mercies contained in this blessed Testament. And this may be done two ways. By clearing to our selves our Covenant-Relations to Christ. And by discovering those special Covenant-Impressions upon our Hearts to which the Promises therein contained do belong.

First, Examine your Relations to Christ. Are you his Spouse, have you forsaken all for him, *Psal.* 45. 10. Are you ready to take your lot with him as it falls in prosperity or adversity, *Jer.* 2. 2. And are you Loyal to Christ? *Thou shalt be for me, and not for another*, *Hos.* 3. 3. Do you yield obedience to him as your Head and Husband, *Eph.* 6. 24. Then you may be confident you are interested in the benefits and blessings of Christ's last Will and Testament, for can you imagine, Christ will make a Testament, and forget his Spouse? It can't be. If he so loved the Church, as to give himself for her, much more what he hath is settled on her. Again, are you his spiritual Seed, his Children by Regeneration? Are you born of the Spirit? *John* 3. Do you resemble Christ in Holiness? *1 Pet.* 1. 14, 15. Do you find a reverential fear of Christ carrying you to obey him in all things? *Mal.* 1. 6. Are you led by the Spirit of Christ, *As many as are so led, they are the Sons of God*, *Rom.* 8. 14. To conclude, have you, the Spirit of Adoption, enabling you to cry, *Abba Father*? *Gal.* 4. 6. That is, helping you in a gracious manner, with reverence mixt with filial confidence to open your Hearts spiritually to your Father on all occasions? If so, you are children, and if children, doubt not but you have a rich Legacy in Christ's last Will and Testament. He would not Seal up his Testament and forget his dear Children.

Secondly,

Nulla pre-
sentis metu
periculi,
Cook's Infirm.
1.3. cap. 10.

The Probate
of Christ's
last Will
and Testa-
ment.

Secondly, You may discern your interest in the New Testament or Covenant, (for they are substantially the same thing) by the new Covenant-impressions that are made on your Hearts, which are so many clear evidences of your right to the benefits it contains. Such are spiritual Illuminations, *Jer.* 31. 34. Gracious softness and tenderness of Heart, *Ezek.* 11. 19. The awful dread and fear of God, *Jer.* 32. 40. The Copy or transcript of his Laws on your Hearts in gracious correspondent Principles, *Jer.* 31. 33. These things speak you the Children of the Covenant, the Persons on whom all these great things are settled.

Infer. 2. To conclude, it is the indispensable duty of all on whom Christ hath settled such Mercies, to *admire his Love*, and *walk answerably* to it.

First, Admire the Love of Christ. O how intense and ardent was the love of Jesus! Who designed for you such an inheritance, with such a settlement of it upon you! These are the Mercies with which his Love had travelled big from Eternity, and now he sees the Travail of his Soul, and you also have seen somewhat of it this day. Before, this Love let all the Saints fall down astonished, humbly professing, that they owe themselves and all they are or shall be worth to eternity, to this Love.

Secondly, And be sure you walk becoming Persons for whom Christ hath done such great things. Comfort your selves under present abasures with your spiritual Privileges, *Jam.* 2. 5. And let all your rejoicing be in Christ, and what you have in him, whilst others are blessing themselves in Vanity. Thus we have finished the state of Christ's Humiliation, and thence proceed to the second state of his Exaltation.

An Introduction to the State of Exaltation.

HAVING finished what I designed to speak to about the Work of Redemption, so far as it was carried on by Christ in his humble State, we shall now view that blessed Work as it is further *advanced* and *perfected* in his state of Exaltation.

The whole of that Work was not to be finished on Earth in a state of suffering and abasure, therefore the Apostle makes his *Exaltation* in order to the finishing of the remainder of his Work, so necessary a part of his Priesthood, that without it he could not have been a Priest, *Heb.* 8. 4. *If he were on earth, he should not be a priest*, (i. e.) if he should have continued always here, and had not been raised again from the dead, and taken up into glory, *he could not have been a complete and perfect Priest*.

For look as it was not enough for the Sacrifice to be slain without, and his Blood left there; but after it was shed without, it must be carried within the veil into the most holy place before the Lord, *Heb.* 9. 7. So it was not sufficient that Christ shed his own Blood on earth, except he carry it before the Lord into Heaven, and there perform his *intercession* work for us.

Moreover, God the Father stood engaged in a solemn Covenant, to reward him for

his deep humiliation, with a most glorious and illustrious advancement, *Isa.* 49. 5, 6, 7. And how God (as it became him) made this good to Christ, the Apostle very clearly expresses it, *Phil.* 2. 9.

Yea, Justice required it should be so. For how could our Surety be detained in the Prison of the Grave, when the debt for which he was imprisoned was by him fully discharged, so that the Law of God must acknowledge it felt to be fully satisfied in all its claims and demands. His Resurrection from the Dead was therefore but his discharge or acquittance upon full payment. Which could not in Justice be denied him.

And indeed God the Father lost nothing by it, for there never was a more glorious manifestation made of the name of God to the World than was made in that Work. Therefore it's said, *Phil.* 2. 11. Speaking of one of the designs of Christ's Exaltation, it was (saith the Apostle) *That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father*. O how is the Love of God to poor sinners illustriously, yea astonishingly displayed in Christ's Exaltation. When to shew the Complacency and Delight which he took in our recovery, he hath openly declared to the World that his exalting Christ to all that Glory such as no meer Creature ever was or can be exalted to, was bestowed upon him as a reward for that Work, that most grateful Work of our Redemption, *Phil.* 2. 9. Wherefore God also hath *highly exalted* him; there is an *Emphatical Pleonasmus* in that word, our *English* is too flat to deliver out the elegancy of the Original, it is *Super-Exaltation*.

The *Syriack* renders it, he hath multiplied his Sublimity. The *Arabick*, he hath heightened him with an height. *Justin*, he hath famously exalted him. Higher he cannot raise him, a greater Argument of his high satisfaction and content in the recovery of poor sinners cannot be given. For this therefore God the Father shall have Glory and Honour ascribed to him in Heaven to all Eternity.

Now this singular Exaltation of Jesus Christ as it properly respects his humane Nature, which alone is capable of advancement, for in respect of his divine Nature he never ceased to be the most high. So it was done to him as a common Person, and as the head of all Believers, their representative in this as well as in his other Works. God therein shewing what in due time he intends to do with the Persons of his Elect, after they in Conformity to Christ have suffered a while. What ever God the Father intendeth to do in us or for us, he hath first done it to the Person of our *representative*, *Jesus Christ*. And this, if you observe, the Scriptures carry in very clear and plain Expressions through all the degrees and steps of Christ's *Exaltation*, viz. his *Resurrection*, *Ascension*, *Session* at the right hand of God. And turning to Judge the World. Of which I purpose to speak distinctly in the following Sermons.

Super-Locus, Pleonasmus Emphaticus, Hieron. Multiplicavit sublimitatem ejus. Arab. Sublimitate Sublimavit eum, Syr. Infigit extelut, Justin. Secundum eandem naturam dicitur exaltatus, secundum quam humiliatus fuit, Zanch.

He arose from the dead as a common Person, Col. 3. 1. *If ye then be risen with Christ, faith the Apostle; so that the Saints have Communion and Fellowship with him in his Resurrection.*

He ascended into Heaven as a common Person, for so it's said in Eph. 2. 6. *He hath raised us up, or exalted us together with Christ. He sits at God's right hand as a common Person, for so it follows in the next Clause, and hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* We sit there in our Representative. And when he shall come again to judge the World, the Saints shall come with him. So 'tis prophesied, Zech. 14. 6. *The Lord my God shall come, and all the Saints with thee.* And as they shall come with Christ from Heaven, so they shall sit on Thrones with him, judging, by way of suffrage. They shall be Assessors with the Judge, 1 Cor. 6. 2. This deserves a special Remark, that all this honour is given to Christ, as our Head and Representative, for thence results abundance of comfort to the people of God. Carry it therefore along with you in your Thoughts throughout the whole of Christ's advancement. Think when you shall hear that Christ is risen from the dead, and is in all that Glory and Authority in Heaven. How sure the Salvation of his redeemed is. *For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his Life.* Surely it cannot be supposed but he is able to save to the uttermost all them that come to God by him: seeing he ever lives to make intercession, Heb. 7. 25. Think how safe the People of God in this World are, whose Head is in Heaven. It was a comfortable Expression of one of the Fathers, encouraging himself and others with this truth in a dark day. Come (said he) why

do we tremble thus, do we not see our Head above Water? If he live, believers cannot die, John 14. 19. *Because I live, ye shall live also.*

And let no Man's Heart suggest a suspicious Thought to him, that this wonderful Advancement of Christ may cause him to forget his poor People, groaning here below under Sin and Misery. For the Temper and Disposition of his faithful and tender heart is not changed with his Condition. He bears the same respect to us, as when he dwelt among us. For indeed he there lives and acts upon our account, Heb. 7. 25. 1 John 2. 1, 2.

And how seasonable and comfortable will the Meditations of Christ's Exaltation be to the Believer, when sickness hath wasted thy Body, withered it's Beauty, and God is bringing thee to the dust of death. Ah think then, that that vile Body shall be confirmed to the glorious Body of Christ, Phil. 3. 21. As God hath glorified and highly exalted his Son, whose form was marred more than any man's, so will he exalt thee also. I do not say to a parity or equality in Glory with Christ, for in Heaven he will be discerned and distinguished by his peculiar Glory, from all the Angels and Saints, as the Sun is known by its excellent Glory from the lesser Stars. But we shall be conformed to this glorious Head, according to the proportion of Members. O whether will Love mount the Believer in that Day!

Having spoken this much of Christ's exalted state to cast some general light upon it, and engage your Attentions to it, I shall now, according to the degrees of this his wonderful Exaltation, briefly open it under the fore-mentioned Heads, viz. His Resurrection, Ascension, Session at the Father's right Hand, and his Return to judge the World.

Serm. 39.

SERMON XXXIX.

MATTH. XXVIII. 6.

He is not here, for he is risen; as he said, come, see the place where the Lord lay.

VVE have finished the Doctrine of Christ's Humiliation, wherein the Sun of Righteousness appeared to you as a setting Sun, gone out of sight; but as the Sun when it is gone down to us, begins a new day in another part of the World, so Christ having finished his course and work in this World, rises again, and that in order to the acting another glorious part of his work in the World above. In his death he was upon the matter totally eclipsed, but in his resurrection he begins to recover his Light and Glory again.

God never intended that the darling of his Soul should be lost in an obscure Sepulchre. An Angel descends from Heaven to roll away the stone, and with it the reproach of his death. And to be the heavenly Herald to proclaim his Resurrection to the two Marys, whose love to Christ had at this time drawn them to visit the Sepulchre, where they lately left him.

At this time (the Lord being newly risen) the keepers were trembling, and become as dead Men. So great was the terrible Majesty and awful solemnity attending Christ's Resurrection: But to encourage these good Souls, the

Wherein
the Resur-
rection of
Christ with
its influ-
ences upon
the Saints
resurrection
is clearly
opened and
comfortably
applied, be-
ing the first
step of his
Exaltation.

In morte erat solutio in motu, aut ut aiunt, in fieri; verum in Resurrectione completa fuit, unde nostri justificatio seu à debito absolutio, non mortis, sed Resurrectionis Apostolo merito tribuatur, *Gr. Maccov. loc. Com. p. 859.*

his

raiment as white as snow, and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. Humane infirmity was not able to bear such Heavenly Majesty as intended the buffets of that morning. Nature sank under it. This Earthquake was, as one calls it, *Triumphale Signum*: A sign of Triumph or token of Victory given by Christ, not only to the Keepers and the neighbouring City, but to the whole World, that he had overcome Death in its own Dominions, and like a Conqueror lifted up his head above all his Enemies. So when the Lord fought from Heaven for his People, and gave them a glorious, though but temporal deliverance; see how the Prophets drives on the triumph in that Rhetorical Song, *Judg. 5. 4, 5.* Alluding to the most awful appearance of God, at the giving of the Law. *Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchest out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the Heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water. The Mountains melted before the Lord, even that Sinai, from before the Lord God of Israel.* Our Lord Jesus went out of the Grave in like manner, and marched out of that bloody field with a Pomp and Majesty becoming so great a Conqueror.

Est incedere cum pompa & Majestate.

Secondly, And to increase the splendor of that day, and drive on the triumph, his Resurrection was attended with the Resurrection of many of the Saints who had slept in their Graves till then, and then were awakened and raised to attend the Lord at his rising. So you read, *Matth. 27. 52, 53.* And the Graves were opened, and many bodies of the Saints which slept arose, and came out of the Graves, after his Resurrection; and went into the holy City, and appeared unto many. This wonder was designed both to adorn the Resurrection of Christ, and to give a specimen or handfel of our Resurrection; which also is to be in the virtue of his. This indeed was the Resurrection of Saints, and none but Saints, the Resurrection of many Saints, yet it was but a special Resurrection, intended only to shew what God will one day do for all his Saints. And for present to give Testimony of Christ's Resurrection, from the dead. They were seen and known of many in the City, who doubtless never thought to have seen them any more in this World. To enquire curiously as some do, who they were, what discourse they had with those to whom they appeared, and what became of them afterwards, is a vain thing. God hath cast a veil of silence and secrecy upon these things, that we might content our selves with the written word, and he that will not believe *Moses and the Prophets, neither will he believe tho' one rise from the dead,* as these Saints did.

Thirdly, As Christ rose from the dead with those *Suallites*, or attendants, who accompanied him at his Resurrection; so it was by the Power of his own God-head that he quickened and raised himself; and by the virtue of his Resurrection were they raised also who accompanied him. It was not the Angel who rolled back the stone that revived him in the Sepulchre but he resumed his own life, so he tells

us, *John 10. 18.* I lay down my life that I may take it again. Hence *1 Pet. 3. 18.* He is said to be put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, (i. e.) by the power of his God-head or Divine Nature, which is opposed there to flesh or his humane nature. By the eternal Spirit he offered himself up to God when he died, *Heb. 9. 14.* (i. e.) by his own God-head, not the third Person in the Trinity, for then it could not have been ascribed to him as his own act, that he offered up himself. And by the same Spirit he was quickened again.

And therefore the Apostle well observes, *Rom. 1. 4.* That he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by his Resurrection from the dead. Now if he had been raised by the power of the Father or Spirit only, and not by his own; how could he be declared by his Resurrection to be the Son of God? What more had appeared in him than in others? For others are raised by the power of God, if that were all. So that in this respect also it was a marvellous Resurrection. Never any did, or shall rise as Christ rose by a self quickening Principle. For though many dead Saints rose at that time also; yet it was by the virtue of Christ's Resurrection that their Graves were opened, and their Bodies quickened. In which respect he saith, *John 11. 25.* when he raised dead *Lazarus*, I am the Resurrection and the Life, (i. e.) the principle of Life and quickning, by which the dead Saints are raised.

Fourthly, And therefore it may be truly affirmed, that tho' some dead Saints were raised to life before the Resurrection of Christ, yet that Christ is the first-born from the dead, as he is call'd, *Col. 1. 18.* For though *Lazarus* and others were raised, yet not by themselves, but by Christ. It was by his virtue and power, not their own. And though they were raised to life, yet they died again. Death recovered them again, but Christ dieth no more. *Death hath no Dominion over him.* He was the first that opened the womb of the Earth, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the preheminance.

Fifthly, But lastly, Christ rose as a publick or common Person. As the first fruits of them that sleep, *1 Cor. 15. 20.* I desire this may be well understood; for upon this account it is that our Resurrection is secured to us by the Resurrection of Christ; and not a Resurrection only, but a blessed and happy one, for the first-fruits, both assured and sanctified the whole Crop or Harvest.

Now that Christ did rise as a publick Person representing and comprehending all the Elect, who are called the children of the Resurrection, is plain from *Eph. 2. 6.* Where we are said to be risen with or in him. So that as we are said to die in Adam, (who also was a common Person) as the Branches die in the death of the Root; so we are said to be raised from Death in Christ, who is the head, root and representative of all his Elect Seed. And why is he called the first-born, and first-begotten from the dead, but with respect to the whole number of the Elect, that are to be born from the Dead in their time and

Genus humanum in a parente primo, vel in radice putruit, Greg.

order also, and as sure as the whole harvest follows the first-fruits, so shall the general Resurrection of the Saints to life Eternal, follow this Birth, of the first-born from the dead.

It shall surely follow it, I say, and that not only as a *consequent* follows an *antecedent*, but as an *effect* follows its proper *cause*. Now there is a three-fold causality or influence that Christ's Resurrection hath upon the Saints Resurrection, of which it is both the *Meritorious*, *Efficient*, and *Exemplary* cause.

First, The Resurrection of Christ, is the *Meritorious* cause of the Saints Resurrection, as it completed his Satisfaction, and finished his Payment, and so our Justification is properly assigned to it, as before was noted from *Rom. 4. 25*. This his Resurrection was the receiving of the Acquittance, the cancelling of the Bond. And had not this been done, we had still been in our Sins, as he speaks, *1 Cor. 15. 7*. And so our guilt had been still a Bar to our happy Resurrection. But now, the price being paid in his Death, which payment was finished when he Revived; and the discharge then received for us, now there is nothing lies in Bar against our Resurrection to Eternal Life.

Secondly, As it is the Meritorious cause of our Resurrection, so it is the *Efficient* cause of it also. For when the time shall come, that the Saints shall rise out of the dust, they shall be raised by Christ, as their Head, in whom the *effective principle* of their Life is. *Your*

then it follows, *verse 11. But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* (i. e.) though your Bodies must die, yet they shall live again in the Resurrection; and that by virtue of the Spirit of Christ which dwelleth in you; and is the Bond of your mystical union with him your head. You shall not be raised as others are, by a meer word of Power, but by the spirit of Life dwelling in Christ your head, which is a choice prerogative indeed.

Thirdly, Christ's Resurrection is not only the meritorious and efficient cause, but it is also the *exemplary* cause, or pattern of our Resurrection. He being the first and best, is therefore the pattern and measure of all the rest. So you read, *Phil. 3. 21. Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.* Now the *Conformity* of our Resurrection to Christ's, stands in the following particulars. Christ's Body was raised substantially the same, so will ours. His Body was raised first; so will ours be raised before the rest of the dead. His Body was wonderfully improved by the Resurrection; so will ours. His Body was raised to be glorified; and so will ours.

First, Christ's Body was raised substantially the same that it was before; and so will ours. Not another, but the same Body. Upon this very reason the Apostle uses that identical expression, *1 Cor. 15. 53. This corruptible must put on incorruptible, and this mortal immortality.* Pointing as it were to his own Body when he spake it the same Body I say, and that not only *Specifically* the same, (for indeed no other Species of flesh is so privileged) but the same *numerically*, that very Body, not a new or another Body in its stead. So that it shall be both the *what* it was, and the *who* it was. And indeed to deny this, is to deny the Resurrection it self. For should God prepare another Body to be raised instead of this, it would not be a Resurrection but a Creation; for *non Resurrectio dici poterit, ubi non resurgit quod cecidit.* That can't be call'd a Resurrection, where one thing falls and another thing rises, as *Gregory* long since pertinently observed.

Secondly, His Body was raised, not by a word of Power from the Father, but by his own Spirit. So will ours. Indeed the power of God shall go forth to unburrrough sinners, and fetch them forcibly out of their Graves; but the Resurrection of the Saints is to be affected another way; as I opened but now to you. Even by his Spirit which now dwelleth in them. That very Spirit of Christ which affected their spiritual Resurrection from sin, shall effect their corporal Resurrection also from the Grave.

Thirdly, His Body was raised first, he had in this as well as in other things the preeminence in the Resurrection, *1 Thes. 4. 16: The dead in Christ shall rise first.* They are to attend the Lord at his coming, and will be knockt up sooner than the rest of the World to attend on that service. As the *Sheriff* with

Proximum instrumentum five sedes somni est cerebrum, utpote in quo spiritus animales frigidant & condensantur, aut etiam resolvuntur & dissipantur proxime, tanquam in propria spiritu animatum officina, & in quatuor radices nervorum obstruuntur, per vapores, ne spiritus animales sensui Communi servire aut in partes reliquas inferiores corporis propagari libere possint, *Keckerm. Syst. Phys. p. (mih) 441.*

Christ's Resurrection is said to be to our Bodies, as the dew of the Morning is to the withered languishing Plants which revive by it, *Isa. 26. 19. Thy dew is as the dew of herbs*; and then it follows, *the earth shall cast forth her dead.* So that by the same Faith we put Christ's Resurrection into the *Premises*, we may put the Believers Resurrection into the *Conclusion*. And therefore the Apostle makes them convertibles, reasoning forward, from Christ's to ours; and back again from ours to his, *1 Cor. 15. 12, 13.* Which is also the sense of that Scripture, *Rom. 8. 10, 11. And if Christ be in you, the body indeed is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.* (i. e.) though you are really united to Christ by the Spirit, yet your Bodies must die as well as other Mens; but your Souls shall be presently upon your dissolution swallowed up in Life. And

Optimum in unoquoque genere est regula et mensura ceterorum

with his Men go forth to meet the Judge, before the Jaylor brings forth his Prisoners.

Fourthly, Christ's Body was marvellously improved by the Resurrection, and so will ours. It fell in weakness, but was raised in Power, no more capable of sorrows, pains, and dishonours. In like manner our Bodies, are *sown in weakness, but raised in strength, sown in dishonour, raised in glory.* Sown natural Bodies, raised spiritual Bodies, as the Apostle speaks, *1 Cor. 15. 43, 44.* Spiritual

Membri detruncatio
vel obfusio nonne mors
membri est? Si universa
his mors Resurrectione
refecunditur, quanto ma-
jus portionalis? Ten. de
Resur.

Bodies not properly but Analogically. No distempers hang about glorified Bodies, nor are they thenceforth subject to any of those natural necessities, to which they are now tied. There are no flaws, defects, or deformities in the Children of the

Resurrection. What members are now defective, or deformed, will then be restored to their perfect being and beauty, for if the universal death of all parts be rescinded by the Resurrection, how much more the partial death of any single member? As *Tertullian* speaks, and from thenceforth they are free from the Law of Mortality, *they can die no more, Luke 20. 35, 36.* Thus shall they be improved by their Resurrection.

Fifthly, To conclude, Christ's Body was raised from the Dead to be glorified, and crowned with honour. Oh it was a joyful day to him, and so will the Resurrection of the Saints be to them, the day of the gladness of their Hearts. It will be said to them in that morning, *awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust, as Isa. 26. 19.* O how comfortable will be the meeting betwixt the glorified Soul, and its new raised Body. Much more comfortable than that of *Jacob's* and *Joseph's* after twenty years absence, *Gen. 46. 29.* Or that of *David's* with *Jonathan* when he came out of the Cave to him, *1 Sam. 20. 41.* Or that of the Father of the Prodigal with his Son, who *was dead, and is alive, was lost and is found.* As he speaks, *Luke 15.* And there are three things will make it so.

First, The gratifications of the Soul by the satisfaction of its natural appetite of union with its own Body. For even glorified Souls in Heaven have such an appetite, and desire of re-union. Indeed the Angels who are pure Spirits, as they never had union with, so they have no inclination to matter; but Souls are otherwise tempered & disposed. We are all sensible of its affection to the Body now in its compounded state, we feel the tender care it hath for the Body, the sympathy with it, and loathsness to be separated from it. It's said, *1 Cor. 5. 6.* *To be at home in the body.* And had not God implanted such an inclination to this its Tabernacle in it, it would not have paid that due respect it owes the body while it inhabited in it, nor have regarded what became of it when it left it. This inclination remains still with it in Heaven, it reckons not it self completely happy till its old dear Companion and Partner be with it, and to that sense some understand those Words, *Job 14. 14.* *All the*

days of my appointed time, (i. e.) of the time appointed for my body to remain in the Grave, will I wait till my change, (viz. that which will be made by the Resurrection) come, for it's manifest enough he speaks there of the Resurrection. Now, when this its inclination to its own body, its longings and hankerings after it are gratified with a sight and enjoyment of it again, oh what a comfortable meeting will this make it! Especially if we consider,

Secondly, The excellent temper and state in which they shall meet each other. For as the body shall be raised with all the improvements and endowments imaginable which may render it amiable and every way desirable, so the Soul comes down immediately from God out of Heaven shining in its holiness and glory. It comes perfumed out of those Ivory Palaces, with a strong scent of Heaven upon it. And thus it re-enters its body and animates it again. But,

Thirdly, And principally, that wherein the chief Joy of this meeting consists, is the end for which the glorified Soul comes down to quicken and repossess it, Namely, *to meet the Lord, and ever to be with the Lord.* To receive a full reward, for all the labours and services it performed to God in this World. This must needs make that day, a day of Triumph and Exaltation. It comes out of the Grave, as *Joseph* out of his Prison to be advanced to highest honour. O do but imagine what an extatic of Joy, and ravishing Pleasure it will be for a Soul, thus to resume its own body, and say as it were unto it, come away my dear, my ancient friend, who servedst, and sufferedst with me in the World; come along with me to meet the Lord, in whose presence I have been ever since I parted with thee. Now thy bountiful Lord hath remembered thee also, and the day of thy glorification is come. Surely it will be a joyful awaking. For do but imagine what a Joy it is for dear Friends to meet after long separation, how do they use to give demonstrations of their love and delight in each other, by Embraces, Kisses, Tears, &c. Or frame but to your selves a Notion of perfect Health, when a sprightly vivacity runs through every part; and the Spirits do, as 'twere, dance before us, when we go about any business; especially to such a business as the business of that Day will be; to receive a Crown and a Kingdom. Do but imagine then what a Sun-shine Morning this will be, and how the Pains and Agonies, cold Swears and bitter Groans at parting will be recompensed by the Joy of such a Meeting?

And thus I have shewed you the certainty of Christ's Resurrection the nature and properties of it, the threefold influence it hath on the Saints Resurrection, and the conformity of ours into his in these five respects. His body rose substantially the same, so shall ours; his body was raised by the Spirit, so shall ours. Nor by the God-head of Christ as his was, but by the Spirit who is the bond of our union with Christ. He was raised as the first-begotten from the dead, so the dead in Christ shall rise first. His body was improved by the Resurrection, so shall ours. From the consideration of all which,

Infer.

Infer. 1. We infer, That if Christ was thus raised from the Dead, then death is fairly overcome, and swallowed up in victory.

How far short do we come of the primitive Christians whose Faith in the Resurrection, and contempt of Death, Cyprian thus expresses, Mente integra fide firma, virtute robusta, parati ad omnem Dei voluntatem sinus pavore mortis omni exclusi; immortalitatem quæ sequitur cogitamus.

Et cum acceritionis propria dies venerit, incautanter & libenter ad dominum ipso vocante venimus. Cyr. Seli. 5. de lapsi. Quod interim morimur, ad immortalitatem morte transgredimur non est exitus, sed transitus, &c. Cyr. ubi sup. Absorpta est mors in vitam in perpetuam ex Hebræo 12. quod & victoriam significat & perpetuitatem. Glos. Rhet. lib. p. 408.

enemy, 1 Cor. 15. 55. *O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Thus like *Joshaa*, they let the foot of Faith upon the neck of that King, and with an Holy Scorn deride its power. *O death where is thy sting?* If it be objected that its said, 1 Cor. 15. 26. *The last enemy that is to be destroyed is Death.* And if so, then it should seem the Victory is not yet achieved, and so we do but boast before the victory. It is at hand to reply, that the Victory over Death, obtained by Christ's Resurrection, is two fold, either *personal and incomplete, or general and complete.* He actually overcame it at his Resurrection in his own Person perfectly and virtually for us, as our head; but at the general Resurrection of the Saints (which his Resurrection as the first-fruits assures them of) then its utterly vanquish'd, and destroyed. Till then it will exercise some little power over the Bodies of the Saints, in which respect its called the *last enemy.* For sin, the chief enemy that let it in, that was conquered utterly and eradicated when they died; but Death holds their Bodies in the Grave, till the coming of Christ; and then it is utterly to be Vanquished. For after that they can die no more, *Luke 20. 35. And then shall be brought to pass, that saying that is written, death is swallowed up in Victory.* Then, and not till then, will that conquest be fully completed in our Persons though it be already so in Christ's, incompletely in ours, and then completely and fully for ever. For the same word which signifies *Victory*, doth also signify *Perpetuity*, and in this place a final or perpetual conquest. And indeed it drives but a poor trade for present, smiting only with its Dart, not with its Sting, and that but the Believers body also, and the body but for a time remains under it neither. So that there is no reason why a Believer should stand in a slavish fear of it.

Infer. 2. Is Christ, and hath his Resurrection such a potent and comfortable influence into the Resurrection of the Saints? Then it is the duty, and will be the wisdom of the people of God so to govern, dispose, and employ their bodies as becomes Men and Women that understand what glory is prepared for them at the Resurrection of the Just. Particularly, *first*, Be not fondly tender of them, but employ and use them for God here. How many good duties are lost and spoiled by sinful indulgence to our bodies? Alas! We are generally more solicitous to live long, than to live usefully. How many Saints have active vigorous bodies, yet God hath little service from them. If your Bodies were animated by some other Souls that love God more than you do, and burn with holy zeal to his service, more work would be done for God by your bodies in a day, than is now done in a month. To have an able healthy body, and not use it for God for fear of hurting it, is as if one should give you a strong and stately Horse, upon condition you must not work, or ride him. Wherein is the mercy of having a body except it be employed for God? Will not its reward at the Resurrection be sufficient for all the pains you now put it to in his service?

Secondly, See that you preserve the due honour of your Bodies. *Possess them in sanctification and honour,* 1 Thess. 4. 4. *O let not these eyes be now defiled with sin, by which you shall see God.* Those ears be inlets to vanity, which shall hear the *Alleluiahs* of the blessed. God hath designed honour for your bodies, O make them not either the *instruments, or objects* of sin. There are sins against the body, 1 Cor. 6. 18. *Preserve your bodies from those defilements, for they are the temples of God: If any man defile the Temple of God, him will God destroy,* 1 Cor. 3. 17.

Thirdly, Let not the contentment and accommodation of your bodies draw your Souls into sin, and bring them under the power of Temptations to sin. This is a very common case. O how many thousands of precious Souls perish eternally, for the satisfaction of a vile body for a moment? Their Souls must, because their bodies cannot suffer. It is recorded to the immortal honour of those future worthies in *Heb. 11. 35. That they accepted death, not deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection.* They might have had a Temporal Resurrection from death, to life, from reproach, to honour, from poverty, to riches; from pains, to pleasure, but upon such terms they judge it not worth acceptance. They would not expose their Souls, to secure their Bodies. They had the same natural affections that other Men have. They were made of as tender flesh as we are, but such was the care they had of their Souls, and the hope of a better Resurrection; that they listened not to the complaints and whinnings of Bodies. O that we were all in the same resolutions with them.

Fourthly, Withhold not upon the presence of the wants your own bodies may be in, that which God and Conscience bids you to communi-

Nemo potest in hac vita & in futura gaudere, nisi qui alteram vult possidere, Aug.

cate for the refreshment of the Saints; whose present necessities require your assistance. O be not too indulgent to your own flesh, and cruel to others. Certainly the consideration of that reward which shall be given you at the Resurrection, for every act of Christian Charity, is the greatest spur and incentive in the world to it. And to that end it's urged as a motive to Charity, Luke 14. 13, 14. *When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the Resurrection of the Just.* It was the opinion of an eminent modern Divine, that no Man living fully understands and believes that Scripture, Matib. 23. 40. *In as much as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren; ye have done it unto me.* How few Saints would be exposed to daily wants and necessities, if that Scripture were but fully understood and believed?

Infer. 3. Is Christ risen from the dead, and that as a publick Person and representative of believers? How are we all concerned then to secure our selves an interest in Christ, and consequently to this blessed Resurrection? What consolation would be left in this world, if the hope of the Resurrection were taken away? 'Tis this blessed hope that must support you under all the Troubles of life, and in the Agonies of Death. The securing of a blessed Resurrection to your selves, is therefore the most deep concernment you have in this World. And it may be secured to your selves, if upon serious heart-examination you can discover the following Evidences.

Evidence 1. *First, If you are regenerated Creatures,* brought forth in a new nature to God, for we are begotten again to a lively hope, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Christ's Resurrection is the groundwork of our hope. And the new birth is our title or evidence of our interest in it. So that until our Souls are partakers of the spiritual Resurrection from the death of sin, we can have no assurance our Bodies shall be partakers of that blessed Resurrection to life.

Blessed and Holy (saith the Spirit) is he that hath part in the first Resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, Rev. 20. 6. Never let unregenerated Souls expect a comfortable meeting with their bodies again. Rise they shall by God's terrible Citation, at the sound of the last trumpet; but not to the same end that the Saints arise, nor by the same Principle. They to whom the Spirit is now a principle of Sanctification, to them he will be the principle of a joyful Resurrection. See then that you get gracious Souls now, or never expect glorious Bodies then.

Evid. 2. *If you be dead with Christ, you shall live again by the life of Christ.* If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his Resurrection, Rom. 6. 5. *συνετη,* Planted together; some refer it to believers themselves, Jews, and Gentiles are planted together in Christ. So *Erasmus*, believers grow together like Branches upon the same root; which should powerfully inforce the great

Gospel duty of unity among themselves. But I would rather understand it with reference to Christ, and Believers, with whom Believers are in other Scriptures said to suffer together, and be glorified together, to die together, and live together, to be Crucified together, and buried together, all noting the Communion they have with Christ, both in his death and in his life. Now if the power of Christ's death, (i. e.) the mortifying influence of it have been upon our hearts; killing their their Lufts, deadning their affections, and flattening their appetites to the Creature; then the power of his life, or Resurrection shall come like the animating due upon our dead withered Bodies to revive and raise them up to live with him in glory.

Evid. 3. *If your hearts and affections be now with Christ in Heaven, your bodies in due time shall be there also,* and conformed to his glorious Body. So you find it, Phil. 3. 20, 21. *For our conversation is in Heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious Body.* The body is here called vile, or the body of our *transience* *vileness.* Not as God made it, but as sin *vici-* hath marred it. Not absolutely and in it self, but relatively, and in comparison of what it will be in its second edition, at the Resurrection. Then those scattered Bones, and dispersed Dust, like pieces of old broken battered Silver, will be new cast, and wrought in the best and newest fashion; even like to Christ's glorious Body. Whereof we have this evidence, that our conversation is already heavenly. The temper, frame, and disposition of our Souls is already so; therefore the frame and temper of our Bodies in due time shall be so.

Evid. 4. *If you strive now by any means to attain the Resurrection of the dead, no doubt but you shall then attain, what you now strive for.* This was Paul's great Ambition, that by any means, he might attain the Resurrection of the dead, Phil. 3. 11. He means not simply a Resurrection from the dead, for that all Men shall attain whether they strive for it, or no. But by a metonymy of the Subject, for the Adjunct; he intends that compleat holiness and perfection which shall attend the state of the Resurrection, so it is expounded, ver. 12. So then, if God have raised in your hearts a vehement desire, and assiduous endeavour after a perfect freedom from sin, and full Conformity to God in the beauties of Holiness; that very love of Holiness, your present Paintings, and tendencies after Perfection, speaks you to be Persons designed for it.

Evid. 5. *If you are such as do good in your Generation.* If you be fruitful and useful Men and Women in the World, you shall have part in this blessed Resurrection, Job. 5. 29. *All that are in the Graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the Resurrection of Life.* Now it is not every act materially good, that entitles a Man to this Privilege; but the same requites that the School-men assign to make a good Prayer, are also necessary to every good

Mr. Mar-
shall.

In unum
concrefecer-
e vel coale-
scere.

Si bonus
bona facit
bono ad bo-
num.

good work. The Person, Matter, Manner and End must be good. Nor is it any single good Act, but a Series and Course of Holy Actions, that is here meant. What a Spur should this be to us all, as (indeed the Apostle makes it, closing up the Doctrine of the Resurrection with this solemn Exhortation, 1 Cor. 15. last, with

which I also close mine) Therefore, my beloved Brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; for as much as you know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Thanks be to God for his unspeakable Gift.

SERMON XL.

Serm. 40.

Wherein the Ascension of Christ is opened and variously improved being the second step of his Exaltation.

JOHN XX. 17.

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: But go to my Brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

IN all the former Sermons we have been following Christ thro' his Humiliation, from the time that he left the blessed bosom of his Father: And now having finished the whole Course of his Obedience on Earth, and risen again from the dead, we must in this Discourse follow him back again into Heaven; and lodge him in that bosom of ineffable Delight and Love, which for our sakes he so freely left. For it was not his end in rising from the dead, to live such a low animal Life as this is; but to live a most glorious Life as an enthroned King in Heaven; upon which state he was now ready to enter, as he tells *Mary* in the Text, and bids her tell it to the Disciples, *Go tell my Brethren, that I ascend to my Father, &c.*

Volebat Maria Christum amplecti, præ nimio scilicet amore ejus, & gaudio quod rufum in carne præsentem vidisset. Bucer. in loc.

In the former Verses you find *Mary* waiting at Christ's Sepulchre in a very pensive frame; exceedingly troubled because she knew not what was become of Christ, v. 15. In the next Verse Christ calls her by her Name, *Mary*; she knowing the Voice, turned her self, and answered, *Rabboni*. And as a Soul transported with Joy, rushes into his Arms, as desirous to clasp and embrace him. But Jesus said, *Touch me not, &c.*

In which words we have Christ's Inhibition, *Touch me not*: Strange that Christ who rendered himself so kind and tender to all, that not only admitted, but commanded *Thomas* to put his finger into his wounds, should forbid *Mary* to touch him; but this was not for want of love to *Mary*; for he gives another reason for it presently, *I am not yet ascended*; i. e. say some, the time for embracing will be when we are in Heaven. Then, and there shall be the place and time, we shall embrace one another for evermore. So *Augustin*. Or thou dost too much upon my present state, as if I had now attained the very end, culminating point of my Exaltation. When as yet I am not af-

Vol. I.

cended; so *Camero* and *Calvin* expound it. Or Lastly, Christ would signifie hereby, that it was not his Will and Pleasure in so great a juncture of things as this, to spend time now in expressing (this way) her affections to him; but rather to shew it by hastening about his Service. Which is,

The second thing observable, viz. his Injunction upon *Mary*, to carry the Tidings of his Resurrection to the Disciples. In which Injunction we have,

First, The Persons to whom this Message was sent, *my Brethren*, so he calls the Disciples. A sweet Compellation, and full of Love. Much like that of *Joseph* to his Brethren, *Gen. 45. 4*. Save only that there is much more tenderness in this than that; for he twits them in the same breath with what they had done against him; *I am Joseph your Brother, whom ye sold*; but in this it is, *Go tell my Brethren*, without the least mention of their Cowardize or Unkindness. And,

Secondly, The Message it self. Tell my Brethren, *I ascend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God; &c.* I ascend. It's put in the present Tense, as if he had been ascending, though he did not ascend in some Weeks after this; but he so expresses it, to shew what was the next part of his work, which he was to act in Heaven for them; and how much his heart was set upon it, and longed to be about it, *I ascend to my father, and your father; to my God and your God*: Not our Father, or God in Common: But mine and yours in a different manner. Yours by right of dominion, mine (in reference to my humane Nature) not only by right of Creation, tho' so too; but also by special Covenant and Confederation. By Pre-

Mr. Henry
Jeanes 2d
part of the
Mixture of
Scholasticall
and Practi-
cal Divinity
page 273.

E c he

he is my God and your God; my Father, and your Father. This is the substance of that comfortable message, sent by *Mary* to the penfive Disciples. Hence the Observation is,

Doct. That our Lord Jesus did not only rise from the dead, but also ascended into Heaven; there to dispatch all that remained to be done for the completing the Salvation of his People.

So much the Apostle plainly witnesseth, *Eph. 4. 10. He that descended, is the same also that ascended up, far above all Heavens* (i. e.) all the aspectable Heavens. A full and faithful account whereof the several Evangelists have given us, *Mark 16. 19. Luke 24. 51.* This is sometimes called his going away, as *John 16. 7.* Sometimes his being exalted, *Acts 2. 33.* Sometimes his being made higher than the Heavens, *Heb. 7. 26.* And sometimes his entering within the vail, *Heb. 6. 19. 20.* All which are but so many *Synonymous Phrases* expressing his ascension in a very pleasant variety.

Now for the opening this act of Christ, we will bind up the whole in the satisfaction of these six Questions. 1. Who ascended? 2. Whence did he ascend. 3. Whither? 4. When? 5. How? And lastly, Why did he ascend? And these will take in what is needful for you to be acquainted with in this point.

First, Who ascended? This the Apostle answers, *Eph. 4. 10. The same that descended, viz. Christ.* And himself tells us in the Text, *I ascend.* And though the ascension were of Christ's whole Person, yet it was but a figurative and improper expression with respect to his divine Nature, but it agrees most properly to the humanity of Christ, which really changed places and conditions by it. And hence it is that that it's said, *John 16. 28. I came forth from the father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to my father.* He goes away, and we see him no more. As God, he is spiritually with us still; even to the end of the world. But as a man, the Heavens must contain him till the restitution of all things, *Acts 3. 21.*

Secondly, Whence Christ ascended?

I answer, more generally, he is said to ascend from this world, to leave the world. That is the *terminus a quo*, *John 16. 28.* But more particularly, it was from *mount Olivet*, near unto *Jerusalem*. The very place where he began his last sorrowful Tragedy. There where his heart began to be sadder, there is it now made glad. O what a difference was there betwixt the frame Christ was in, in that Mount before his Passion, and this he is now in, at his ascension! But,

Thirdly, Whither did he ascend?

It's manifest it was into the third Heavens. The Throne of God, and place of the blessed. Where all the Saints shall be with him for ever. It's said to be far above all Heavens. That is, the Heavens which we see, for they are but the pavement of that stately Palace of the great King. He is gone (saith the Apostle) within the vail (i. e.) into the most holy Place. And into his Father's House, *John 14. 2.* And he is also said to go to the place where he was before, *John 6. 62.* Back again to that sweet and glorious bosom of delight and love

from whence at his incarnation he came.

Fourthly, When did Christ ascend? Was it presently as soon as he rose from the dead?

No, not so, for after his Resurrection (saith *Luke*) he was seen of them forty days, speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. And truly the care and love of Christ to his People was very manifest in this his stay with them. He had ineffable glory prepared for him in Heaven, and awaiting his coming; but he will not go to possess it, till he had settled all things for the good of his Church here. For in this time he confirmed the truth of his Resurrection, gave charge to the Apostles concerning the Discipline and order of his House, or Kingdom; which was but needful, since he intended that their Acts should be rules to future Churches. So long it was necessary he should stay. And when he had set all things in order, he would stay no longer, lest he should seem to affect a terrene life. And besides, he had work of great concernment to do for us in the other world. He desired to be no longer here, than he had work to do for God, and Souls. A good pattern for the Saints.

Fifthly, How did Christ ascend into Heaven?

Here it's worthy our Observation, that Christ ascended as a *publick person*, or *fore-runner* in our Names, and upon our accounts. So it's said expressly, *Heb. 6. 20.* Speaking of the most holy place within the vail; *Whither* (saith he) *the fore-runner is for us entered.* His entering into Heaven as our fore-runner implies, both his *publick capacity*, and *precedency*.

First, His publick capacity, as one that went upon our business to God. So he himself speaks, *John 14. 2. I go before to prepare a place for you.* To take possession of Heaven in our Names. The *fore-runner* hath respect to others that were to come to Heaven after him in their several Generations; for whom he hath taken up mansions, which are kept for them against their coming.

Secondly, It notes precedency, he is our *fore-runner*, but he himself had no *fore-runner*. Never any entered into Heaven before him, but such as entered in the Name, and through the virtue of his Merits. He was the first that ever entered Heaven directly immediately in his own name, and upon his own account. But all the Fathers who died before him, entered in his Name. To the holiest of them all God would have said as *Elisha* to *Jehoram*, *2 Kings 3. 14.* Were it not that I had respect to the person of my Son, in whose name and right you come; I would not look upon you. You must back again, Heaven were no place for you. No not for you *Abraham*, nor for you *Moses*.

Secondly, He ascended Triumphantly into Heaven. To this good Expositors refer that which in the Type is spoken of *David*, when he lodged the *Ark* in its own place, with musical instruments and shoutings; but to Christ, in the *Antitype*, when he was received up Triumphantly into Glory, *Psal. 47. 5. God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a Trumpet; sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises unto our King, sing praises.*

A Cloud is prepared as a Royal Chariot to carry up the King of Glory to his princely Pavilion,

Ascensio-
nis fuisse
na. nauter
men divi
non conve-
nit nisi figura-
te, sed hu-
mane nature
maxime pro-
prie convulsa.
Sec. Amos.
Met. p. 114.

dis. spulcorum
victimas hu-
m. interitus
morum postu-
labat. Amos.

Me reverentia
vram videtur
cur nosse
Amos.

Confiliatio-
nem summam
nobis mun-
dum, neque
nostra causa,
ut de casto
decedat; in
causam occu-
perat; ut no-
bis illi locum
enque domici-
lium pararet.
Petens in LA.

Molitus in Jer.
Genus. Aym-
worth.

Mr. Cate in
tu Pilgah.

Deut. 24. 51. lion. A cloud received him out of their sight. And then a Royal Guard of mighty Angels furround the Chariot, if not for support, yet for greater state and solemnity of their Lord's Ascension. And oh what Jubilations of the blessed Angels were heard in Heaven! How was the whole City of God moved at his coming! For look as when he brought his first-begotten into the world, he said, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*, Heb. 1. 6. So at his return thither again, when he had finished Redemption-Work, there were no less demonstrations given by those blessed Creatures of their delight and joy in it. The very Heavens echoed and re-ounded on that account. Yea, the triumph is not ended at this day, nor ever shall.

Tis said, *Dan. 7. 13, 14.* I *Jaw* (saith the Prophet) in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of Heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him, dominion, and glory, and a kingdom; that all people, nations and languages should serve him. This Vision of Daniel's was accomplished in Christ's Ascension, when they, i. e. the Angels brought him to the ancient of days, i. e. to God the Father, who to express his welcome to Christ, gave him Glory and a Kingdom. And so 'tis and ought to be expounded. The Father received him with open Arms, rejoicing exceedingly to see him again in Heaven; therefore God is said to receive him up into Glory, *1 Tim. 3. 16.* For that, which with respect to Christ, is call'd *Ascension*, is with respect to the Father, call'd *Assumption*. He went up, and the Father received him. Yea, received so as none ever was received before him, or shall be received after him.

Thirdly, Christ ascended munificently, shedding forth abundantly inestimable Gifts upon his Church at his Ascension. As in the Roman Triumphs they did *Spargere misilia*, bestow their Largesies upon the People; so did our Lord when he ascended, *wherefore he saith*, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. The Place to which the Apostle refers, is *Psalms 68. 17, 18.* where you have both the Triumph and Munificence with which Christ went up excellently set forth together.

The chariots of God (saith the Psalmist) are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels; the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men; Yea, for the rebellious also, that God might dwell among them. Which words in their literal Sense are a Celebration of that famous Victory and Triumph of David, over the Enemies of God, recorded, *2 Sam. 8.* These conquered Enemies bring him several sorts of Presents, all which he dedicated to the Lord. The Spiritual Sense is, that just so our Lord Jesus Christ, when he had overcome by his death on the Cross, and now triumphed in his Ascension, he takes the Parts and Gifts of his Enemies, and gives them by their conversion to the Church, for its use and service. Thus he received Gifts even for the *Rebellious*, i. e. sanctifies the natural Gifts, and Faculties of such as hated his People be-

fore, dedicating them to the Lord in his Peoples Service. Thus (as one observes) *Tertullian, Origen, Austin and Jerome*, came into Canaan, laden with Egyptian Gold. Meaning, they came into the Church richly laden with Natural Learning and Abilities. *Austin* was a *Manichee*, *Cyprian* a *Magician*, learned *Bradwardine*, a scornful, proud Naturalist, who once said, when he read *Paul's* Epistles, *Indignabar esse parvulus*. He scorned such childish things, but afterwards became a very useful man in the Church of God. And even *Paul* himself, was as fierce an Enemy to the Church, as breathed on Earth; till Christ gave him into its bosom by Conversion; and then no meer Man ever did the Lord and his People greater Service than he. Men of all sorts: Greater and smaller Lights, have been given to the Church. Officers of all sorts were given it by Christ. Extraordinary and temporary, as Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists; ordinary and standing, as Pastors and Teachers, which remain to this day, *Eph. 4. 8, 9.* And those stars are fixed in the Church-heaven, by a most firm Establishment, *1 Cor. 12. 28.* Thousands now in Heaven, and thousands on Earth also, are blessing Christ at this Day for these his Ascension Gifts.

Fourthly, Our Lord Jesus Christ ascended most comfortably, for whilst he was blessing his People, he was parted from them, *Luke 24. 50, 51.* Therein making good to them what is said of him, *John 13. 1.* Having loved his own, he loved them to the end. There was a great deal of Love manifested by Christ in this very last Act of his, in this world. The last fight they had of him in this world was a most sweet and encouraging one. They heard nothing from his lips but Love, they saw nothing in his face but Love; till he mounted his triumphant Chariot, and was taken out of their sight.

Surely these blessings at parting were sweet and rich ones. For the Matter of them, they were the Mercies which his Blood had so lately purchased for them. And for their Extent, they were not only intended for them, who had the happiness to be upon the place with him from whence he ascended; but they reach us, as well as them; and will reach the last Saint that shall be upon the Earth, till he come again. For they were but Representatives of the future Churches, *Matth. 28. 20.* And in blessing them, he blessed us also. And by this we may be satisfied that Christ carried an heart full of Love to his People away with him to Heaven; since his Love so abounded in the last Act that ever he did in this world. And left such a demonstration of his tenderness with them at parting.

Fifthly, He ascended, as well as rose again, by his own Power. He was not merely passive, in that his Ascension, but it was his own Act. He went to Heaven. Therefore 'tis said, *Acts 1. 10.* He went up, viz. by his own divine Power. And this plainly evinceth him to be God, for no meer Creature ever mounted it self from Earth, far above all heavens, as Christ did.

Sixthly, And Lastly, why did Christ ascend? I answer: His Ascension was necessary upon many and great Accounts. For,

Ee 2

Firſt,

Vide Deodato
and English
Joan. 6. 6.

Solent principi
pes post. Vi
dorianum dum
Triumphant.
magna monu
ra & pecunia
in populum
sibi trium
phanti gratu
larent et Ju
bilarent,
ſurgere.
Zanb.

Enclaus d. do
ret ecclesia
eniam inter
eos qui popu
lum tuum o
derunt & per
ſecutauntur, &
ſabande mal
itosa hoſtibus
tuis, ad hoc
regnum ad
ducit. Act.
re. ier.

Causa huius
ascensionis fu
it virtus Divi
nitatis
sed accedebat
indispenſabili
conſpectu
placitum
quod aequa
litas (cum foret)
atque dectum.
Amg.

First, If Christ had not ascended, he could not have interceded as now he doth in Heaven for us. And do but take away Christ's Intercession, and you starve the hope of the Saints. For what have we to succour our selves with, under the daily surprizes of Sin, but this, *That if any man sin, we have an Advocate* [with the Father] mark that, *with the Father*. A Friend upon the place: One that abides there, on purpose to transact all our Affairs, and as a Surety for the peace betwixt God and us.

Secondly, If Christ had not ascended, you could not have entered into Heaven, when you die. For he went to *prepare a place for you*, John 14. 2. He was (as I said before) the first that entered into Heaven directly and in his own Name; and had he not done so, we could not have entered (when we die) in his Name. The *fore-runner* made way for all that are coming on in their several generations after him. Nor could your Bodies have ascended after their Resurrection, but in the virtue of Christ's Ascension. For he ascended (as was said before) in the capacity of our Head, and Representative. To his Father and our Father. For us and himself too.

Thirdly, If Christ had not ascended, he could not have been *inaugurated and installed* in the Glory he now enjoys in Heaven. This world is not the place where perfect Felicity and Glory dwells. And then how had the promise of the Father been made good to him? Or our Glory (which consists in being with and conformed to him) where had it been? *Ought not Christ to suffer, and to enter into his glory?* Luke 24. 25.

Fourthly, If Christ had not ascended, how could we have been satisfied that his payment on the Cross made full satisfaction to God? and that now God hath no more Bills to bring in against us? how is it that the Spirit convinceth the world of righteousness, John 16. 9, 10. But from Christ's going to the Father, and returning thither no more; which gives Evidence of God's full content and satisfaction both with his Person and Work.

Fifthly, How should we have enjoyed the great blessings of the Spirit and Ordinances, if Christ had not ascended? And surely we could not have been without either. If Christ had not gone away, *the comforter had not come*, John 16. 7. He begins where Christ finished. For he takes of his, and shews it to us, John 16. 14. And therefore it's said, John 7. 39. *The Holy Ghost was not given because Jesus was not yet glorified*. He was then given as a sanctifying Spirit, but not given, in that measure as afterward he was, to furnish and qualify Men with Gifts, for service. And indeed by Christ's Ascension both his sanctifying and his ministring Gifts, were shed forth more commonly, and more abundantly upon Men. These fell from him when he ascended, as *Elijah's* Mantle did from him, so that whatsoever good of Conversion, Edification, Support or Comfort you receive from spiritual Ordinances he hath shed forth that, which you now see and feel. *'Tis the fruit of Christ's Ascension*.

Sixthly, And lastly, if Christ had not ascended, how had all the Types and Prophecies

that figured and foretold it been fulfilled? *And the Scriptures cannot be broken*, John 10. 35. So that upon all these accounts it was expedient that he should go away. It was for his glory, and for our advantage. Though we lost the comfort of his bodily presence by it; yet if *we loved him, we would rejoice because he went to the Father*, John 14. verse 28. We ought to have rejoiced in his advancement, tho' it had been to our loss; but when it is so much for our benefit as well as his glory; it's matter of Joy on both sides that he is ascended to his Father and our Father; to his God and to our God. From the several blessings flowing to us out of Christ's Ascension, it was that he charged his people not to be troubled at his leaving of them, Job. 14. And hence learn.

Infer. 1. Did Christ ascend into Heaven? Is our Jesus, our treasure indeed there? Where then should the hearts of believers be, but in Heaven where their Lord their Life is? Surely Saints, it is not good that your Love and your Lord should be in two several Countries, said one that is now with him. Up, up, after your Lover, that he and you may be together. Christians you ascended with him virtually when he ascended; you shall ascend to him personally hereafter, oh that you would ascend to him spiritually in acts of Faith, Love and Desires daily. *Sursam Corda*, up with your hearts, was the form used by the ancient Church, at the Sacrament. How good were it if we could say with the Apostle, Phil. 3. 21. *Our Conversation is in Heaven from whence we look for a Saviour*. An heart ascendant, is the best evidence of your interest in Christ's ascension.

Infer. 2. Did Christ go to Heaven as a fore-runner? What haste should we make to follow him? He ran to Heaven; he ran thither before us. Did he run to glory, and shall we linger? Did he flee as an Eagle towards Heaven, and we creep like Snails? Come Christians, *lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset you, and run with patience the race set before you, looking unto Jesus*, Heb. 12. 1, 2. The Captain of our Salvation is entered within the gates of the new Jerusalem, and calls to us out of heaven, to hasten to him; proposing the greatest encouragements to them that are following after him, saying, *he that overcomes shall sit with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne*, Rev. 3. 22. How tedious should it seem to us to live so long at a distance from our Lord Jesus!

Infer. 3. Did Christ ascend so triumphantly, leading Captivity Captive? How little reason then have believers to fear their conquered enemies. Sin, Satan and every enemy was in that day led away in triumph, dragged at Christ's Chariot wheels. Brought after him as it were in Chains. 'Tis a lovely sight to see the necks of those Tyrants under the foot of our Joshua. He made at that day an open shew of them, Col. 2. 15. Their strength is broken for ever. In this he shewed himself more than a conqueror; for he conquered and triumphed too. *Satan was then trod under his feet*. And he hath promised to tread him under our feet also, and that

that shortly, *Rom. 16. 20.* Some power our enemies yet retain, the Serpent may bruise our heel, but Christ hath crush'd his head.

Infer. 4. Did Christ ascend so munificently, shedding forth so many mercies upon his People? Mercies of inestimable value reserved on purpose to adorn that day? *O then see that you abuse not those precious ascension gifts of Christ, but value and improve them, as the choicest mercies.* Now the Ascension gifts, as I told you, are either the *Ordinances and Officers* of the Church (for he then gave them Pastors and Teachers) or the *Spirit* that furnisheth the Church with all its gifts. *Beware you abuse not either of these.*

First, Abuse not the *Ordinances and Officers* of Christ. This is a sin that no Nation is plunged deeper into the guilt of, than this Nation And no Age more than this. — Surely God hath written to us the great things of his Law, and we have accounted them small things. We have been loose, wanton, sceptical professors for the most part; that have had nice and coy stomachs that could not relish plain wholesome truths, except so and so modified to our humours. For this the Lord hath a Controversie with the Nation, and by a sore Judgment he hath begun to rebuke this sin already. And I doubt before he make an end, plain truths will down with us; and we shall bless God for them.

Secondly, But in the next place, see that you abuse not the Spirit, whom Christ hath sent from Heaven at his ascension, to supply his bodily absence among us, and is the great pledge of his care for, and tender love to his people. Now take heed that you don't vex him by your disobedience. Nor grieve him by your unkindness. Nor quench him by your sinful neglects of duty, or abuse of light. O deal kindly with the Spirit, and obey his voice. Comply with his Designs, and yield up your selves to his guidance and conduct. Methinks to be intreated by the Love of the Spirit, *Rom. 15. 30.* should be as great an Argument as to be intreated for Christ's sake. Now to persuade all the Saints to be tender of grieving the Spirit, by sin; let me urge a few Considerations proper to the point under hand. And

Confid. 1. *First,* He was the first and principal mercy that Christ received for you, at his first entrance into Heaven. It was the first thing he asked of God, when he came to heaven. So he speaks, *John 14. 16, 17.* *I will pray the father, and he shall give you another Comforter; that he may abide with you.* No sooner had he set foot upon the place, but the first thing, the great thing that was upon his heart to ask the Father for us, was, that the Spirit might be forthwith dispatched, and sent down to his People. So that the Spirit is the first born of mercies. And deserves the first place in our hearts, and esteems.

Confid. 2. *Secondly,* The Spirit comes not in his own name to us (tho' if so, he deserves a dear welcome for his own sake, and for the benefits we receive by him which are inestimable) but he comes to us in the name, and in the loves both of the Father, and Son. As one authorized and delegated by them. Bringing his *Credenti-*

als under both their hands and seals, *John 15. 26.* But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from the Father. Mark, I will send him from the Father, and in *John 14. 26.* The Father is said to send him in Christ's name. So that he is the messenger that comes from both these great and holy Persons. And if you have any Love for the God that made you, any kindness for Christ that he died for you; then it by your obedience to the Spirit that comes from 'em both; and in both their names to us; & who will be both offended and grieved if you grieve him. O therefore give him an entertainment worthy of one that comes to you in the name of the Lord. In the Father's name, and in the Son's name.

Confid. 3. *Thirdly,* But that is not the only consideration that should cause you to beware of grieving the Spirit, because he is sent in the name of such great and dear Persons to you, but He deserves better entertainment than any of the Saints give him, for his own sake, and upon his own account, and that upon a double score, viz. Of his Nature and Office.

First, On the account of his Nature; for he is God, Coequal with the Father and Son in Nature, and dignity, *2 Sam. 23. 23.* The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue; the God of Israel said; the Rock of Israel spake to me. So that you see he is God. The rock of Israel. God omnipotent, for he created all things, *Gen. 1. 2.* God omnipresent, filling all things, *Psal. 139. 7.* God omniscient, who knows your hearts, *Rom. 9. 1.* Beware of him therefore, and grieve him not, for in so doing, you grieve God.

Secondly, Upon the account of his Office, and the benefits we receive by him. We are obliged even on the score of gratitude and ingenuity to obey him. For he is sent in the quality of an Advocate, to help us to pray. To indite our requests for us. To reach us what, and how to ask of God, *Rom. 8. 26.* He comes to us as a comforter, *John 14. 16.* And none like him. His work is to take of Christ's, and shew it to us, (i. e.) to take of his Death, Resurrection, Ascension, yea, of his very present intercession in Heaven and shew it to us. He can be with us in a moment, he can (as One well observes) tell you what were the very last thoughts Christ was thinking in heaven about you. It was he that formed the body of Christ in the Womb, and so prepared him to be a sacrifice for us. *Luke 1. 35.* He filled that humanity with his unexampled fullness. So fitting and anointing him for the discharge of his Office.

'Tis he that puts efficacy into the Ordinances, and without him they would be but a dead letter. 'Twas he that blessed them to your conviction and conversion. For if Angels had been the preachers, no conversion had followed, without the Spirit. 'Tis he that is the vinculum unionis, bond of union betwixt Christ and your Souls; without which you could never have had interest in Christ, or communion with Christ. 'Twas he that so often hath helped your infirmities, when you knew not what to say. Comforted your hearts when they were overwhelmed with in you, and you knew not what to do. Preserved you many thousand times from sin and ruin when you have been upon the slippery brink of it

John 16. 14.

Mr. Tho. Goodwin.

Luk 1. 35. 1/2. 61. 1. Col. 1. 19.

2 Cor. 9. 6.

John 16. 9.

Pet. 1. 12.

John 2. 24.

Rom. 8. 9.

Rom. 8. 26

John 14. 26.

Ezek. 36.

17.

it in temptations. 'Tis he (in his sanctifying Work) that is the best evidence your souls have for Heaven. 'Twere endless to enumerate the mercies you have by him. And now, Reader, dost thou not blush to think how unworthy thou hast treated such a Friend? for which of all these his Offices or Benefits dost thou grieve and quench him? O grieve not the holy Spirit, whom Christ sent as soon as ever he came to Heaven, in his Father's Name, and in his own Name, to perform all these Offices for you.

Infer. 5. Is Christ ascended to the Father as our Fore-runner? *Then the door of Salvation stands open to all believers, and by virtue of Christ's ascension, they also shall ascend after him, far above all visible Heavens.* O my Friends, what place hath Christ prepared and taken up for you! What a splendid Habitation hath he provided for you! *God is not ashamed to be called your God; for he hath prepared for you a City,* Heb. 11. 16. In that City Christ

hath provided Mansions, and resting Places for your everlasting abode, *John* 14. 2. and keeps them for you till your coming. O how august and glorious a dwelling is that, where Sun Moon and Stars shall shine as much below your feet as they are now above your heads? Yea, such is the Love Christ hath to the Believer, that (as one saith) if thou only hadst been the chosen of God, Christ would have built that House for himself and thee: Now 'tis for himself, for thee and for many more who shall inherit with thee. God send us a joyful meeting within the veil, with our Fore-runner; and sweeten our passage into it, with many a foresight and fore-taste thereof. And mean time, let the Love of a Saviour inflame our Hearts, so that when ever we cast a look towards that place, where our Fore-runner is for us entred, our Souls may say with melting affections, *Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ; and again, Blessed be God for his unspeakable Gift.*

Spes futurae
nostra heredi-
tatis in capite
nostro plebis
time consi-
deramus et nos
cum eo in
caelis collocati
sumus. *Somp.
pariteri Theol.
Dip. 28. 342*

S E R M O N XLI.

Serm. 41.

H E B. I. 3. Part of the Verse.

When he had by himself, purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Wherein
Christ's sit-
ting at Gods
right hand
is explain'd
and apply'd,
being the 3d
step of his
glorious ex-
altation.

Chrift being return'd again to his Father, having finished his whole work on Earth, is there bid by the Father to sit down in the Seat of Honour and Rest. A Seat prepared for him at God's right hand, that makes it honourable, and all his enemies as a footstool under his feet, that makes it easie. How much is the state and condition of Jesus Christ changed in a few days! Here he groan'd, wept, laboured, suffered, sweat, yea, sweat blood, and found no rest in this world; but when he comes to Heaven, there he enters into rest. Sits down for ever in the highest, and easiest Throne prepared by the Father for him, when he had done his work. *When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down, &c.*

The scope of this Epistle is to demonstrate Christ to be the fulness of all Legal Types and Ceremonies, and that whatever light glimmered to the world through them, yet it was but as the light of the day-star, to the light of this Sun.

In this Chapter Christ, the subject of the Epistle is described, and particularly in this 3d Verse, he is described three ways.

First, By his essential, and primæval glory and dignity he is *ἀσώρευτος*, the brightness of his Father's glory, the very splendor of glory, the very refulgency of that Sun of Glory. The primary reason of that appellation is with respect to his eternal and ineffable generation, light of light, as the *Nicene Creed* expresses it. As a beam of light proceeding from the Sun. And the secondary reason of it is with respect to Men, for look as the Sun communicates its light & influence to us by its beams, which it projects; so doth God communicate his goodness, and manifest himself to us by Christ. Yea, he is the *express Image*, or Character of his person. Not as the impressed Image of the Seal upon the Wax but as the engraving in the Seal itself. Thus he is described by his essential Glory.

Secondly, He is described by the work he wrought here on earth in his humbled state, and it was a glorious work, and that wrought out by his own single hand, *when he had by himself purged our sins.* A work that all Angels in Heaven could not do, but Christ did it.

Thirdly, And lastly, He is described by his glory, the which (as a reward of that work) he now enjoys in Heaven. *When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high,* (i. e.) the Lord clothed him with the greatest power, and highest honour, that Heaven itself could afford; for so much this phrase of *sitting down on the right hand of Majesty* imports, as will appear in the explication of this point, which is the result of this clause, *viz.*

Doct. That when our Lord Jesus Christ had finished his work on earth, he was placed in the seat of the highest honour, and authority; at the right hand of God in Heaven.

This truth is transformingly glorious. *Stephen* had but a glimpse of Christ at his Father's right hand, and it caus'd his face to shine, as it had been the face of an Angel, *Acts* 7. 56. this his high advancement was foretold and promised before the work of redemption was taken in hand, *Psal.* 100. 1. *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.* And this promise was punctually performed to Christ after his Resurrection and ascension, in his supreme exaltation far above all created beings in Heaven and Earth, *Ephes.* 1. 20, 21, 22. We shall here open two things in the doctrinal part, *viz.* what is meant by God's right hand, and what is implied in Christ's sitting there, with his enemies for a footstool.

First, What are we to understand here by God's right hand? Its obvious enough, that the

Ratio appell.
lationis pri-
maria est re-
spectu patris
caelestis a quo
aliis aeterno, per
ineffabilem
generationem
emittitur lumina,
de lumine re-
spondens, so-
cundaria re-
spectu homi-
num &c. *Gloss.
Ries. p. 174.
7. acot. 17.*
invisibilem di-
citur, non tam
imaginem ex-
pressam extra
impressam,
quam ipsum
figillum de-
notare. *Gloss.
Ries. fac. 159*

Sun

the expression is not proper, but figurative and borrowed. God hath no hand, right or left; but its a condescending expression, wherein God stoops to the Creatures understanding, and by it he would have us to understand *honour, power, and nearness*.

First, The right hand of honour, the upper hand, where we place those whom we highly esteem and honour. So *Solomon* placed his Mother in a seat, at his right hand, *1 Kings 2. 19*. So in token of honour God sets Christ at his right hand; which on that account in the Text is called the right hand of *Majesty*. God hath therein express more favour, delight and honour to Jesus Christ, than ever he did to any Creature. To which of the *Angels* said he at any time, *fit thou on my right hand*? *Heb. 1. 13*.

Secondly, The right hand is the hand of power: We call it the *weapon hand*, and the *working hand*. And the sitting of Christ there, imports his exaltation to the highest authority, and most supream dominion. Not that God the Father hath put himself out of his Authority, and advanced Christ above himself; no, for in that he saith he hath put all things under him, it is manifest, that he is excepted which did put all things under him, *1 Cor. 15. 27*. But to sit as an enthroned King, at God's right hand, imports power. Yea, the most sovereign and supream power; and so Christ himself calls the hand at which he sits, *Mat. 26. 64*. Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power.

Thirdly, And as it signifies honour and power, so nearness in place, as we use to say at ones elbow, and so it is applied to Christ, in *Psal. 110. 5*. The Lord at thy right hand, shall strike through Kings in the day of his Wrath; that is, the Lord who is very near thee, present with thee, he shall subdue thine enemies. This is that then we are to understand by God's right hand. Honour, power, and nearness.

Secondly, In the next place let us see what is implied in Christ's sitting at God's right hand, with his enemies for his footstool. And if we attently consider, we shall find that it implies and imports divers great and weighty things in it. As.

First, It implies the Complement and Perfection of Christ's work, that he came into the world about. After his work was ended, then he sat down and rested from those labours, *Heb. 10. 11, 12*. Every Priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices; which can never take away sins; but this Man when he had once offered one sacrifice for sins; for ever sat down on the right hand of God. Here he assigns a double difference betwixt Christ and the Levitical Priests; they stand, which is the posture of Servants; he sits, which is the posture of a Lord. They stand daily, because their sacrifices cannot take away sin; he did his work fully, by one offering; and after that sits, or rests for ever in Heaven. And this (as accurate and judicious Dr. Reynolds observes) was excellently figured to us in the Ark, which was a lively Type of Jesus Christ, and particularly in this, it had rings by which it was carried up and down, till at last it rested in *Solomon's Temple*, with glo-

rious and triumphal solemnity, *Psal. 132. 8, 9*. *2 Chron. 5. 13*. So Christ, while he was here on earth, being anointed with the Holy Ghost and Wisdom, went about doing good, *Matt. 10. 38*. and having ceased from his works, did at last enter into his rest, *Heb. 5. 10*. which is the heavenly Temple, *Rev. 11. 19*.

Secondly, His sitting down at God's right hand, notes the high content and satisfaction of God the Father in him, and in his work. The Lord said to my Lord, sit thou at my right hand; the words are brought in as the Words of the Father, welcoming Christ to Heaven; and (as it were) congratulating the happy accomplishment of his most difficult work. And it is as if he had said, O my Son, what shall be done for thee this day? Thou hast finished a great work, and in all the parts of it acquired thy self as an able and faithful servant to me; what honours shall I now bestow upon thee? the highest glory in Heaven, is not too high for thee; come, sit at my right hand. O how well is he pleased with Christ, and what he hath done! He delighted greatly to behold him here at his work on earth, and by a voice from the excellent glory he told him so, when he called out of Heaven to him, saying, Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, *2 Pet. 1. 17*. and himself tells us, *Joh. 10. 17*. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, &c. for it was a work that the heart of God had been upon from Eternity. He took infinite delight in it.

Thirdly, Christ's sitting down at Gods right hand in heaven, notes the advancement of Christ's humane nature to the highest honour; even to be the object of adoration to Angels and Men. For it is properly his humane nature that is the subject of all this honour and advancement; and being advanced to the right hand of Majesty, its become an object of worship and adoration. Not simply as it is flesh and blood, but as it is personally united to the second person, and enthroned in the supream glory of Heaven. O here's the mystery, that flesh and blood, should ever be advanced to the highest throne of Majesty, and being there installed in that glory, we may now direct our Worship to him as God-man; and to this end was his humanity so advanced, that it might be adored and worshipped by all. The Father hath committed all judgement to the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. And the Father will accept of no honour divided from his honour. Therefore it's added in the next clause, he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him, *John 5. 22, 23*. Hence the Apostles in the salutations of their Epistles, beg for grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ; and in their valedictions, they desire the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Churches.

Fourthly, It imports the sovereignty and supremacy of Christ over all. The investiture of Christ with authority over the Empire of both Worlds: For this belongs to him that sits down upon this throne. When the Father said to him, sit at my right hand, he did therein deliver to him the dispensation and economy of the Kingdom

Significat ergo hec felicitas Christi ad dextram patris, non propter gloriam suam, et regnum naturale, quod filio Dei cum patre ab æternis fuit commune; hoc enim patris etiam spiritus sanctus ad dextram Dei sedet; sed regnum æternum et voluntatem, in quo tantum *Dei* *Imperator* et mediator noster, ad ecclesiam sue collectionis non de cernitur a patre esse constitutus. *Synops. par. Theol. Disp. 28. p. 143.*
Aut. V. B.
 Cum Christum totum persequitur, hunc et sub *Carthilino* *fella* *Canis* *que* *fuit*.

dom. Put the awful scepter of government into his hand, and so the Apostle interprets and understands it, 1 Cor. 15. 25. *He must reign, till he have put all his enemies under his feet.* And to this purpose the same Apostle accommodates, (if not expounds) the words of the Plaintiff, *thou madest him a little lower than the Angels,* (i. e.) in respect of his humbled State on earth, *thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the work of thy hands, thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet,* Heb. 2. 7, 8. He is over the Spiritual Kingdom, the Church, absolute Lord there, *Matt. 28. 18, 19, 20.* He also is Lord over the providential Kingdom, the whole world, *Psal. 110. 2.* and this providential Kingdom, being subordinate to his spiritual Kingdom, he orders and rules this, for the advantage and benefit of that, *Eph. 1. 22.*

Fifthly, To sit at Gods right hand with his enemies for a footstool, implies Christ to be a Conqueror over all his enemies. To have ones enemies under his feet, notes perfect conquest, and compleat victory. As when *Joshua* set his foot upon the necks of the Kings: So *Tamherlane* made proud *Bajazet* his footstool. They trampled his name, and his Saints under their feet, and Christ will tread them under his feet. 'Tis true indeed, this victory is yet incomplete, and inconsummate; for now we see not yet all things put under him, (saith the Apostle) but we see *Jesus Crowned with glory and honour*, and that's enough. Enough to shew the power of his enemies is now broken; and though they make some opposition still, yet it is to no purpose at all; for he is so infinitely above them, that they must fall before him. It is not with Christ as it was with *Abijah*, against whom *Jeroboam* prevailed because he was young and tender hearted, and could not withstand them. His incapacity and weakness gave the watchful enemy an advantage over him. I say, 'tis not so with Christ, he is at God's right hand. And all the power of God stands ready bent to strike through his enemies, as it is, *Psal. 110. 5.*

Sixthly, Christ's sitting in Heaven notes to us the great and wonderful change that is made upon the state and condition of Christ, since his ascension into Heaven. Ah, 'tis far other wise with him now, than it was in the days of his humiliation here on earth. *Quantum mutatus ab illo!* Oh what a wonderful change hath heaven made upon him! It were good (as a Worthy of our speaks) to compare in our thoughts the Abatement of Christ, and his Exaltation together; as it were in Columns, one over against the other. He was born in a Stable, but now he reigns in his Royal Palace. Then he had a Manger for his Cradle, but now he sits on a Chair of State. Then Oxen and Asses were his companions, now thousands of Saints, and ten thousand of Angels minister round about his Throne. Then in contempt they call'd him the *Carpenter's Son*, now he obtains a more excellent name than *Angels*. Then he was led away into the Wilderness to be tempted of the Devil, now it is proclaimed before him, *Let all the Angels of God worship him.* Then he had not a place to lay his

Head on, now he is exalted to be Heir of all things. In his state of humiliation, he endured the contradiction of sinners; in his state of Exaltation, he is adored and admired of Saints and Angels. Then he had no form nor comeliness; and when we saw him, there was no Beauty why we should desire him: Now the beauty of his countenance shall send forth such glorious beams, that shall dazzle the Eyes of all the Celestial inhabitants round about him, &c.

O what a change is here! Here he sweat but there he sits. Here he groaned, but there he triumphs. Here he lay upon the ground, there he sits in the throne of glory. When he came to Heaven, his Father did as it were thus bespeak him.

My dear Son, *what an hard travail hast thou had of it? What a world of woe hast thou past thro', in the strength of thy love to me, and mine Elect? Thou hast been hungry, thirsty and weary, scourged, crucified and reproached: Ah what bad usage hast thou had in the ungrateful world! Not a days rest and comfort since thou wentest out from me; but notwithstanding suffering days are accomplished; now thy rest is come, rest for evermore. Henceforth sit at my right hand. Henceforth thou shalt groan, weep, or bleed no more. Sit thou at my right hand.*

Seventhly, Christ's sitting at God's right hand, implies the advancement of Believers to the highest Honour: For this Session of Christ's, respects them; and there he fits as our Representative, in which regard we are made to sit with him in heavenly Places, as the Apostle speaks, *Eph. 2. 6.* How secure may we be (saith *Tertullian*) who do now already possess the Kingdom? meaning in our Head, Christ. This (saith another) is all my Hope, and all my Confidence, namely, that we have a Portion in that Flesh and Blood of Christ, which is so exalted, and therefore where he reigns, we shall reign; where our Flesh is glorified, we shall be glorified. Surely, it's matter of exceeding Joy, to believe that Christ our Head, our Flesh and Blood, is in all this Glory at his Father's right hand. Thus we have open'd the sense & importance of Christ's sitting at his Father's right hand. Hence we infer.

Infer. 1. Is this so great an honour to Christ, to sit enthroned at God's right hand? What honour then is reserved in Heaven for those that are faithful to Christ now on the Earth? Christ prayed, and his Prayer was heard, *John 17. 24.* That we may be with him, to behold the glory that God hath given him; and what Heart can conceive the felicity of such a sight? It made *Stephen's* Face shine as the Face of an Angel, when he had but a glimpse of Christ at his Father's Right-hand. *Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty,* *Isa. 33. 7.* which respected *Hezekiah* in the Type, Christ in the Truth. But, this is not all, though this be much, to be Spectators of Christ in his Throne of Glory; we shall not only see him in his Throne, but also sit with him enthroned in Glory. To behold him is much, but to sit with him is more. I remember it was the saying of a heavenly Christian, now with Christ, *I would far rather look but through the hole of Christ's Door, to see but one half of his fairest and most comely Face, [for he looks like Heaven] suppose I should never win it, to see his Excellency*

Mr. T. Cate
 his Testimony
 part. 2. B. 22.

lency and Glory to the full; than to enjoy the Flower, the Bloom and chiefest Excellency of the Glory and Riches of ten Worlds. And you know how the Queen of the South fainted at the sight of Solomon in his Glory. But this fight you shall have of Christ, will change you into his likeness. *We shall be like him* (saith the Apostle) *for we shall see him as he is*, 1 John 3. 2. He will place us as it were in his own Throne with him. So runs the Promise, Rev. 3. 21. *To him that overcometh, I will grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my father in his throne*; and so 2 Tim. 2. 12. *If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him*. The Father set Christ on his right hand, and Christ will set the Saints on his right hand. So you know the Sheep are placed by the Angels, at the great day, Matt. 25. and so the Church under the Figure of the Daughter of Egypt whom Solomon married, is placed on the King's right hand, in Gold of Ophyr, Psal. 45. This Honour have all the Saints. O amazing Love! What, we set on Thrones, while as good as we by nature howl in Flames! O what manner of Love is this! These Expressions indeed do not intend, that the Saints shall be set in higher Glory than Christ; or that they shall have a Parity of Glory with Christ; for in all things he must have the preeminence: but they note the great honour that Christ will put upon the Saints; as also, that his Glory shall be their Glory in Heaven. As the Glory of the Husband redounds to the Wife; and again, their Glory will be his Glory, 2 Thes. 1. 10 And so it will be a social Glory. O it's admirable to think, whither free Grace hath already mounted up poor Dust and Ashes!

To think how nearly we are related now to this Royal Princely Jesus! but how much higher are the designs of Grace that are not yet come to their parturient fulness, they look beyond all this that we now know! *Now are we the Sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be*, 1 John 3. 2. Ah what Reason have you to honour Christ on Earth, who is preparing such Honours for you in Heaven!

Infer. 2. Is Jesus Christ thus enthroned in Heaven, then how impossible is it, that ever his interest should miscarry or sink on Earth? The Church hath many subtle and potent Enemies. True, but as Haman could not prevail against the Jews whilst Hester their Friend spake for them to the King, no more can they, whilst our Jesus sits at his and our Fathers right hand. Will he suffer his Enemies that are under his Feet, to rise up and pull out his Eyes think you? Surely they that touch his People, touch the very apple of his eye, Zech. 2. 8. *He must reign till all his enemies are under his feet*, 1 Cor. 15. 25. The Enemy under his Feet, shall not destroy the Children in his Arms. He sits in Heaven on purpose to manage all to the Advantage of his Church, Ephes. 1. 22. Are our Enemies powerful; lo our King sits on the right hand of power. Are they subtil and deep in their Contrivance; he that sits on the Throne, over-looks all they do. Heaven overlooks Hell. *He that sits in the Heavens beholds*, and derides their attempts, Psal. 2. 4. He may permit his

Enemies to straighten them in one place, but it shall be for their enlargement in another. For 'tis with the Church, as it is with the Sea; what it loses in one place, it gets in another; and so really loses nothing. He may suffer them also to distress us in outwards, but that shall be recompensed with inward and better Mercies; and so we shall lose nothing by that. A Foot-stool you know is useful to him that treads on it, and serves to lift him up the higher; so shall Christ's Enemies be to him, and his; albeit they think not so. What singular Benefits the Oppositions of his Enemies, occasion to his People; I have * elsewhere discovered, to which I refer my Reader, and pass to the

A Saint indeed. p. 64, 65, 66.

Infer. 3. Is Christ set down on the right hand of the Majesty in Heaven? O with what awful Reverence should we approach him in the Duties of his Worship! Away with light and low thoughts of Christ. Away with formal, irreverent, and careless Frames in praying, hearing, Receiving, yea, in conferring and speaking of Christ. Away with all deadness, and drowiness in Duties; for he is a great King with whom you have to do. A King to whom the Kings of the Earth are but as little bits of Clay. Lo the Angels cover their Faces in his Presence. He is an adorable Majesty.

When John had a Vision of this enthroned King, about sixty Years after his Ascension; such was the over-powering Glory of Christ, *as the Sun when it shineth in its strength*; that when he saw him, he fell at his Feet as dead, and died it's like he had, if Christ had not laid his hand on him, and said, *fear not, I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore*, Rev. 1. 17, 18. When he appeared to Saul in the way to Damascus, it was in Glory above the Glory of the Sun, which over-powered him also, and laid him as one dead upon the ground.

O that you did but know what a glorious Lord you Worship and Serve. Who makes the very place of his Feet glorious, where-ever he comes. Surely He is greatly to be feared in the Assembly of his Saints, and to be had in reverence of all that are round about him. There is indeed a boldness or free Liberty of Speech allowed to the Saints, Eph. 3. 12. But no rudeness, or irreverence. We may indeed come as the Children of a King come to the Father, who is both their awful Sovereign, and tender Father; which double Relation causes a due mixture of Love and Reverence in their Hearts, when they come before him. You may be free, but not Rude in his Presence. Though he be your Father, Brother, Friend; yet the distance betwixt him and you is infinite.

Infer. 4. If Christ be so gloriously advanced in the highest Throne, then none need to reckon themselves dishonoured, by suffering the vilest for his sake. The very Chains and Sufferings of Christ have a Glory in them. Hence Moses esteemed the very reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, Heb. 11. 26. He saw an excellency in the very worst things of Christ, his Reproaches and Sufferings, as made him leap out of his Honours and Riches into them. He did not (as one saith) only endure the reproaches of Christ, but count-

Non ignominiam est reputavit, sed potius quod Christus passus est, nec vobis gloriam facere, sed bonam famam, ut dicitur, Dr. MARTINI on Jam. 2. 22.

F f ed

These expressions fit to edify Mercies.

Cut et non me
quod, sic que
dona? An in-
signis hujus
ordinis mili-
tem creas?
Tinan. Hif.

ed them *Treasures*. To be reckoned among his Honours, and things of value. So *Thuanus* reports of *Ludovicus Marfacus*, a noble Knight of *France*, when he wasled with other *Martyrs*, that were bound with Cords, to Execution; and he for his Dignity was not bound, he cried, give me my Chain too, let me be a Knight of the same Order. Disgrace it self is honourable, when 'tis endured for the *Lord of Glory*. And surely there is (as one phraseth it) a little Paradise, a young Heaven in sufferings for Christ. If there were nothing else in it, but that they are endured on his Account, it would richly reward all we can endure for him; but if we consider how exceeding kind Christ is to them that count it their Glory to be abased for him; that though he be always kind to his People, (yet if we may so speak) he overcometh himself in kindness, when they suffer for him; it should make Men in Love with his Reproaches.

Infer. 5. If Christ fate not down to rest in Heaven, till he had finish'd his Work on Earth; then 'tis in vain for us to think of rest, till we have finish'd our Work, as Christ also did his.

How willing are we to find rest here! To Dream of that which Christ never found in this World, nor any ever found before us. O think not of resting, till you have done working and done sinning. Your life and your labours must end together. Write (saith the Spirit) *blest are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours*, Rev. 14. 13. Here you must have the *Sweet*, and there the *Sweet*. 'Tis too much to have two Heavens. Here you must be content to dwell in the *Tents of Kedar* hereafter you shall be *within the curtains of Solomon*. Heaven is the place of which it may be truly said, *That there the weary be at rest*. O think not of sitting down on this side Hea-

ven. There are four things will keep the Saints from sitting down on Earth, to rest, *viz.* Grace, Corruption, Devils, and wicked Men.

First, Grace will not suffer you to rest here. Its tendencies are beyond this World. It will be looking and longing for the blessed Hope. A gracious person takes himself for a Pilgrim, seeking a better Country, and is always suspicious of danger in every place and state. It's still beating up the sluggish heart with such language as that, *Mica. 2. 10. Arise, depart, this is not thy rest, for it is polluted*. It's farther tendencies and continual Jealousies will keep you from sitting long still in this World.

Secondly, Your Corruptions will keep you from rest here. They will continually exercise your Spirits, and keep you upon your watch. Saints have their hands filled with work by their own hearts every day. Sometimes to prevent sin; & sometimes to lament it. And always to watch and fear, to mortifie and kill it. Sin will not long suffer you to be quiet, *Rom. 7. 21, 22, 23, 24*. And if a bad heart will not break your rest here, then

Thirdly, There is a busy Devil will do it. He will find you work enough with his Temptations, and Suggestions, and except you can sleep quietly in his arms, as the wicked do, there's no rest to be expected. *Your adversary, the Devil, goeth about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist*, 1 Pet. 5. 8.

Fourthly, Nor will his Servants and Instruments let you be quiet on this side Heaven. Their very Name speaks their turbulent Disposition. *My Soul (saith the holy Man) is among Lions, and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the Sons of Men, whose Teeth are Spears and Arrows*, Psalm 57. 4. Well then, be content to enter into your rest, as Christ did into his. He sweat, then fate, and so must you.

Ux?
Inquietum
est. Turbu-
lentus.

S E R M O N XLII.

A C T S X. 42. *And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify, that it is he which was ordained by God to be the Judge of quick and dead.*

Christ enthroned in the highest glory in Heaven, is there to abide for the effectual and successful Government both of the world and of the Church, until the number given him by the Father before the world was, and purchased by the blood of the Cross be gathered in; and then cometh the Judgment of the great day, which will perfectly separate the precious from the vile; put the redeemed in full possession of the purchase of his blood in Heaven, and then shall be delivered up the Kingdom to his Father, that God may be all in all.

This last act of Christ, namely, his Judging the world, is a special part of his Exaltation and honour, bestowed upon him, because he is the Son of Man, John 5. 27. In that day shall his glory, as King and absolute Lord, shine forth as the Sun when it shineth in its strength. O what an honour will it be to the Man Christ Jesus, who stood arraigned and condemned at Pilate's Bar, to sit upon the great white Throne surrounded with thousands, and ten thousands

of Angels! Men and Devils waiting upon him to receive their final sentence from his mouth. In this will the glory of Christ's Sovereignty and power be eminently and illustriously displayed, before Angels and Men. And this is that great truth, which he commanded to be preached and testified to the people; namely, that it is he which is ordained of God, to be the Judge of quick and dead.

Wherein we have four things to be distinctly considered, *viz.* The Subject, Object, Fountain, and Truth of the supremacy Judiciary Authority.

First, The Subject of it, Christ; 'tis he that's ordained to be Judge. Judgment is the Act of the whole undivided Trinity. The Father and Spirit judge, as well as Christ, in respect of authority and consent, but 'tis the act of Christ in respect of visible management, and execution and so it's his *per proprietatem*, by propriety, the Father having conferred it upon him, as the Son of Man; but not his *per appropriationem*, so as to exclude either the Father or Spirit from their Authority, for they judge by him. Se-

Ad regium
dignitatem
pertinet illa
potestas qua
Christus factus
est iudex
universi ho-
minum et an-
gelorum.
1. Cor. 6. 2.

Serm. 42.
Wherein
Christ com-
ing to Judge-
ment, being
the 4th and
last degree
of his exalta-
tion, is
open'd and
improved.

Secondly, The *Object* of Chrill's Judiciary authority. The *quick and dead*, (i. e.) all that at his coming do live, or ever had lived. This is the *Object personal*. All the Men and Women that ever sprang from *Adam*, all the Apostate Spirits that fell from Heaven, and are reserved in Chains to the Judgment of this great day. And in this personal object, is included the *Real Object*, viz. all the actions, both secret, and open, that ever they did, 2 Cor. 5. 5. Rom. 2. 16.

Thirdly, The *Fountain* of this delegated authority, which is God the Father; for he hath ordained Christ to be the Judge. He is appointed, *sc.* as the Son of Man to this Honourable office and work. The word notes, a firm establishment of Christ in that Office by his Father. He is now by right of Redemption, Lord and King. He enacts Laws for Government, then he comes to judge of mens obedience and disobedience to his Laws.

Fourthly, And lastly, here is the infallible Truth, or unquestionable certainty of all this. He gave us commandment to preach and testify it to the People. We had it in charge from his own mouth; and dare not hide it. Hence the point of Doctrine is plainly this,

Doct. That our Lord Jesus Christ is ordained by God the Father, to be the Judge of quick and dead.

This truth stands upon the firm basis of Scripture-Authority. You have it from his own hand, John 5. 22. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son. viz. in the Sense before given. And so the Apostle, Acts 17. 31. He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the Man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance, &c. And again, Rom. 2. 16. in the day when God shall judge the secrets of Men by Jesus Christ. Three things will be opened here. First, The certainty of a Judgment to come. Secondly, The quality and nature of it. Thirdly, That it's a special part of Chrill's Exaltation to be appointed Judge in this day.

First, The certainty of a Judgment. This is a truth of firmer establishment than Heaven and Earth. It's no devised fable, no cunning artifice to keep the world in awe; but a thing as confessedly true, as it is awfully solemn. For,

First, As the Scriptures fore-mentioned (with these, 2 Cor. 5. 10. Ecclef. 12. 14. Matt. 12. 36. and many other, the true and faithful sayings of God) do very plainly reveal it: So the Justice and Righteousness of God require it should be so. For the Judge of all the Earth will do right, Gen. 18. 25. Now righteousness it self requires that a difference be made betwixt the righteous and the wicked; Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him; woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him, Isa. 3. 10. But no such distinction is generally and fully made betwixt one another in this world. Yea, rather the wicked prosper, and the righteous perish, There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man, that longeth his life in his wickedness, Ecclef. 7. 15. Yea, not only in, but for his righteousness, as it may be fairly rendred.

Here the wicked devoureth the Man that is more righteous than himself, Hab 1. 14. As the fishes of the Sea, where the great and strong

swallow up the small and weak. And even in Courts of Judicature, where the innocent might expect relief; there they often meet with the worst oppressions. How fairly and justly therefore doth a wife Man infer a Judgment to come from this consideration? Ecclef. 3. 16, 17. I saw under the Sun the place of Judgment, that wickedness was there, and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there; I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time there for every purpose, and for every work, q. d. the Judgment to come is the only relief and support left to poor innocents, to quiet and comfort themselves withal. To the same purpose also is that, James 5. 6, 7. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you; be patient therefore brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. It is consistent, that sometimes God vindicates his providence against the Atheism of the world, by particular strokes upon the wicked; but this is but rare. And as the Father well observes, if no sin were punished here, no providence would be believed; again, if every sin were openly punished here, no Judgment hereafter could be expected. Besides,

Secondly, Man is a reasonable being, and every reasonable being, is an accountable being. He is a capable subject of moral Government. His actions have relation to a Law. He is rewarded by rewards and punishments. He acts by counsel, and therefore of his actions he must expect to give an account, as it is Rom. 14. 12. So then every one of us, shall give an account of himself to God. Especially if we add, that all the gifts of body, mind, estate, time, &c. are so many Talents, credited and entrusted to him by God, and every one of us hath one Talent at least; therefore a time to render an account for all these Talents will come, Mat. 25. 14, 15. We are but Stewards, and Stewards must give an account in order whereto, there must be a great audit day.

Thirdly, And what need we seek evidence of this truth, further than our own conscience? Lo, it is a truth engraven legibly upon every mans own breast. Every one hath a kind of little Tribunal, or privy Sessions in his own conscience, which both accuses, and excuses for good and evil, which it could never do, were there not a future Judgment of which it is now conscious to it self. In this Court Records are now kept of all that we do, even of our secret actions & thoughts, which never yet took air; but if no Judgment, what need of records? nor let any imagine, that this may be but the fruit of education and discourse. We have heard of such things, and so are scared by them. For if so, how comes it to obtain so universally? who could be the Author of such a common deception?

Reader, bethink thy self a little; if thou hadst a mind (as one saith) to impose a lie upon all the world, what course wouldst thou take? How wouldst thou lay the design? Or why dost thou in this case imagine, what thou knowest not how to imagine? 'Tis evident that the very consciences of the Heathens, have these Offices of accusing and excusing, Rom. 2. 15. And tis as hard to imagine (as an ingenious Author † (speaks) that a general Cheat should bow down the Backs of all Mankind, and induce so

In tanta injuria confusa ad Dei Judicium in quo pronuntiabit qui sum justus qui sum peccator.

Drusius. Hoc malo remedium opposui. Merito. Contra istum injuriam consolabatur hac cogitatione quod Deus omnes judicet.

ret. Geras. Si multum peccatum an sit ista plebs? nolum esse di-vinum prodigium creatoris. Narium si tunc peccatum aperire possent, nullum fore Judicium crederetur.

Aug.

Definitus seu constitutus.

The certainty of a Judgment.

Mr. Howes blessedness of the right. p. 343.

† Sir Charles Woolley's Universal edition of the Works of Mr. p. 76.

many Doubts and Fears, and Troubles amongst them; and gave an interruption to the whole course of their corrupt living, and that there should be no account of it? And therefore it's undoubted that such a day will come. But I shall rather chuse in the

The quality of the Judgment.

Second place, to open the Nature and manner of this Judgment, than to spend more time in proving a truth, that cannot be denied without violence offered to a mans own light. If then the Question be, what manner of Judgment will this be? I answer.

First, It will be a great and awful day. It's called the *Judgment of the great day*, Jude 6. Three things will make it so, the manner of Christ's coming. The work he comes about. And the *issues or events* of that work. The manner of Christ's coming will be awfully solemn, *For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the Trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the air,* &c. 1 Thes. 4. 16, 17. Here Christ breaks out of Heaven with the shouts of Angels

Cale his Pishab.

Italiam, Italiam le- to clamore salutant. Virgil. Æneid.

in *habeant*, it signifies such a shout (saith one) as is to be heard among Seamen, when after a long and dangerous Voyage they first descry Land, crying a loud with united voices, *A shore, A shore.* As the Poet describes the *Italians* when they saw their native Country, lifted up their Voices, and making the Heavens ring again with *Italy, Italy*; or as Armies shout when the signal of Battle is given. Above all which (as some expound it) shall the voice of the *Archangel* be distinctly heard. And after this shout, the *Trump of God* shall sound. By this Tremendous blast, sinners will be affrighted out of their Graves, but to the Saints it will carry no more terror than the roaring of Cannons, when Armies of Friends approach a besieged City, for the relief of them that be within. The dead being raised, they shall be gathered before the great Throne on which Christ shall sit in his Glory; and there be divided exactly to the right and left hand of Christ, by the Angels. Here will be the greatest Assembly that ever met. Where *Adam* may see his numerous off-spring, even as the sand upon the Sea-shore which no Man can number. And never was there such a perfect division made (how many divisions forever have been in the world) none was ever like it. The Saints in this great *Oecumenical assize* (as the Author styles it) shall meet the Lord in the Air, and there the Judge shall sit upon the Throne; and all the Saints shall be placed upon bright clouds, as on Seats or Scaffolds round about him; the wicked remaining below upon the Earth, there to receive their final Doom and Sentence.

The Preparatives will make it awful. And much more will the *work it self* that Christ comes about make it so. For it is to *judge the secrets of Men*, Rom. 2. 16. To sever the Tares from the Wheat. To make every Mans *whites and blacks* appear. And according as they are found in that Trial, to be sentenced to their everlasting and immutable state. O what a solemn thing is this!

And no less will the *Execution of the Sentence* on both parts, make it a great and solemn

Day. The heart of Man cannot conceive what impression the voice of Christ from the Throne will make both upon believers, and unbelievers.

Imagine Christ upon his glorious Throne, surrounded with Myriads and Legions of Angels, his Royal Guard; a poor unbeliever trembling at the Bar. An exact scrutiny made into his heart and life. The dreadful Sentence given. And then a *cry*. And then his delivering them over to the Executioners of eternal Vengeance, never, never to see a glimpse of hope or mercy any more.

Imagine Christ, like the General of an Army, mentioning with honour in the head of all the hosts of Heaven and Earth, all the services that the Saints have done for him in this world. Then sententially justifying them by open Proclamation. Then mounting with him to the third Heaven, and entering the Gates of that City of God, in that noble train of Saints and Angels intermixed. And so for ever to be with the Lord. O what a great day must this be.

Secondly, As it will be an awful and solemn Judgment, so it will be, a *Critical and Exalt* Judgment. Every Man will be weighed to his ounces and drams. The name of the Judge is *searcher of hearts*. The Judge hath eyes as flames of Fire, which pierce to the dividing of the heart and reins. It's said, *Matt. 12. 36.* That Men shall then give an account of every idle word that they shall speak. It's a day that will perfectly fan the World. No Hypocrite can escape. Justice holds the ballances in an even hand. Christ will go to work so exactly, that some Divines of good note, think the day of Judgment will last as long as this day of the Gospel's administration hath or shall last.

Thirdly, It will be an *Universal Judgment*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. *We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ.* And *Rom. 14. 12.* *Every one of us shall give an account of himself to God.* Those that were under the Law, and those that having no Law, were a Law to themselves, *Rom. 2. 12.* Those that had many Talents, and he that had but one Talent, must appear at this Bar; those that were carried from the Cradle to the Grave, with him that stooped for Age. The rich, and poor; the Father and the Child, the Master and the Servant; the Believer, and Unbeliever must stand forth in that day. I saw the dead both small and great stand before God, and the Books were opened, *Rev. 20. 12.*

Fourthly, It will be a Judgment full of *convictive clearness*. All things will be so fitted to bran (as we say) that the Sentence of Christ both on Saints and Sinners shall be applauded. *Righteous art thou O Lord, because thou hast judged thus.* His Judgments will be as the light that goeth forth. So that those poor sinners whom he will condemn, shall be first *convicted* self condemned. Their own consciences shall be forced to confess, that there is not one drop of injustice in all that Sea of wrath, into which they are to be cast.

Fifthly, And lastly, It will be a *supream and final Judgment*, from which lies no Appeal. For it is the Sentence of the Highest, and *only Lord*. For as the ultimate resolution of Faith is into the Word, and truth of God, so the ultimate

*Ad Dei ver-
bom fit ult-
ima resolutio
hæc, ad Dei
tribunalem
ultimam refe-
rentio judicii.*

ultimate resolution of *Justice* is into the Judgment of God. This Judgment is supream and imperial. For Christ is the *only potentate*, 1 Tim. 6. 5. And therefore the Sentence once past, its Execution is infallible. And so you find it in that judicious process, *Mat. 25. ult.* Just after the Sentence is pronounced by Christ, it is immediately added, *those shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.* This is the Judgment of the great Day.

Thirdly, In the last place, I must inform you, that God in ordaining Christ to be the Judge, hath very highly exalted him. This will be very much for his honour. For in this Christ's Royal dignity will be illustrated beyond what ever it was since he took our Nature, till that Day. Now he will appear in his Glory. For

First, This Act of Judging pertaining properly to the kingly Office, Christ will be glorified as much in his kingly Office, as he hath been in either of the other. We find but some few glimpses of the kingly Office, breaking forth in this World; as his riding with *Hosannas* into *Jerusalem*. His whipping the buyers and sellers out of the Temple. His Title upon the Cross, &c. But these were but faint Beams: Now that Office will shine in its Glory, as the Sun in the midst of the Heavens. For what were the *Hosannas* of little Children, in the Streets of *Jerusalem*, to the Shouts and Acclamations of thousands of Angels, and ten thousands of Saints? What was his whipping the prophane out of the Temple, to his turning the wicked into Hell; and sending his Angels to gather out of his Kingdom every thing that offendeth? What was a Title written by his Judge, and fixed on the ignominious Tree, to the name that shall be now seen on his Vesture, and on his Thigh; *Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*?

Secondly, This will be a display of his Glory in the highest, before the whole World. For there will be present at once and together all the Inhabitants of Heaven and Earth, and Hell. Angels must be there to attend and minister; those glittering Courtiers of Heaven must attend his Person. So that Heaven will for a time, be left empty of all its Inhabitants. Men and Devils must be there to be judged. And before this great Assembly, will Christ appear in Royal Majesty that Day. He will (*so allude to that Text*, Isa. 24. 23.) reign before his Ancients gloriously. For he will come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, 2 Thes. 1. 10. The Inhabitants of the three Regions, Heaven, Earth and Hell, shall rejoice or tremble before him that Day. And acknowledge him to be supream Lord and King.

Thirdly, This will roll away for ever the Reproach of his Death. For *Pilate* and the *High Priest* that judged him at their Bars, shall now stand quivering at his Bar; with *Herod* that set him at nought, the Souldiers and Officers that traduced and abused him. There they that reviled him on the Cross wagging their Heads, will stand with trembling Knees before his Throne. For every eye shall see him, and they all that pierced him, Rev. 1. 7. O what a contemptible Person was Christ in their Eyes once? As a Worm, and no Man. Every vile Wretch could freely tread and trample on him; but now such will be the brightness of his Glo-

ry, such the awful Beams of Majesty, that the wicked shall not stand in his presence, or be able to rise up (as that Word imports, *Psal. 115.*) רָקְבִי before him. So that this will be a full and universal vindication of the Death of Christ, from all that contempt and ignominy that attended it. We next improve it.

Infer. 1. Is Jesus Christ ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead; great then is the security believers have, that they shall not be condemned in that day. Who shall condemn, when Christ is Judge? If Believers be condemned in Judgment, Christ must give Sentence against them. Yea, and they must condemn themselves too. I say, Christ must give Sentence, for that is the proper and peculiar Office of Christ. And to be sure, no Sentence of condemnation shall in that Day be given by Christ against them. For

First, He died to save them, and he will never cross and overthrow the designs and ends of his own Death. That cannot be imagined; nay,

Secondly, They have been cleared, and absolved already. And being once absolved by divine Sentence, they can never be condemned afterward. For one divine Sentence, cannot cross and rescind another. He justified them here in this World by Faith. Declared in his Word (which shall then be the Rule of Judgment, *Rom. 2. 16.*) That there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, *Rom. 8. 1.* And surely he will not retract his own Word, and give a Sentence quite cross to his own Statute-book, out of which he hath told us they shall be judged. Moreover,

Thirdly, The far greatest part of them will have past their particular Judgment long before that Day, and being therein acquitted by God the Judge of all; and admitted into Heaven upon the score and account of their Justification; it cannot be imagined that Christ should now condemn them with the World. Nay,

Fourthly, He that judgeth them is their Head, Husband, Friend, and Brother; who loved them, and gave himself for them: O then, with what confidence may they go, even unto his Throne? And say with *Job*, though he try us as fire, we know we shall come forth as Gold. We know that we shall be justified. Especially, if we add, that they themselves shall be the Assessors with Christ in that Day. And (as a judicious Author pertinently observes) not a Sentence shall pass without their Votes. "So as that they may by Faith not only look upon themselves as already in Heaven, sitting with Christ as a common Person in their right; but they may look upon themselves as Judges already. "So that if any Sin should arise to accuse, or condemn, yet it must be with their Votes. "And what greater Security can they have than this, that they must condemn themselves, if they be condemned. No, no, it is not the business of that Day to condemn, but to absolve and pronounce them pardoned and justified, according to the Sentence of *Acts 3. 19.* and *Mat. 12. 32.* So that it must needs be a time of refreshing (as all Scriptures call it) to the People of God. You that now believe, shall not come into condemnation, *John 5. 24.* You that now judge your selves shall not be condemned with the World, 1 Cor. 11. 31. 32.

In.

That this Judgment makes for Christ's Honour.

Goodwin's Triumph. P. 146.

Infer. 2. If Christ be ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead, *how miserable a Case will Christless Souls be in at that Day!* They that are *Christless* now, will be *Speechless, Helpless, and Hopeless* then. How will their Hands hang down, and their Knees knock together! O what pale Faces, quivering Lips, fainting Hearts, and roaring Consciences will be among them in that Day! O dreadful Day! O astonishing Sight! to see the World in a dreadful Conflagration, the Elements melting, the Stars falling, the Earth trembling, the Judgment sat, the Prisoners brought forth; O who shall endure in this Day, but those that by Union with Christ, are secured against the Danger and Dread of it? Let me demand of poor Christless Souls, whom this Day is like to overtake unawares,

First, Do ye think it possible to avoid appearing after that terrible citation is given to the World by the Trump of God? Alas, how can you imagine it? Is not the same Power that revived your Dust, able to bring you before the Bar? There is a necessity that you must come forth, 2 Cor. 5. 10. *We [must] all appear.* It is not at the Sinner's Choice, to obey the Summons or not.

Secondly, If you must appear, are there no Accusers, nor Witnesses that will appear against you, and confront you in the Court? What think you, was Satan so often a Tempter to you here, and will not he be an Accuser there? Yes, nothing surer, for that was the main design of all his Temptations. What think you of your own Consciences? Are they not privy to your secret wickedness? Don't they now whisper sometimes in your Ears, what you care not to hear of? If they whisper now, they will thunder then, Rom. 2. 15, 16. Will not the Spirit accuse you, for resisting his Motions, and stifling thousands of his Convictions? Will not your Companions in Sin accuse you? who drew, or were drawn by you to Sin. Will not your Teachers be your Accusers? How many times have you made them complain, *Lord they are Iron and Brass, they have made their Faces harder than a Rock; they refuse to return.* Will not your very Relations be your Accusers; To whom you have failed in all your rational Duties? Yea, and every one whom you have tempted to Sin, abused, defrauded, over-reach; all these will be your Accusers. So that it is without dispute you will have Accusers enough to appear against you.

Thirdly, Being accused before Jesus Christ, what will you plead for your selves? Will you confess, or will you deny the Charge? If you confess, what need more? *Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, saith Christ,* Luke 19. 22. If you deny, and plead not guilty; thy Judge is the Searcher of Hearts, and knows all things. So that it will not at all help thee to make a Lie thy last Refuge. This will add to the Guilt, but not cover it.

Fourthly, If no Defence or Plea be left thee, then what canst thou imagine should retard the Sentence? Why should not Christ go on to that dreadful Work? *Must not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* Gen. 18. 25. Must he not render to every Man according to his Deeds? 2 Cor. 5. 10. Yes, no question but he will pro-

ceed to that Sentence, how terrible soever it be to you to think on it now, or hear it then.

Fifthly, To conclude, If Sentence be once given by Christ against thy Soul, what in all the World canst thou imagine should hinder the Execution? Will he alter the thing that is gone out of his Mouth? No, *Psal. 89. 34.* Dost thou hope he is more merciful and pitiful than so? Thou mistakest, if thou expectest Mercy out of that way in which he dispenses it. There will be thousands, and ten thousands that will rejoice in, and magnify his Mercy then; but they are such as obey his Call, repented, believed, and obtained Union with his Person here; but for Unbelievers, it's against the settled Law of Christ, and constitution of the Gospel to shew Mercy to the despisers of it. But it may be you think your Tears, your Cries, your Pleadings with him, may move him; these indeed might have done somewhat in time, but they come out of Season now. Alas, too late. What the success of such Pleas and Cries will be, you may see if you will but consult two Scriptures, *Job 27. 8, 9.* *What is the hope of the Hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his Soul? Will God bear his Cry when he troubleth him?* No, no; *And Matth. 7. 22.* *Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out Devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity.*

And must it come to this dismal Issue with you indeed? God forbid it should. Oh then,

Infer. 3. If Christ be appointed of God to be the Judge of all, *how are all concerned to secure their interest in him, and therein an eternity of happiness to their own Souls, by the work of Regeneration?* Of all the business that Men and Women have in this World, there is none so solemn, so necessary, and important as this. O my Brethren, this is a Work, able to drink up your Spirits, while you do but think of the consequences of it.

Summon in then thy self-reflecting, and considering powers: get alone Reader, and forgetting all other things, ponder with thy self this deep, dear and eternal concernment of thine. Examine the State of thy own Soul. Look into the Scriptures, then into thine own Heart, and then to Heaven, saying, *Lord let me not be deceived in so great a concernment to me as this.* O let not the trifles of Time wipe off the impressions of Death, Judgment, and Eternity from thy Heart. O that long Word [*Eternity*], that it might be Night and Day with thee. That the awe of it may be still upon thy Spirit. A Gentlewoman of this Nation having spent the whole Afternoon, and a great part of the Evening at Cards, in much mirth and jollity, came home late at Night, and finding her waiting Gentlewoman reading, she lookt over her Shoulder upon the Book, and said, poor melancholy Soul, why dost thou sit here poring so long upon thy Book? That Night she could not Sleep, but lay sighing and weeping; Her Servant asked her once and again what ailed her; at last she burst out into Tears, and said, O it was one Word that I cast my Eye upon in thy Book, that troubles me; there

there I saw that Word *Eternity*. How happy were I, if I were provided for Eternity! Sure it concerns us, seeing we look for such things, to be diligent that we may be found of him in peace. O let not that Day come by surprisal upon you. Remember that as Death leaves, so Judgment will find you.

Infer. 4. Is Jesus Christ appointed Judge of quick and dead, *then look to it*, all you that hope to be found of him in peace, *that you avoid those sins, and live in the daily practice of those duties, which the consideration of that day powerfully persuades you to avoid or practise.* For it not only presses us to Holiness in *all primo*, in the being of it; but in *actu secundo*, in the daily exercise and practice of it. Do you indeed expect such a day? Oh then,

First, See you be meek and patient under all injuries and abuses for Christ's sake. Avenge not your selves, but leave it to the Lord, who will do it. Don't anticipate the Work of God. Be patient my Brethren, *to the coming of the Lord*, James 5. 7, 8, 9.

Secondly, Be communicative publick-hearted Christians, studying and devising liberal things for Christ's distressed Members. And you shall have both an honourable remembrance of it, & a full reward of it in that day, *Mat.* 25. 34, 35.

Thirdly, Be watchful and sober, keep the golden Bridle of Moderation upon all your Affections; and see that you be not over-charged with the cares and love of this present Life, *Luk.* 21. 34, 35. Will you that your Lord come, and find you in such a posture? O let your moderation be known unto all, *the Lord is at hand*, *Phil.* 4. 5.

Fourthly, Improve all your Master's Talents, diligently and carefully. Take heed of the Napkin, *Mat.* 25. 14, 18. Then must you make up your account for them all.

Fifthly, But above all, be sincere in your profession. Let your hearts be found in God's Statutes, that you may never be ashamed; for this day will be the day of manifestation of all hidden things: And nothing is so secret, but that day will reveal it, *Luke* 12. 1, 2, 3. *Beware of hypocrisy, for there is nothing covered which shall not be revealed, neither hid, that shall not be made known.* — Thus I have finished, thro' Divine Aids, the whole Doctrine of the Imputation of Redemption by Jesus Christ; we shall wind up the whole in a General Exhortation, and I have done.

The General U S E.

The general Use of the mind, pressing to the soul, which is the main scope of the Doctrine of Redemption.

AND now, to close up all, let me persuade all those for whom the dear Son of God came from the blessed bosom of the Father; assumed flesh, brake by the strength of his own Love; through all discouragements and impediments, laid down his own life a ransom for their Souls; for whom he lived, died, rose, ascended, and lives for ever in Heaven to intercede; to live wholly to Christ, as Christ lived, and died wholly for them.

O Brethren, never was the Heathen World acquainted with such arguments to deter them from Sin, never acquainted with such Motives to urge them to Holiness, as I shall this Day ac-

quaint you with. My request is, to give up both your hearts and lives to glorifie the Father, Son and Spirit, whose you are, by the holiness and heavenliness of them. Other things are expected from you, than from other Men. See that you turn not all this Grace that hath founded in your Ears, into wantonness. Think not because Christ hath done so much for you, you may sit still; much less indulge your selves in sin, because Christ hath offered up such an excellent sacrifice for the expiation of it. No, no, though Christ came to be a Curse, he did not come to be a Cloak for your Sins. *If one died for all, then were all dead; that they that live, should not henceforth live to themselves; but to him that died for them,* 2 Cor. 5. 15. O keep your lives pure and clean. Don't make fireth work for the blood of Christ every day. *If you live in the Spirit, see that you walk in the Spirit,* Gal. 5. 25. That is (saith *Cornelius a Lapide* very solidly) Let us shape and order our lives and actions according to the dictates, instincts and impulses of the Spirit, and of that grace of the Spirit put within us, and planted in our Hearts, which tendereth to practical Holiness. O let the Grace which is in your hearts, issue out into all your religious, civil and natural Actions. Let the Faith that is in your hearts appear in your Prayers; the Obedience of your Hearts in hearing; the Meekness of your hearts in suffering; the Mercifulness of your hearts in distributing; the Truth and Righteousness of your hearts, in trading; the Sobriety and Temperance of your hearts in eating and drinking. These be the Fruits of Christ's Sufferings indeed, and they are sweet Fruits. Let Grace refine, enoble and elevate all your Actions; that you may say, *truly our Conversation is in Heaven.* Let Grace have the ordering of your Tongues, and of your Hands; the moulding of your whole Conversation. Let not Humility appear in some Actions, and Pride in others. Holy seriousness in some companies, and vain frothiness in others. Suffer not the fountain of Corruption to mingle with; or pollute the streams of Grace. Write as exactly as you can after your Copy Christ. O let there not be (as one says) here a Line, and there a Blank; here a Word and there a Blot. One word dicia of God, and two of the World. Now a spiritual Rapture, and then a fleshly Frolick. This Day a fair stride to Heaven, and to Morrow a slide back again towards Hell. But be you in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Let there be a due proportion betwixt all the parts of your conversation. Approve your selves the Servants of Christ in all things. *By pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of Truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness, on the right hand, and on the left,* 2 Cor. 6. 6. See then how accurately you walk. — Cut off occasion from them that desire occasion; and in well-doing commit your selves to God, and commend Religion to the World. That this is your great concernment and duty, I shall evidence to your Consciences, by these following Considerations. That of all Persons in the world the redeemed of the Lord, are most obliged to be holy, most assisted for a life of Holiness; and that God intends to make great Use of their Lives, both for the conviction and conversion of others.

*Secundum dictamen in-
structionis, im-
pulsu spiritus
et eo gratia
instructa, et in-
dicata nobis a
spiritu sancto.*

*R. A. Vin-
dicia Pic-
tatis.*

• Confid.

Confid. *First*, God hath most obliged them to live pure and strict Lives. I know the Command obliges all Men to it, even those that cast away the Cords of the Commands, and break Christ's Bonds asunder, are yet bound by them; and cannot plead a dispensation to live as they do. Yea, and it is not unusual for them to feel the Obligations of the Command upon their Consciences, even when their impetuous Lusts hurry them on to the Violation of them; but there are special Ties upon your Souls, that oblige you to holiness more than others. Many special and peculiar Engagements you are under. *First*, from God. *Secondly*, from your *Selves*. *Thirdly*, from your *Brethren*. *Fourthly*, from your *Enemies*.

First, God hath peculiarly oblig'd you to purity and strictness of Life. Yea, every Person in the blessed Trinity hath cast his Cord over your Souls, to bind up your Hearts and Lives to the most strict and precise Obedience of his Commands. *The Father* hath obliged you, and that not only by the common Tie of *Creation*, which is yet of great Efficacy in it self; for is it reasonable, that God should create and form so excellent a piece, and that it should be employed against him? That he should plant the Tree, and another eat the Fruit of it? But besides this common Engagement, he hath obliged you to holiness of Life.

First, By his wise and merciful Designs and Counsels for your Recovery and Salvation by Jesus Christ. It was he that laid the corner Stone of your Salvation with his own Hands. The first Motion sprang out of his Breast. If God had not designed the Redeemer for you, the World had never seen him; he had never left that sweet Bosom for you. It was the Act of the Father to give you to the Son to be redeemed, and then to give the Son to be a Redeemer to you. Both of them stupendous and astonishing acts of Grace. And in both God acted as a most free Agent. When he gave you to Christ before the beginning of time, there was nothing out of himself that could in the least move him to it. When the Father, Son, and Spirit (as I may say) at the Counsel Table, contriving and laying the design for the salvation of a few out of many of *Adam's* degenerate Offspring, there was none came before them to speak one word for thee; but such was the divine pleasure to insert thy name in that Catalogue of the saved. Oh how much owest thou to the Lord for this! and what an engagement doth it leave upon thy Soul to obey, please, and glorify him?

Secondly, By his bountiful remunerations of your obedience, which have been wonderful. What service didst thou ever perform for him, for which he hath not paid thee a thousand times more than it was worth? Didst thou ever seek him diligently, and not find him a bountiful rewarder; none seek him in vain, unless such only as seek him vainly, *Heb. 11. 6*. Didst thou ever give a cup of cold Water in the name of a Disciple, and not receive a Disciple's reward? *Matth. 10. 42*. Hast thou not found inward peace and comfort flowing into thy Soul, upon every piece of sincere Obedience? Oh what a good Master do Saints serve? You that are remiss and unconformable in your Obedi-

ence, you that are heartless and cold in Duties; hear how your God expostulates with you, *Jer. 2. 31*. *Have I been a Wilderness to Israel, or a Land of Darkness?* q. d. have I been a hard Master to you? Have you any reason to complain of me? To whomsoever I have been straight-handed, surely I have not been so to you. Are the Fruits of Sin like the Fruits of Obedience? Do you know where to find a better Master? Why then are you so thuffling and unconformable, so sluggish and remiss in my Work? Surely God is not behind-hand with any of you. May you not say with *David*, *Psal. 119. 56*. *This I had because I kept thy precepts*. There are fruits in holiness, even present fruit. It is a high favour to be employed for God. Reward enough that he will accept any thing thou dost. But to return every Duty thou presentest to him with such comforts, such quickenings, such inward and outward blessings into thy Bosom, so that thou mayest open the Treasury of thine own Experiences, view the Varieties of Encouragements and Love-tokens at several times received in Duties; and say, this I had, and that I had, by waiting on God, and serving him. Oh what an engagement is this upon thee to be ever abounding in the work of the Lord! Though thou must not work for *Wages*, yet God will not let thy work go unrewarded. For *He is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of Love*.

Thirdly, Your Father hath further obliged you to this holiness and purity of Life, by *signifying to you* (as he hath frequently done) *the great delight and pleasure he hath therein*. He hath told you, that *such as are upright in the way are his delight*, *Prov. 11. 20*. That he would not have you *forget to do good, and to communicate, for with such sacrifices he is well pleased*, *Heb. 13. 16*. You know you cannot *talk worthily of the Lord to all pleasing, except ye be fruitful in every good word and work*, *Col. 1. 10*. And oh what a Bond is this upon you to live holy Lives! Can you please your selves in displeasing your Father? if you have the Hearts of Children in you, sure you cannot. O you cannot grieve his Spirit by loose and careless walking, but you must grieve your own Spirits too. How many times hath God pleased you, gratified and contented you, and will not you please and content him? This Mercy you have asked of him, and he gave it, that Mercy and you were not denied; in many things the Lord hath wonderfully condescended to please you, and now there is but one thing that he desires of you and that most reasonable, yea, beneficial for you, as well as pleasing to him, *1 Phil. 27*. *Only let your conversation be as cometh the Gospel of Jesus Christ*. This is the one thing, the great and main thing he expects from you in this World, and will not you do it? Can you expect he should gratify your desires, when you make no more of grieving and displeasing him? Well, if you know what will please God, and yet resolve not to do it, but will rather please your Flesh, and gratify the Devil, than him; pray pull off your Vizards, fall into your own rank among Hypocrites; and appear as indeed you are.

Fourthly, The Father hath further obliged you to *strictness and purity of conversation*, by his gra-

gracious promises made to such as so walk. He hath promised to do great things for you, if you will but do this one thing for him. If you will order your conversation aright, Psal. 50. ult. He will be your Sun and Shield, if you walk before him and be upright, Gen. 15. 1. He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from him that walketh uprightly, Psal. 84. 11. And he promises no more to you than he hath made good to others, that have thus walked, and stand ready to perform to you also. If you look to enjoy the good of the promise, you are obliged by all your Expectations, and hopes to order your lives purely and uprightly. This hope will set you on work to purge your lives as well as your Hearts from all pollutions, 2 Cor. 7. 1. Having these Promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Fifthly, Yea, He hath yet more obliged you to strict and holy lives by his confidence in you, that you will thus walk, and please him. He expresseth himself in Scripture as one that dare trust you with his Glory, knowing that you will be tender of it, and dare do no otherwise. If but a Man repose confidence in you and trust you with his concerns, it greatly obliges you to be faithful. What an engagement was that upon Abraham to walk uprightly, when God said of him, Gen. 18. 19. I know him, that he will command his Children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, q. d. as for this wicked generation, whom I will speedily consume in my wrath, I know they regard not my Laws, they will trample my Commands under their feet, they care not how they provoke me, but I expect other things from Abraham, and I am confident he will not fail me. I know him, he is a man of another spirit, and what I promise my self from him, he will make good. And to the like purpose is that in Isa. 36. 78. I will mention the loving kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord; according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them; according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses. For he said, surely they are my people, Children that will not lie, (or fail me) so he was their Saviour. Here you have an ample account of the endearing mercies of God to that People, ver. 7. and the Lords confident expectations of suitable returns from them, ver. 8. I said (i. e.) (speaking after the manner of Men in like cases) I made full account that after all these endearments, and favours bestowed upon them, they would not offer to be disloyal and false to me. I have made them sure enough to my self, by so many bonds of Love. Like to which is that expression, Zeph. 3. 7. I said surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction. Oh how great are the expectations of God from such as you! I know Abraham, there's no doubt of him. And again, they are Children that will not lie, (i. e.) they will not fallere fidei datam, Break their Covenant with me. Or they are My People that will not shrink, as Mr. Coverdale well translates, filii non negantes, such as will keep touch with me, and will answer their Covenant-engagements.

Vol. I.

And again, surely thou wilt fear me, thou wilt receive instruction. And shall not all this engage you to God? What! neither the ancient and bountiful love of God, in contriving your Redemption from eternity, nor the bounty of God in rewarding all and every piece of Service you have done for him. Nor yet the pleasure he takes in your obedience and upright walking. Nor the encouraging promises he hath made thereto, nor yet his confident expectations of such a life from you whom he hath so many ways obliged and endeared to himself? Will you forget your ancient Friend, Contemn his rewards, take no delight or care to please him? Slight his promises, and deceive and fail his expectations? Be astonished, O ye Heavens, at this! and be horribly afraid. Consider how God the Father hath fastned this five fold cord upon your Souls, and shew your selves Christians; yea, to use the Prophet's words, Isa. 46. 8. Remember this, and shew your selves Men.

Secondly, You are yet farther engaged to this precise and holy life by what the Son hath done for you, is not this pure and holy life the very aim, and next end of his death? Did he not shed his blood to redeem you from your vain conversations? 1 Pet. 1. 18. Was not this the design of all his sufferings? That being delivered out of the hands of your enemies, you might serve him in righteousness and holiness all the daies of your life, Luke 1. 74, 75. And is not the Apostle's inference, 2 Cor. 5. 14. highly reasonable? If one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live to themselves, but to him that dyed for them. Did Christ only buy your persons, and not your services also? No, no, whoever hath thy time, thy strength, or any part of either; I can assure thee, Christian, that Christ hath paid for it, and thou givest away what is none of thine own to give. Every moment of thy time is his. Every Talent, whether of Grace or nature, is his. And dost thou defraud him him of his own? O how liberal are you of your precious words and hours, as if Christ had never made a purchase of them! O think of this when thy life runs muddy and foul. When the fountain of corruption flows out at thy tongue, in idle frothy discourses; or at thy hand, in sinful unwarrantable actions; Doth this become the redeemed of the Lord? Did Christ come from the bosom of his Father for this? Did he groan, sweat, bleed, endure the Cross, and lay down his life for this? Was he so pleased with all his sorrows, and sufferings, his pangs and agonies upon the account of that satisfaction he should have in seeing the travail of his Soul? Isa. 53. 11. as if he had said, Welcome, death, welcome Agonies, welcome the bitter cup, and heavy burthen; I cheerfully submit to all this. These are travailling pangs indeed, but I shall see a beautiful birth at last. These throws and agonies, shall bring forth many lovely children to God, I shall have joy in them, and glory from them to all eternity. This blood of mine these sufferings of mine, shall purchase to me, the Persons, duties, services and obedience of many thousands that will love me, and honour me, serve me, and obey me with their Souls and Bodies which are mine. And doth not this

G g

engage

engage you to look to your Lives, and keep them pure? Is not every one of Christ's wounds, a mouth open to plead for more holiness, more service, and more fruit from you? Oh what will engage you if this will not? But,

Engage-
ments from
the Spirit.

Thirdly, This is not all; as a Man when he weigheth a thing, casteth in weight after weight, till the scales are counterpoised: So doth God cast in engagement after engagement, and argument upon argument, till thy heart (Christian) be weighed up, and won to this heavenly life. And therefore as *Elihu* said to *Job*, Cap. 36. 22. *Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee what I have yet to speak on God's behalf.* Some Arguments have already been urged on the behalf of the Father and Son for purity, and cleanness of life; and next I have something to plead on the behalf, of the Spirit. I plead now on his behalf, who hath so many times helped you to plead for your selves with God. He that hath so often refreshed, quickened and comforted you, he will be quenched, grieved, and displeased, by an impure, loose, and careless conversation; and what will you do then? who shall comfort you, when the comforter is departed from you? When he that should relieve your Souls, is far off? O grieve not the holy Spirit of God, by which you are sealed, to the day of Redemption, *Eph.* 4. 30. There is nothing grieves him more than impure practices; for he is a Holy Spirit. And look as Water damps and quenches the Fire, so doth Sin quench the Spirit, *1 Thes.* 5. 19. Will you quench the warm affections and burning desires which he hath kindled in your bosoms? If you do, 'tis a question whether ever you may recover them again to your dying day. The Spirit hath a delicate Sense. It is the most tender thing in the whole world. He feels the least touch of sin, and is grieved when thy corruptions within are stirred by temptations, and break out to the defiling of thy Life; then is the holy Spirit of God, as it were, made sad, and heavy within thee. As that word *ἡδυνήθη*, *Eph.* 4. 30. may be rendred. For thereby thou resistest his motions, whereby in the way of a loving constraint, he would lead and guide thee in the way of thy duty; yea, thou not only resistest his Motions, but crodest his grand design, which is to purge and sanctifie thee wholly and build thee up more and more to the perfection of holiness. And when thou thus forsakest his conduct, and crodest his design in thy Soul, then doth he usually withdraw, as a Man that is grieved by the unkindness of his Friend. He draws in the beams of his evidencing and quickning Grace. Packs up all his divine Cordials and faith, as 'twere, to his unkind and disingenuous Soul,

The Spirit
Expellat-
on with
careless
Christians.

‘Hast thou thus requir’d me for all the favours and kindnesses thou hast received from me? Have I quickned thee, when thou wast dead in transgressions? did I descend upon thee in the preaching of the Gospel, and communicate life, even the life of God, to thee; leaving others in the state of the dead? Have I shed forth such rich influences of grace and comfort upon thee: comforting thee in all thy troubles, helping thee in all thy duties; satisfying thee in all thy doubts and perplexities of soul; saving thee, and pulling thee back from so many destructive temptations and dangers? What had been thy condition, if I had not come unto thee? could the world have convert’d thee without me? could Ministers, could Angels have done that for thee which I did? And when I had quickned thee, and made thee a

‘living soul, what couldst thou have done without my exercising and assisting grace? couldst thou go on in the way of duty, if I had not led thee? how wouldest thou have waded thro’ the deeps of spiritual troubles, if I had not born thee up? whither had the temptations of Satan and thine own corruptions carried thee before this day, if I had not flood thy friend, and come in for thy rescue in the time of need? did I ever fail thee in thy extremities? did I ever leave thee in thy dangers? have I been tender over thee, and faithful to thee? and now for which of all these kindnesses doest thou thus wrong and abuse me? why hast thou wound’d me thus by thy kindness? Ah thou hast ill requir’d my Love! and now thou wast eat the fruit of thy doings. Let the light now be darkness; thy songs turn’d into howlings; the joy of thine heart, the light of thine eyes, the health of thy countenance, even the face of thy God, and the joy of Salvation be hid from thee.

This is the fruit of careless and loose walking. To this sad issue it will bring thee at last, & when it is come to this, thou shalt go to Ordinances, and Duties, and find no good in them; no life quickning comfort there. When thy heart which was wont to be enlarged, and flowing, shall be clung up and dry; when thou shalt kneel down before the Lord, and cry as *Elisba* when with the mantle of *Elijah*, he smote the Water. *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?* So thou, where is the God of Prayer? where is the God of Duties? But there is no answer: When like *Sampson*, thou shalt go forth and shake thy self as at other times; but thy strength is gone; then tell me, what thou hast done in resisting, quenching, and grieving the holy Spirit of God by impure and offensive practices? And thus you see what engagements lie upon you from the Spirit also, to walk uprightly and keep the issues of life pure. I could willingly have enlarg’d my self upon this last branch, but that I find a judicious hand hath lately improv’d this Argument; to which I shall refer the Reader. Thus God hath oblig’d you to circumspect and holy lives.

Mr. Pole-
wheel’s
Treasure of
quenching
the Spirit.

Secondly, *You are under great engagements to keep your lives pure, even from your selves, as well as from your God.* As God hath bound you to purity of conversation, so you have bound your selves. And there are several things in you, and done by you, which wonderfully increase, and strengthen your Obligations to practical holiness.

First, Your clearer illumination is a strong bond upon your souls, *Eph.* 5. 8. *Ye were sometimes darkness, but now ye are light in the Lord; walk as Children of the light.* You cannot pretend, or plead ignorance of your duty. You stand convinced in your own Consciences before God, that this is your unquestionable Duty. Christians, will you not all yield to this? I know you readily yield it. We live indeed in a contentious disputing Age. In other things our opinions are different. One Christian is of this Judgment, another of that; but doth he deserve the name of a Christian that dare once question this Truth? In this we all meet and close in oneness of mind and judgment, that it is our indisputable Duty, to live pure, strict, and clean lives. The grace of God which hath appeared to you, hath taught you this truth clearly and convincingly, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. *You have received how you ought to walk, and to please God,* *1 Thes.* 4. 1. Well then, this being yielded, the inference is plain and undeniable; that you cannot walk as others, in the vanity of their mind; but you must offer violence to your own light,

You

You cannot suffer the Corruptions of your Hearts to break forth into Practice, but you must flight, and put by the notices and rebukes of your own Consciences, *James 4. 17. He that knoweth to do good, and doth it not; to him it is sin.* Yea sin with a Witness. Aggravated sin. Sin of a deeper Tincture than that of the ignorant Heathens. Sin that sadly wastes and violates Conscience. Certainly whoever hath, you have no Cloak for your Sin. Light and Lust struggling together, great Light and strong Lusts: These make the Soul a troubled Sea that cannot rest. O but when masterless Lusts over-bear Conscience, this impresses horror upon the Soul. This brake David's Heart, *Psal. 51. 6. Thou hast put knowledge in my inner parts, q. d. Ah, Lord! I went against the rebukes of Conscience, to the Commission of this Sin. I had a watchful Light set up with me. I knew it was Sin. My light endeavoured lovingly to restrain me, and I thrust it aside. Besides, what pleasure in Sin can you have? Indeed such as for want of Light know not what they do, or such whose Consciences are scared and past feeling; they may seek a little Pleasure (such as it is) out of Sin; but what content or pleasure can you have, so long as your Light is ever breaking in upon you, and smiting you for what you do? This greatly encreases your Obligation to a precise holy Life. Again,*

Secondly, You are professors of holiness. You have given in your Names to Christ, to be his Disciples; and by this your Engagement to a life of holiness are yet further strengthened, *2 Tim. 2. 19. Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.* The name of Christ is called upon you, and it's a worthy name, *James 2. 7.* It's called upon you, as the name of the Husband, is called upon his Wife, *IJa. 4. 1. Let thy name be called upon us.* Or as the name of a Father is called upon his Child, *Gen. 48. 16. Let thy name be called on them, and the name of my Fathers.* Well then, you bear the name of Christ as his Spouses or Children; and will you not live suitably to your name? Every place and relation, every title of honour and dignity hath its *decorum*, and becomingness. O how will that worthy name of Christ be blasphemed through you, if you adorn it not with becoming deportments? Better you had never profest any thing, than to set your selves by your Profession in the Eye and Observation of the World; and then to pour contempt on Jesus Christ, by your scandalous Conversations, before the Chams of the World; who will laugh at it. I remember it was a *Memento* given to one of his Name by *Alexander, Recordare nominis Alexandri.* Remember (said he) thy Name *Alexander*, and do nothing unworthy of that Name. O that's a heavy charge, *Rom. 2. 24. Through you is the name of God blasphemed among the Heathens.* Unhappy Man, that ever thou shouldst be a reproach to Christ! The herd of wicked Men, they are *ignota capita*; Men of no note, or observation. They may may Sin, and Sin again; drink, swear, and tumble in all uncleanness; and it passes away silently; the World takes little notice of it. Their wicked Actions make but little noise in the World; but the miscarriages of Professors are like a *Blazing Comet*,

or an Eclipsed Sun, which all Men gaze at, and make their observations upon; Oh then, what manner of Persons ought you to be, who bear the worthy Name of Christ upon you!

Thirdly, But more than this, you have obliged your selves to this life of holiness by your own Prayers. How many times have you lifted up your Hands to Heaven, and cried with *David, Psal. 119. 5. O that my ways were directed to keep thy Statutes. Order my steps in thy Word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me, ver. 133.* Were you in earnest with God, when you thus prayed? Did you mean as you said? Or did you only complement with God? If your Hearts and Tongues agreed in this request, doubtless it's as much your Duty to endeavour, as to desire those Mercies; and if not, yet do all those Prayers stand on record before the Lord, and will be produced against you as witnesses to condemn you, for your hypocrisy and vanity. How often also have you in your Prayers lamented and bewailed your careles and uneven walkings? You have said with *Ezra, chap. 9. 6. O my God, I am ashamed, and even blush to look up unto thee.* And do not your Confessions oblige you to greater circumspection and care for time to come? Will you confess, and Sin? And Sin, and confess? Go to God and bewail your Evils, and when you have bewailed them, return again to the commission of them? God forbid, you should thus dissemble with God, play with Sin, and dye your iniquities with a deeper Tincture.

Fourthly, And lastly, to add no more, you have often reproved or censured others for their miscarriages and falls, which adds to your own obligation, to walk accurately and evenly. Have you not often reproved your erring Brethren? or at least privately censured them, if not duly reproved them, (for to these left-handed blows of secret censurings, we are more apt than to the fair and open strokes of just and due reproofs) and will you practise the same things, you criminate and censure others for? *Thou that teachest another (saith the Apostle) teachest thou not thyself?* *Rom. 2. 21.* So say I, thou that censurest or rebukest another, condemnest thou not thyself? Will your rebukes ever do good to others, whilst you allow in your selves what you condemn in them? And as these reproofs and censures can do them no good, so they do you much evil, by reason of them you are *adversarius* self-condemned Persons; and out of your own Mouths God will judge you. For you need no other Witness, than your selves in this case. Your own Tongues will fall upon you. Your censures and reproofs of others, will leave you without Plea, or Apology, if you look not to your lives with greater care. And yet will you be careles still? Fear you not the displeasure of God? nor the wounding and disquieting your own Consciences? Surely these things are of no light value with you, if you be Christians indeed.

Thirdly, You are yet further engaged to practical holiness upon the account of your Brethren, who are not a little concerned, and interested therein. For if through the neglect of your hearts, your lives be defiled and polluted, this will be thrown in their Faces, and many innocent and upright ones, both reproach-

ed and grieved upon your Account. This mischievous effect holy *David* earnestly deprecated, *Psal. 69. 5, 6. O God thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee; let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of Hosts, be ashamed for my sake. Let not them that seek thee, be confounded for my sake, O God of Israel, q. d. Lord thou knowest what a weak and foolish Creature I am. And how apt to miscarry, if left to my self, and should I through my foolishness, act unbecoming a Saint; how would this shame the Faces, and sad the Hearts of thy People! They will be as Men confounded at the report of my fall. The fall of one Christian, is matter of trouble and shame to all the rest. And when they shall hear the sad and unwelcome News of your scandalous Miscarriages, (which will certainly be the effect of a neglected Heart and Life) they will say as *David* concerning *Saul & Jonathan. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, &c.* Or as *Tamar* concerning *Amnon, And we, whither shall we cause our shame to go? And for them, they shall be as Fools in Israel.* Thy loose and careless life will cause them to estrange themselves from thee, and look shy upon thee, as being ashamed to own thee, and canst thou bear that? Will it not grieve and pierce your very hearts to see a cloud of strangeness and trouble over the countenances of your Brethren? To see your selves disowned and lightly esteemed by them? This very consideration struck a great Favourite in the Persian Court to the very Heart. * *Twags Ufazanes*, who had been Governour to *Sapores* in his Minority. And this Man for fear, denied the Christian Faith, and complied with the Idolatrous Worship of the King. And one Day (saith the Historian) sitting at the Court-Gate, he saw *Simon* the aged Arch-Bishop of *Silucia*, drawing along to Prison, for his constancy in the Christian Faith, and though he durst not openly own the Christian Faith he had basely denied, and confess himself a Christian; yet he could not chuse but rise, and express his reverence to this holy Man, in a respectful and honourable Salutation, but the zealous good Man frowned upon him, and turned away his Face from him; as thinking such an *Apostate* unworthy of the least respect from him; this presently struck *Ufazanes* to the Heart, and drew from him many Tears, and Groans; and thus he reasoned with himself, *Simon* will not own me, and can I think but that God will disclaim me, when I appear before his Tribunal? *Simon* will not speak unto me, will not so much as look upon me, and can I look for so much as a good word or look from *Jesus Christ*, whom I have so shamefully betrayed, and denied? Hereupon he threw off his rich courtly Robes, and put on mourning Apparel, and professed himself a Christian; and dyed a Martyr. O 'tis a piercing thing to an honest Heart, to be cast out of the favour of God's People. If you walk loosely, neither God nor his People will look kindly upon you.*

Fourthly, And lastly, Your very enemies engage you to this pure and holy life upon a double ground. You are obliged by them two ways, viz. as they are your bold Conjurors, and your watchful Observers. They censure you as Hy-

pocrites, and will you give them them ground and matter for such a charge? They say only your Tongues are more holy than other Mens, and shall they prove it from your Practice? They also observe you diligently. Lie at catch, and are highly gratified by your miscarriages. If your Lives be loose and defiled, you will not only be a shame to your Friends, but the Song of your Enemies. You will make mirth in Hell; and gratify all the Enemies of God. This is that they watch for. They are curious observers of your goings. And that which makes them Triumph at your Falls and Miscarriages, is not only that deep rooted Enmity betwixt the two Seeds, but because all your Miscarriages and Evils are so many absolutions to their Consciences, and justifications (as they think) of their Ways and Practices. For look as your strictness and holiness doth as it were cast, and condemn them, as *Noah, Heb. 11. 7.* by his Practice, condemned the World, their Consciences lie in their Faces, when they see your holy and pure Conversations. It lays a damp upon them. It works upon their Consciences, and causes many smart Reflections. So when you Fall, you as it were, absolve their Consciences, loose the Bonds of Conscience you had made fast upon them, and now there's matter of joy put before them.

Oh, say they, what ever these Men talk; we see they are no better than we. They can do as we do. They can Cozen and Cheat for Advantage. They can comply with any thing for their own Ends; 'tis not Conscience, as we once thought, but meer Stomach and Humour that made them so precise. And oh, what a sad thing is this! Hereby you shed Soul-blood. You fasten the Bonds of Death upon their Souls. You kill those Conversions, which for any thing you know might have made way to their Conversion. When you fall, you may rise again; but they may fall at your Example, and never rise more. Never have a good Opinion of the Ways of God, or of his People any more. Upon this consideration, *David* begs of God, *Psal. 5. 8. Lead me, O Lord, in thy Righteousness, because of my Enemies;* (or as the Hebrew) *my Observers, make thy way straight before my Face.* And thus you see how your very Enemies oblige you to this holy and pure Conversation also.

Now put all this together, and see to what these particulars will amount. You have heard how God the Father hath engaged you to this Conversation purity, by his designment of your Salvation. Rewarding your Obedience. His Pleasure in it. His Promises to it. And his great Confidence in you, that you will thus walk before him. The Lord *Jesus* hath also engaged you thereunto, by his death and sufferings, whereby you were redeemed from your vain Conversations. The Spirit hath engaged you by telling you plainly how much you will grieve and wrong him, resist and quench him, if you do not keep your selves pure. Yea, you are obliged further by your selves, your clear Illumination, your high Profession, your many Prayers and Confessions, your many censures and reprehensions of others, do all strengthen your obligation to holiness. Yea, you are obliged further to this holy life, by the shame, grief

* *Zucconen.*
lib. 2. cap.
8.

grief, and trouble your loose walking will bring upon your Friends. And the mirth it will make for, and mischief it will do to your Enemies. Who will fall and break their Necks, where it may be you only stumbled and brake your Shins. Who are justified, and absolved (as before you heard) by your miscarriages. And now what think you of all this? Are you obliged or not, to this purity of life? Are all these Bonds tied with such slip Knots that you can get loose, and free your selves at pleasure from them? If all these things are of no force with you, if none of these Bonds can hold you; may it not be questioned (notwithstanding your Profession) whether any spiritual Principle, any fear of God, or love to Christ, be in your Souls or no? O you could not play fast and loose with God; if so, you could not as *Sampson*, snap these Bonds asunder at your Pleasure.

Confid. 2. *Secondly*, As you are more obliged to keep the issues of life pure than others are, so God hath given you greater *Affluences* and *Advantages* for it, than others have. God hath not been wanting to any in helps and means. Even the Heathen who are without the Gospel, will yet be speechless and inexcusable before God: But how much more will you be so! Who besides the light of Nature, and the general light of the Gospel, have *First*, such a Principle put within you. *Secondly*, such Patterns set before you. *Thirdly*, such an *Affluant* ready to help you. *Fourthly*, so many *Rods* at your Backs to quicken you; and prevent your wandering. If notwithstanding all these helps, your life be still unholly.

First, Shall Men of such Principles walk as others do? Shall we lament for you, as *David* once did for *Saul*, saying, *there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away, the shield of Saul; as though he had not been anointed with oil*. There the honour of a Christian was vilely cast away, as though he had not been anointed with the Spirit? *You have received an unction from the holy one, which teacheth you all things*, 1 John 2. 20. Another Spirit, far above that which is in other Men, 1 Cor. 2. 12. And as this Spirit which is in you, is fitted for this life of holiness, (for ye are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus to good works Ephes. 2. 10.) So this holy Spirit, or principle infused into your Souls, hath such a natural tendency to this holy Life; that if you live not purely and strictly, you must offer Violence to your own Principles, and new Nature. A twofold help this Principle affords you for a life of holiness.

(1.) *First*, It pulls you back from Sin, as in *Joseph*; *How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God!* And it also inclines you powerfully to Obedience. 'Tis a curb to Sin, and a spur to Holiness. It is impossible for all others to live spiritually and heavenly, because they have no new Nature to incline them thereunto. And methinks it should be hard for you to live carnally, and sensually; and therein cross the very bent and tendency of the new Creature, which is formed in you. How can you neglect Prayer as others do, whilst the Spirit by divine Pulsations is awaking and rousing up your sluggish Hearts with such inward Motions, and whispers as that, *Psal.* 27. 8.

Vol. L

Seek my face. Yea, whilst you feel (during your omissions of Duty) something within that bemoans it self, and as it were, cries for Food, Pains and Gripes you, like an empty Stomach, and will not let you be quiet till it be relieved. How can you let out your Hearts to the World as other Men do; when all that while your Spirit is restless, and akes like a Bone out of Joint. And you can never be at ease till you come back to God, and say, as *Psal.* 116. *Return to thy rest, O my Soul*. Is it not hard, yea, naturally impossible to fix a Stone, and make it abide in the fluid Air? Doth not every Creature in a restless Motion tend to its proper Center, and desire its own Perfection? So doth this new Creature also. You see how the Rivers in their course will not be checkt, but bear down all Obstacles in their way, & *Sevior ab obice ibit*. A stop doth but make them rage the more, and run the swifter afterwards.

There is a Central force in these natural Motions, which cannot be stoppt. And the like may you observe in the motions of a renewed Soul, *John* 4. 14. *It shall be in him as a Well of Water springing up*. And is it not hard for you to keep it down, or turn its course? How hard did *Jeremy* and *David* find that work? If you do not live holy Lives, you must cross your own new Nature, and violate the Law that's written in your own Hearts, and engraven upon your own Bowels. To this purpose a late Writer speaks; Till you were converted (saith he) the Flesh was predominant, and therefore it was impossible for you to live any other than a fleshy Life; for every thing will act according to its predominant Principle. Should you not therefore live a spiritual Life? Should not the Law of God written in your Hearts, be legible in your Lives? O should not your Lives be according to the tendency of your Hearts? Thus he: Doubtless this is no small Advantage to practical Holiness. But

Secondly, Besides this Principle within, you have no small *Affluence* for the purity of Life by these excellent Patterns before you. The Path of Holiness is no untrodden Path to you. Christ and his Servants have beaten it before you. The life of Christ is your Copy, and it is a fair Copy indeed, without a blot. Oh what an Advantage is this to draw all the Lines of your Actions according to his Example! This glorious grand Example is often prest upon you for imitation, *Heb.* 12. 2. *Looking to Jesus*, he hath left you an example that ye should tread in his steps, 1 Pet. 2. 21. His Life is a living Rule to his People, and besides Christ's Example (for you may say, who can live as Christ did? His Example is quite above us) you have a cloud of Witnesses. A cloud for its directive Use, and these Men of like Passions, Temptations, and Constitutions with you; who have gone before you in exemplary Holiness. The Holy Ghost (intending therein, your special help and advantage) hath set many industrious Pens a work to write the Lives of the Saints, and preserve for your use their holy Sayings, and heavenly Actions. He bids you take them for an example, *James* 5. 10. Oh what excellent Men are pait on before you! What renowned Worthies have led the way! Men whose Conversations were in Heaven,

Mr. T. Mally
Enters. to copy
1790.

Hh whilst

Don. 11. 91. *When they fall by the sword and by famine, and by captivity, and by spoil, it is to try them and to purge them and to make them white. They are both purges and lavatories to your Souls. Others have the same afflictions that you have, but they do not work on them as on you; they are to you as fire for purging, and water for cleansing; and yet shall not your lives be clean? It's true (as one well observes upon that place of Daniel) Christ is the only Lavatory, and his blood the only Fountain to wash away sin. But in the virtue and efficacy of that Blood, sanctified afflictions are cleansers and purgers too.*

A Cross without a Christ never made any man better; but with Christ, Saints are much the better for the Cross. Hath God as it were, laid you out for many days and nights a whitening, and yet is not the hue of your conversation altered? Hath he put you for many times into the Furnace, and yet is not your drofs separated? The more afflictions you have been under, the more affluences you have had for this life of Holiness.

Thirdly, By all your troubles God hath been weaning you from the world, the Lufts, Loves, and Pleasures of it; and drawing out your Souls to a more excellent life and state than this. He makes your Sorrows in this life, give a lustre to the glory of the next. Whoever hath, before you shall have no rest here; and all, that you may long more ardently for that to come. He often makes you groan being burdened, to be clothed with your haire from Heaven, 1 Cor. 5. 4. And yet will you be not weaned from the Lufts, Customs, and evils of it? O what manner of Persons should you be for heavenly and holy Conversations? You stand upon the higher ground. You have, as it were, the wind and tide with you. None are assisted for this life as you are. Put all this together, and see what this second Argument contributes towards your further conviction, and pervasion to holiness of life. Have you received a supernatural principle fitting you for, and inclining you to holy actions, refitting and holding you back from sin? Hath God also set before you such eminent patterns to encourage and quicken you in your way? Doth the Spirit himself stand ready so many ways to assist and help you in all difficulties, and hath God hedged up the way of sin with the thorns of affliction to prevent your wandering, and yet will you turn aside? Will you offer violence to your own Principles, and new nature? Refuse to follow such Leaders as have beaten the way before you? Resist or neglect the gracious assistances of the blessed Spirit, which he offers you in every need, and venture upon sin, though God have hedged up your way with afflictions? O how can you do such great wickedness, and sin against such grace as this!

Metthink I need say no more to convince you how much you are concerned to keep the issues of life pure, none being so much obliged to it, or assisted for it as you are. But when I remember that *Josh* lost the complete Victory over the *Syrians*, because he smote not his Arrows often enough upon the ground, 2 Kings 13. 8. I shall level one Arrow more at this Mark: For indeed that can never be enough *practised*, which can never be enough *practised*. And therefore, Confid. 3. It will yet further appear to be your high concernment to exalt holiness in your Conversations, because of the manifold and great uses which God hath to make of the visible holiness and purity of your lives, both in this world, and that to come. The uses God puts the conversation-holiness of his People to in this world, are these among others.

First, *To win over Souls to Christ, and bring them in love with Religion.* Practical holiness is a very lovely attractive and obliging thing. If the Heathen then could call Moral Virtue *verticordia*, turn-heart, from that obliging and winning Power it exercises upon the hearts of men. If they could say of it, that were it visible to humane eyes, all men would adore it, and fall in Love with it; how much rather may we say so of true holiness made visible in the lives of Saints! This is the *turn-heart* indeed. It makes the Souls of Men to cling and cleave to the persons in whom it is; as it is prophesied, *Zach. 8. 23.* of the Jews when they shall be called (which shall be a time of great holiness) in that day, *ten men out of all languages of the Nations shall take hold of the skirts of him that is a Jew, saying we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* So much of God as appears in Men, so much drawing excellency there is in them.

And this is the Apostle's argument, 1 John 1. 3. *That ye may have fellowship with us. Why, what is there in your fellowship to invite men to you! Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Christ Jesus.* Who can choose but covet their company, that keep company every day with God? Great is the efficacy of visible holiness to work upon the hearts of Men; either as a *constant*, working in fellowship with the Word, or as a single instrument working solitarily without the Word.

Where God is pleased to afford the word unto men, there the practical holiness of Saints is of singular use to assist and help it in its operation upon the hearts of Men. When the lives of Christians sensibly exhibit that to the Eyes of Men, which the Gospel doth to their Ears; when we draw by our Doctrines, and you draw with us by our Examples when we hold forth the Word of Life doctrinally, and you hold it forth practically; as *Phil. 2. 16.* Where is the heart that can stand before us? O when the plain and powerful Gospel pierces the ears of Men, and at the same time the visible holiness of professors shines so full of in their Faces, that they must either put out their own Eyes, or else be forced to acknowledge that God is in you of a truth; then it will work to purpose upon Souls. Then will Christ see of the travail of his Soul daily.

Yea, if God deny the Word to Men, yet this practical holiness I am speaking of may be to them an Ordinance for Conversion. This way Souls may be won to Christ without the word, as the Apostle speaks, 1 Pet. 1. 1. *Though Preachers should be silent, and Vision fail; yet if you would this way turn Preachers, if your lives may but preach the reality, excellency and sweetness of Jesus Christ and his ways; and if you would this way reach down the love of the World, and let Men see what poor Vanities these are; and preach up the necessity and beauty of Holiness, surely you even you might be honoured to bring many Souls to Christ, to turn many to righteousness, and cause many to bless God on your behalf in the day of visitation.* This is the use God hath for the holiness and purity of your lives, and doth not this engage you strongly to it? What, not when it may prove the means of eternal Life to others? Surely if you have any bowels of mercy in you, you cannot hide from others that whereby they may be saved. How can you instead of holding forth the Word of life (which is your manifest duty) visibly hold forth the works of death before men? Have you been beholding to others, and shall none be beholding to you for help towards Heaven? Dare you say, let others shift as well as they can, find the way to Heaven by themselves if they can, they shall have no benefit by your light? If you be Christians, you are Christians of a different stamp and Spirit from all those we find described in Scripture. Should not you rather say as the *Lepers* did, 2 King 7. 9. *Do we well to hold our peace, whilst others are perishing? Shall the lips of Ministers, and the lives of Christians be both silenced together? Shall poor sinners neither hear any thing from us, nor see any thing from you, that may help them to Christ? The Lord have mercy then upon the poor World, and pity it, for its case is desperate.* O put on as the Elect of God, bowels of mercy. Destroy not by the looseness of your Conversations so many Souls; for your scandalous miscarriages are like a bag of poison put into the spring, which supplies the whole City with Water.

Secondly, *Another use God hath for it, is to recover and save the Credit of Religion, which by the Apostacies of Hypocrites and scandalous falls of careless Christians is wounded and exposed to contempt.* Much reproach by this means is brought upon Religion, and how shall that reproach be rolled away, but by your strictness and purity? By this the world must be convinced that are not so. Though some be a blot to the name of Christ, yet others are his Glory. The more others live and disgrace Religion, the more God expects you to honour and adorn it. I remember *Christoffelm* brings in the persecutors speaking to two renowned Martyrs after this manner, *Nonne videtis alios vestri ordinis hoc fecisse?* (i. e.) why are you so nice and scrupulous? See you not that others of your rank and profession have done these things? To which they returned this brave answer, *Nonne potissimum ratione viriliter stabimus,* (i. e.) have they done so?

For

For that very reason we will stand it out like men, and will never yield to it. There is an holy Antiprinciple in the zeal of a Christian, which makes it like fire burn most vehemently in the coldest weather. If men make void God's Law, therefore will David love his Commandments above Gold, *Psal.* 119. 127. If there be many *Pendulous* among professors, who will betray Christ and his truth to save their flesh; God will have some *Sanders* to repair that breach by their constancy and courage in appearing for them.

Thirdly, God makes use of it for the encouragement of his Ministers, who labour among you. And indeed it is of no small use to refresh their hearts, and strengthen their hands in their painful work. Now we live (saith the Apostle) if ye stand fast in the Lord, 1 Thel. 3. 8. He speaks as if their very life lay at the mercy of the People, because of much of the Joy and Comfort of it is wrapt up in their Regularity and steadfastness. God knows what an hard Province his poor Ministers have, and how many discouragements attend them in their work. Hear how one of them expresses it. "Every drop that hath fallen from our heart and head, from our eye-lids and eye-brows, shall be all gathered up, and put as Marginal Notes by all our Labours, and put into one Volume together, and this Volume put into your hands at the great day, and opened leaf after leaf, and read distinctly and exactly to you. Ministers would not be gray-headed for fear, nor die too fast, notwithstanding their great labours; if they were but successful: But this cuts the heart, and makes us bleed in secret; that tho' we do much, yet it comes to nothing. Our work dies, therefore we die; Not for much that we labour, but that we labour in vain. We can find none out of the Hospital where we are Physicians, upon two Legs. When our Ministry petrifies, turns hearts into Stones, and these taken up and thrown at us, these kill us. The recoyling of our pains kill us. When our peace returns to us, when we spend our strength to make men more naughty than they were, this wounds our hearts, which should be considered by sinners, to kill ones self, and ones Ministers too, who would save them; what a bloody Condition is this?"

Christians, you hear our case, you see our work, now a little to cheer our Spirits in the midst of our hard and killing Labours, God sends us to you for a little refreshment, that by beholding your holy and heavenly conversation, your cheerful Obedience, and sweet agreement in the ways of God; we may be comforted over all these troubles, 2 Thel. 1. 3, 4. And will you wound and kill our hearts too? Oh! what a cut will this be!

Fourthly, God hath further use for the holiness of your lives, this serves to daunt the hearts, and over-awe the consciences of his and your enemies. And sometimes it hath had a strange influence, and effect upon them. There is a great deal of awful Majesty in holiness, and when it shines upon the conscience of a wicked Man, it makes him sloop, and do obedience to it. Which turns to a Testimony for Christ and his ways before the world. Thus Herod was over-awed by the strict and holy life of John, he feared him, knowing that he was a just Man and holy, and observed (or preserved and saved) him.

That bloody Tyrant was convinced in his conscience of the worth and excellency of that Servant of God, and was forced to reverence him for his Holiness. So *Darius*, Dan. 6. 14, 18, 19, 20. What conflicts had he himself about *Daniel* whom he had condemned; his Conscience condemned him, for condemning to holy and righteous a Person. Then the King went to his Palace, and passed the night in fasting; neither were instruments of Musick brought before him, and his sleep went from him. He goes early in the morning to the Den, and cries with a lamentable voice, O Daniel Servant of the living God. How much is this for the honour of holiness, that it conquers the very persecutors of it, and makes them sloop to the meanest Servant of God. His said of *Henry the second of France*, that he was so daunted by the heavenly Majesty of a poor *Taylor* that was burnt before him, that he went home sad, and vowed that he would never be present at the death of such Men, any more. When *Salome* the Emperor came in person to apprehend *Paul*, he saw such Majesty in his very countenance, that he reel'd at the very sight of him; and had fallen backward to the

ground, had not his Servants slept in to support him. O holiness, holiness, thou art a Conqueror. So much as you shew of it in your lives, so much you preserve your interest in the Consciences of your enemies. Let down this, and they despise you presently.

Fifthly, And lastly, God will use the purity of your conversations to Judge and convince the world in the great day. 'Tis, the world shall be judged by the Gospel, but your lives shall also be produced as a Commentary upon it, and God will not only shew them by the Word how they ought to have lived, but bring forth your lives and ways to stop their mouths, by shewing how others did live. And this I suppose is intended in *that Text*, 1 Cor. 6. 2. The Saints shall judge the world, *yea, we shall judge Angels*, that is, our examples are to condemn their lives and practices, as *Paul*, Heb. 11. 7. Christ is said to condemn the world by building the Ark, (1. e.) his Faith in the threatening, and obedience to the command, condemned their supineness, infidelity, and disobedience. They saw him every day about that work, diligently preparing for a deluge, and yet were not moved with the like fear that he was; this left them inexcusable: So when God shall say in that day to the careless world, did you not see the care, and diligence, the holy zeal, watchfulness, and self-denial of my People, who lived among you? How many times have they been watching and praying when you have been drinking, or sleeping! Was it not easy to reflect when you saw their pains and diligence; have not I a Soul to look after as well as they, a Heaven to win or lose, as well as they? O how speechless and inexcusable will this render wicked men, yea, it shall not be only used to judge them, but *Angels* also. How many shocks of Temptations have poor Saints stood; when as they fell without a Tempter? They stood not in their integrity, though created in such excellent Natures; how much then are you concerned on this very account also, to walk exactly! if not, instead of judging them, you shall be condemned with them.

And thus you see what use your lives and actions shall be put to, and are these inconsiderable uses? Is the winning over Souls to God a small matter? Is the saving the honour and reputation of godliness a small matter? Is the encouraging the hearts, and strengthening the hands of God's poor Ministers amidst their spending killing labours a small matter? Is the awing of the consciences of your enemies, and judging them in the last day a light thing? Which of these can you call so?

O then since you are thus obliged to holiness of life. Thus singularly affected for it; and since there are such great dependencies upon it, and uses for it both now and in the world to come; see that ye be holy in all manner of conversation. See that as ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so ye walk in him. Always remembering that for this very end Christ hath redeemed or delivered you of the hands of your enemies, that you might serve him without fear in righteousness and holiness all the days of your lives, Luk. 1. 74, 75. And to how little purpose will be all that I have preached, and you have heard of Christ, if it be not converted into practical godliness? This is the Scope and design of it all.

And now Reader, thou art come to the last leaf of this Treatise of Christ, it will be but a little while and thou shalt come to the last Page or Day of thy Life; and thy last moment in that day. Wo, to thee, wo and alas for ever, if interest in this blessed Redeemer be then to get. The world affords not a faster flight, than a poor Christless Soul shivering upon the brink of Eternity. To see the poor Soul that now begins to awake out of its long dream, at its entrance into the world of realities, to shrink back into the body and cry, O I cannot, I dare not die. And then the tears run down. Lord, what will become of me? O what shall be my eternal Lot? This I say, is as sad a sight as the world affords. That this may not be thy case, reflect upon what thou hast read in these Sermons; Judge thyself in the light of them. Obey the calls of the Spirit in them. Let not thy flight and formal Spirit float upon the surface of these truths, like a feather upon the water; but get them deeply mixed upon thy Spirit, by the Spirit of the Lord; turning them into life and power upon thee. And so animating the whole course and tenour of thy Conversation by them, that it may proclaim to all that know thee, that thou art one who esteemest all to be but dross, that thou mayst win Christ.

To the Worshipful

AND THE

The Author wishes Grace, Mercy and Peace.

[illegible]

Trappings which add not any real worth, yet (x) how are some vain Minds puffed up with these Things! But ye have not so learned Christ.

(3.) That you steadily persevere in those good Ways of God in which you have walked, and beware of Heart or Life Apostasy. You expect Happiness whilst God is in Heaven, and God expects Holiness from you whilst you are on Earth. It was an excellent Truth which Tossanus (y) recommended to his Posterity in his last Will and Testament from his own Experience. I beseech you, saith he, my dear Children and Kindred, that you never be alarmed of the Truths of the Gospel, either by Reasons of Scandals in the Church or Persecutions upon it; Truth may labour for a Time but cannot be Conquered, and I have often found God to be wonderfully present with them that walk before him in Truth, though for a Time they may be oppressed with Troubles and Calumnies.

(4.) Lastly, That you keep a strict and constant Watch over your own Hearts, lest they be ensnared by the tempting, charming and dangerous Snares attending a full and easy Condition in the World. There are Temptations suited to all Conditions: Those that are poor and low in Estate and Reputation, are tempted to cozen, cheat, lye and flatter, and all to get up to the Mount of Riches and Ho-

nours; but those that were born upon that Mount, though they be more free from those Temptations, yet lie exposed to others no less dangerous, and therefore we find, *Not many mighty, not many noble are called*, 1 Cor. i. 26. Many great and stately Ships, which spread much Sail, and draw much Water, perish in the Storms, when small Barks creep along the Shore under the Wind, and get safe into their Port. Never aim at an higher Station in this World than that you are in: (z.) Some have wished in their dying Hour they had been lower, but no wise Man ever wished himself at the Top of Honour at the brink of Eternity.

I will conclude all with this hearty Wish for you, that as God hath set you in a capacity of much Service for him in your Generation, so your Hearts may be enlarged for God accordingly; that you may be very Instrumental for his Glory on Earth, and may go safe, but late to Heaven. That the Blessings of Heaven may be multiplied upon you both, and your hopeful springing Branches; and that you may live to see your Childrens Children, and Peace upon Israel. In a Word, that God will follow these Truths in your Hands with the Blessing of his Spirit; and that the manifold Infirmities of him that Ministers them, may be no Prejudice or Bar to their Success with you, or any into whose Hands they shall come; which is the hearty Desire of,

divina clementia, plurimo astantium horrore, anceps sui, anima aternitatem ingressa est. Hist. Bohem. lib. 11.

Your most faithful Friend and

Servant in Christ,

John Flavell.

THE

EPISTLE.

Christian Reader,

Every Creature by the Instinct of Nature, or by the light of Reason, strives to avoid danger, and get out of harm's way. The Cattle in the Fields presaging a Storm at Hand, fly to the Hedges and Thickets for shelter. The Fowls of Heaven, by the same natural Instinct, perceiving the approach of Winter, take their timely flight to a warmer Climate. This * Naturalists have observed of them, and their observation is confirmed by Scripture Testimony: Of the Cattle it is said, Job 37. 6, 7, 8. He saith to the Snow, be thou on the Earth, likewise the small Rain, and the great Rain of his Strength; then the Beasts go into Dens, and remain in their Places: And of the Fowls of the Air it is said, Jer. 8. 7. The Stork in the Heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle and the Crane and the Swallow observe the time of their coming.

But Man being a prudent and prospeſſing Creature, hath the advantage of all other Creatures in his foreseeing faculty? For God hath taught him more than the Beasts of the Earth, and made him wiser than the Fowls of Heaven, Job. 35. 11. And a wise Man's Heart discerneth both Time and Judgment, Eccles. 8. 5. For as there are natural Signs of the change of Weather, Mat. 16. 3. So there are moral Signs of the changes of Time and Providences: Yet such is the supineness and inexcusable regardlessness of most Men, that they will not fear till they feel; nor think any danger very considerable, till it become inevitable.

We of this Nation have long enjoyed the light of the glorious Gospel among us: It hath shone in much clearness upon this sinful Island, for more than a whole Century of happy Tears: But the longest day hath an end, and we have cause to fear our bright Sun is going down upon us; for the shadows in England are grown greater than the substance, which is one sign of approaching Night, Jer. 6. 4. The Beasts of prey creep out of their Dens and Coverts, which is another sign of Night at Hand, Psal. 104. 20. And the Workmen come home apace from their Labours, and go to rest; which is as sad a sign as any of the rest, Job 7. 1, 2. Isa. 57. 1, 2. Happy were it if in such a juncture as this, every Man would make it his Work and Business to secure himself in Christ, from the Storm of God's indignation, which is ready to fall upon these sinful Nations. It is said of the Egyptians, when the Storm of Hail was coming upon the Land, Exod. 9. 20. He that feared the Word of the Lord, made his Servants and Cattle flee into the Houses. 'Tis but an odd sight to see the Prudence of an Egyptian outwitting the Wisdom and Circumspection of a Christian.

God who provides natural Shelter and Refuge for all Creatures, hath not left his People unprovided and destitute of defence and security in the most tempestuous times of national Judgments. It is said, Mic. 5. 5. This Man (meaning the Man Christ Jesus) shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall

come into our Land, and when he shall tread in our Palaces: And Isa. 26. 20. Come my People, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy Doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.

My Friends, let me speak as freely as I am sure I speak reasonably. A Sound of Judgment is in our Ears; the Lords Voice crieth unto the City, and the Man of Wisdom shall see thy Name: Hear ye the Rod, and who hath appointed it, Mic. 6. 9. All things round about us seem to posture themselves for trouble and distress. Where is the Man of Wisdom that doth not foresee a shower of wrath and indignation coming? We have heard of a Voice of trembling, of fear and not of peace. Ask ye now and see whether a Man doth Travel with Child? Wherefore do I see every Man with his Hand on his Loins, as a Woman in Travail, and all Faces are turned into paleness. Alas, for that Day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the Day of Jacobs trouble, but he shall be delivered out of it, Jer. 30. 5, 6, 7.

Many Eyes are now opened to see the common danger, but some foresaw it long ago; when they saw the general decay of Godliness every where, the notorious Profanity and Atheism that overspread the Nations; the Spirit of enmity and bitterness against the Power of godliness where-ever it appeared: And tho' there seemed to be a present calm and general quietness, yet those that were Wise in Heart, could not but discern distress of Nations with great perplexity in these Seeds of Judgment and Calamity: But as the Ephe fills more and more, so the determined Wrath grows more and more visible to every Eye: And 'tis a fond thing to Dream of tranquillity in the midst of so much iniquity. Indeed, if these Nations were once swept with the Besom of Reformation, we might hope God would no: sweep them with the Besom of Destruction: But what Peace can be expected, whilst the highest Provocations are continued?

It is therefore the great and present concernment of all, to provide themselves of a Refuge before the Storm overtake them: For as Augustin well observes, non facile inveniuntur prædia in adversitate, quæ non fuerint in pace quaesita. O take up your Lodgings in the Attributes and Promises of God, before the Night overtake you: View them often by Faith, and clear up your Interest in them, that you may be able to go to them in the Dark, when the Ministers and Ordinances of Christ have taken their leave of you, and bid you good Night.

Whilst many are hasting on the Wrath of God by Profaneness, and many by smiting their fellow Servants; and Multitudes resolve, if trouble come, to fish in the troubled Waters for safety and preferment; not doubting whensoever the overflowing Flood comes, but they shall stand dry: O that you would be mourning for their Sins, and providing better for your own Safety.

Reader,

Reader, it is thy one thing necessary to get a cleared Interest in Jesus Christ : Which being once obtained, thou maist face the Storm with boldness, and say, Come troubles and distresses, losses and trials, prisons and death, I am provided for you ; do your worst, you can do me no harm : Let the Winds roar, the Lightnings flash, the Rains and Hail fall never so furiously, I have a good Roof over my Head, a comfortable Lodging provided for me : My Place of defence is the Munition of Rocks, where Bread shall be given me, and my Waters shall be sure, *Isa. 33. 16.*

The design of the ensuing Treatise, is to assist thee in this great Work : And tho' it was promised to the World many Tears past, yet Providence hath reserved it for the fittest Season, and brought it to thy Hand in a time of need.

It contains the Method of Grace in the application of the great Redemption to the Souls of Men, as the former Part contains the Method of Grace in the imputation thereof by Jesus Christ. The acceptance God hath given the former Part, signified by the desires of many for the Publication of this, hath at last prevailed with me, (notwithstanding the secret consciousness of my inequality to so great an undertaking) to adventure this Second Part also upon the ingenuity and candour of the Reader.

And I consent the more willingly to the Publication of this, because the design I first aimed at could not be intire and compleat without it ; but especially the quality of the subject matter, which through the blessing and concurrence of the Spirit, may be useful both to rouse the drowsie Consciences of this sleepy Generation, and to assist the upright in clearing the Work of the Spirit upon their own Souls. These considerations have prevailed with me against all discouragements.

And now, Reader, it is impossible for me to speak particularly and distinctly to the Case of thy Soul, which I am ignorant of, except the Lord shall direct my Discourse to it in some of the following Suppositions.

If thou be one that hast sincerely applied and received Jesus Christ by Faith, this Discourse, thro' the blessing of the Spirit, may be useful to thee, to clear and confirm thy Evidences, to melt thy Heart in the Sense of thy Mercies, and to engage and quicken thee in the way of thy Duties. Here thou wilt see what great things the Lord hath done for thy Soul, and how these Dignities, as thou art his Son or Daughter, by the double Title of regeneration and adoption, do oblige thee to yield up thyself to God intirely, and to say from thy Heart, Lord, whatever I am, I am for thee, whatever I can do, I will do for thee, and whatever I can suffer, I will suffer for thee ; and all that I am or have, all that I can do or suffer, is nothing to what thou hast done for my Soul.

If thou be a Stranger to Regeneration and Faith ; a Person that maketh a powerless Profession of Christ ; that hast a Name to live but art dead : Here it's possible thou maist meet something that will convince thee, how dangerous a thing it is to be an old Creature in the new Creatures Dress and Habit : And what it is that blinds thy Judgment, and is likeliest to prove thy ruin : A seasonable and

full Conviction whereof will be the greatest Mercy that can befall thee in this World ; if thereby at last God may help thee to put on Christ as well as the Name of Christ.

If thou be in darkness about the State of thy own Soul, and willing to have it faithfully and impartially tried by the Rule of the Word, which will not warr to any Mans Humour or interest : Here thou wilt find some weak assistance offered thee, to clear and disengage thy doubting Thoughts, which thro' thy Prayers and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, may lead thee to a comfortable settlement, and inward peace.

If thou be a proud, conceited, presumptuous Soul, who hast too little Knowledge, and too much Pride and self-love, to admit any doubts or scruples of thy State towards God ; there are many things in this Treatise proper for thy Conviction and better Information ; for not to thee, if thou shouldst not fear, till thou begin to feel thy misery, if thy troubles do not come on, till all thy hopes are gone off.

I know all these things are performed by me with much infirmity ; and that the whole management is quite below the Dignity of the Subject. But when I consider the success of Sermons and Books in the World, but little relation to the elegance of Language or accuracy of Method ; and that many may be useful, who cannot be excellent ; I am willing in all humility and sincerity to commit it to the direction of Providence, and the blessing of the Spirit.

One thing I shall earnestly request of all the People of God, into whose Hands this shall fall ; that now at last, they will be persuaded to end all their unbrotherly quarrels and strifes among themselves, which have wasted so much precious time, and decayed the vital spirits of Religion, bindred the Conversion of multitudes, and increased and confirmed the Atheism of the times, and now at last opened a breach, at which the common enemy is ready to enter, and end the quarrel to our cost. O put on, as the elect of God, Bowels of Mercy, and a Spirit of Charity and forbearance ; if not for your own sakes, yet for the Churches sake ; Si non vis tibi parcere, parce Carthagini.

I remember it is noted in our English History, as a very remarkable thing, that when the Severn overflowed part of Somersetshire, it was observed that Dogs and Hares, Cats and Rats, to avoid the common destruction, would swim to the next rising Ground, and abide quietly together in that common danger, without the least discovery of their natural antipathy.

The story applies it self, and O that Christians would every where depose their animosities ; that the Hearts of the Fathers might be turned to the Children, and the Children to the Fathers ; lest God come and smite the Earth with a Curse.

O that you would dwell more in your Closets, and be more frequently and fervently upon your Knees. O that you would search your Hearts more narrowly, and sift them more thoroughly than ever, before the Day pass as the Chaff, and the Lords fierce anger come upon you : Look into your Bibles, then into your Hearts, and then to Heaven, for a true discovery of your Conditions ; and if this poor Assise may contribute any thing to that end, it will be a great reward of the unworthy Labours of,

Thy Servant in Christ,

John Flavell.

TITULUS TOTIUS OPERIS.

Redemption hath Two Parts, <i>viz.</i> meritorious <i>Impetration</i> , opened Part 1. And effectual <i>Application</i> , opened in this 2d Part: Wherein it is considered and improved,	1. Doctrinally both in its	1. General nature opened, <i>Sermon 1.</i>	1. Union with Christ, <i>Serm. 2.</i> Including four Things in it, <i>&c.</i>	1. The Gospel offer. <i>Serm. 3.</i>	2. The Spirits drawing. <i>Serm. 4.</i>	3. Infusion of Life. <i>Serm. 5.</i>	4. Actual Faith. <i>Serm. 6, 7.</i>	Priviledges <i>Serm. 8.</i>
		2. Special nature consisting in our	2. Communion with Christ in Graces and					
		1. Exhortation to come to Christ, <i>Serm. 9.</i> enforced by Motives drawn from his	1. Encouraging Titles which are six.	1. Title. <i>Serm. 10.</i>	2. Title. <i>Serm. 11.</i>	3. Title. <i>Serm. 12.</i>	4. Title. <i>Serm. 13.</i>	5. Title. <i>Serm. 14.</i>
			2. Excellent Priviledges which are four.	6. Title. <i>Serm. 15.</i>				
				1. Priviledge. <i>Serm. 16.</i>	2. Priviledge. <i>Serm. 17.</i>	3. Priviledge. <i>Serm. 18.</i>	4. Priviledge. <i>Serm. 19.</i>	
	2. Practically in 4 Uses.	2. Conviction, proving that none can ordinarily come to Christ without		1. The Application of the Law. <i>Serm. 20, 21.</i>	2. The Teachings of the Father. <i>Serm. 22, 23.</i>			
		3. Examination of our Interest in Christ by Four Trials, <i>viz.</i>		1. The Donation of the Spirit. <i>Serm. 24.</i>	2. The New Creation. <i>Serm. 25, 26.</i>	3. The Mortification of Sin. <i>Serm. 27, 28.</i>	4. The Imitation of Christ. <i>Serm. 29, 30.</i>	
		4. Lamentation, representing the misery of Christless Persons as they lie under, and are exposed to		1. The Death of Sin. <i>Serm. 31.</i>	2. The Curse of the Law. <i>Serm. 32.</i>	3. Greater Guilt and Damnation. <i>Serm. 33.</i>		
		(4.) And in order thereunto, they are blinded by the God of this World, which forerunner of Damnation is opened and applied in						

Serm. 1.

The First S E R M O N.

I. C O R. I. xxx.

Opening
the general nature
of Effectual Ap-
plication.

But of him are ye in Christ, who of God is made unto us, Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

HE that enquires what is the just Value and Worth of Christ, asks a question which puts all the Men on Earth, and Angels in Heaven, to an everlasting Non-plus.

The highest attainment of our Knowledge in this Life, is to know that Himself and his Love do pass knowledge, Eph. 3. 19.

But how Excellent soever Christ is in himself, what Treasures of Righteousness soever lie in his Blood, and whatever Joy, Peace, and ravishing Comforts spring up to Men out of his Incarnation, Humiliation, and Exaltation, they all give down their distinct Benefits and Comforts to them in the way of effectual application.

For never was any Wound healed by a prepared, but unapplied Plaster. Never any Body warmed by the most costly Garment made, but not put on: Never any Heart refreshed and comforted by the richest Cordial compounded, but not received: Nor from the beginning of the World was it ever known that a poor deceived, condemned, polluted miserable Sinner, was actually delivered out of that woful State, until of God, Christ was made unto him, Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

For look * as the Condemnation of the First Adam passeth not to us, except (as by Generation) we are his; so Grace and Remission pass not from the Second Adam to us, except as (by regeneration) we are his. Adam's Sin hurts none but those that are in him: And Christ's Blood profits none but those that are in him: How great a weight therefore doth there hang upon the effectual application of Christ to the Souls of Men! And what is there in the whole World so awfully solemn, so greatly important as this is! Such is the strong consolation resulting from it, that the Apostle in this context offers it to the believing Corinthians, as a superabundant Recompence for the despicable meanness and balencis of their onward Condition in this World, of which he had just before spoken in ver. 27, 28. telling them, Tho' the World condemned them as vile, foolish and weak, yet of God, Christ is made unto them Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

In which Words we have an Enumeration of the chief Privileges of Believers, and an Account of the Method whereby they come to be invested with them.

First, Their Privileges are enumerated, namely, *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*, Mercies of inestimable value in themselves; and such as respect a fourfold Misery lying upon sinful Man, viz. Ignorance, Guilt, Pollution, and the whole train of miserable Consequences and Effects let in upon the Nature of Men, yea, the best and holiest of Men by Sin.

Lapsed Man is not only in deep Misery, but

grossly Ignorant both that he is so, and how to recover himself from it: Sin hath left him at once senseless of his State, and at perfect Loss about the true Remedy.

To cure this, Christ is made to him *Wisdom*, not only by improvement of those Treasures of Wisdom that are in himself for the Benefit of such Souls as are united to him, as an Head consulting the good of his own Members; but also by imparting his Wisdom to them by the Spirit of Illumination, whereby they come to discern both their Sin and Danger; as also the true way of their Recovery from both, through the application of Christ to their Souls by Faith.

But alas! Simple Illumination doth but increase our Burden, and exasperate our Misery, as long as Sin in the Guilt of it is either imputed to our Persons unto Condemnation, or reflected by our Consciences in a way of Accusation.

With design therefore to remedy and heal this sore Evil, Christ is made of God unto us *Righteousness*, complete and perfect Righteousness, whereby our obligation to Punishment is dissolved, and thereby a solid Foundation for a well settled Peace of Conscience firmly established.

Yea, but although the removing of Guilt from our Persons and Consciences be an inestimable Mercy, yet alone it cannot make us completely happy: For tho' a Man should never be damned for Sin, yet what is it less than an Hell upon Earth to be under the Dominion and Pollution of every base Lust? It's Misery enough to be daily defiled by Sin, tho' a Man should never be damned for it.

To complete therefore the happiness of the redeemed; Christ is not only made of God unto them *Wisdom and Righteousness*, the one curing our Ignorance, the other our Guilt; but he is made *Sanctification* also, to relieve us against the Dominion and Pollutions of our Corruptions: *He comes both by Water and by Blood, not by Blood only, but by Water also*, 1 Joh. 5. 6. purging as well as pardoning: How complete and perfect a Cure is Christ!

But yet something is required beyond all this to make our happiness perfect and entire wanting nothing; and that is the removal of those doleful Effects and Consequences of Sin, which notwithstanding all the forementioned Privileges and Mercies still lie upon the Souls and Bodies of illuminated, justified and sanctified Persons. For even upon the best and holiest of Men, what swarms of vanity, loads of deadness, and fits of unbelief, do daily appear in and oppress their Souls! To the imbittering of all the comforts of Life to them. And how many Diseases, Deformities, Pains oppress their Bodies, which daily moulders away by them, till they fall into the Grave by Death, even as the

Bodies

* Patientis de causis, cur deus homo, cap. 9. Quomodo mundum non transisset Adam demerito, nisi per generationem in carnaliter ex co generatos: Sic non transisset Christi gratia, & peccatorum remissio, nisi per regenerationem ad spiritum alter per ipsum regenerationis. Sic delictum Adam non nocet, nisi suis, in eo quod sunt: Sic nec gratia Christi prodest, nisi suis, in eo quod sunt.

1. Quamvis Christo obligati sit

Bodies of other Men do, who never received such Privileges from Christ as they do. For if Christ be in us (as the Apostle speaks, Rom. 8. 10.) the Body is dead because of Sin: Sanctification exempts us not from Mortality.

But from all these, and whatsoever else the Fruits and Consequences of Sin, Christ is Redemption to his People also: This seals up the sum of Mercies: This so compleats the happiness of the Saints, that it leaves nothing to desire.

These Four, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, take up amongst them all that is necessary or desirable to make a Soul truly and perfectly Blessed.

Secondly, We have here the Method and Way by which the Elect come to be invested with these excellent Privileges: The account whereof the Apostle gives us in these Words, [*Who of God is made unto us*] in which Expression four Things are remarkable.

First, That Christ and his Benefits go inseparably and undividedly together: 'Tis Christ himself is made all this unto us: We have no saving Benefit sepeate and apart from the Person of Christ: Many would willingly receive his Privileges, who will not receive his Person; but it cannot be; if we will have one, we must take the other too: Yea, we must accept his Person first, and then his Benefits: As it is in the marriage Covenant, so 'tis here.

Secondly, That Christ with his Benefits must be personally and particularly applied to us, before we can receive any actual saving Privilege by him: He must be [*made unto us*] (i. e.) particularly applied to us. As a Sum of Money becomes or is made the Ransom and Liberty of a Captive, when it is not only promised, but paid down in his Name, and legally applied for that use and end: When Christ died, the Ransom was prepared, the Sum laid down; but yet the Elect continue still in Sin and Misery notwithstanding, till by effectual calling it be actually applied to their Persons, and then they are made free, Rom. 5. 10, 11. reconciled by Christ's death, by whom we have now received the atonement.

Thirdly, That this application of Christ is the Work of God, and not of Man: *Of God he is made unto us*: The same Hand that prepared it, must also apply it, or else we perish notwithstanding all that the Father hath done in contriving and appointing, and all that the Son hath done in executing and accomplishing the design thus far. And this actual application is the Work of the Spirit by a singular appropriation.

Fourthly and lastly, This Expression imports the suitability of Christ to the necessities of Sinners: What they want, he is made to them: And indeed as Money answers all things, and is convertible into Meat, Drink, Raiment, Physick, or what else our bodily necessities do require; so Christ is virtually and eminently all that the necessities of our Souls require: Bread to the hungry Soul, and Cloathing to the naked Soul. In a Word, God prepared and furnished him on purpose to answer all our wants, which fully hits the Apostles Sense, when he saith, *Who of God is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*. The sum of all is,

Doct. That the Lord Jesus Christ, with all his precious Benefits, becomes ours by God's special and effectual Application.

There is a twofold Application of our Redemption, one *Primary*, the other *Secondary*: The former is the Act of God the Father, applying it to Christ our Surety, and virtually to us in him; the latter is the Act of the holy Spirit, personally and actually applying it to us in the Work of Conversion: The former hath the respect and relation of an Example, Model, or Pattern to this, and this is produced and wrought by the Vertue of that. What was done upon the Person of Christ, was not only virtually done upon us, considered in him as a common publick representative Person, in which Sense we are said to die with him and live with him, to be crucified with him and buried with him: But it was also intended for a Platform, or Idea of what is to be done by the Spirit actually upon our Souls and Bodies in our single Persons. As he died for Sin, so the Spirit applying his Death to us in the Work of mortification, causes us to die to Sin, by the vertue of his Death: And he was quickned by the Spirit and raised unto Life, so the Spirit applying unto us the Life of Christ, causeth us to live, by spiritual vivification. Now this Personal, secondary and actual application of Redemption to us by the Spirit in his sanctifying Work, is that which I am engaged here to discuss and open: Which I shall do in these following Propositions.

Prop. 1. *The Application of Christ to us is not only Comprehensive of our Justification, but of all those Works of the Spirit which are known to us in Scripture by the Names of Regeneration, Vocation, Sanctification and Conversion.*

Though all these Terms have some small respective differences among themselves; yet they are all included in this general, the applying, and putting on of Christ, Rom. 13, 14. *Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Regeneration expresses those Supernatural, Divine, new Qualities, infused by the Spirit into the Soul, which are the Principles of all Holy Actions.

Vocation expresses the Terms from which, and to which the Soul moves, when the Spirit works savingly upon it under the Gospel Call.

Sanctification notes that Holy Dedication of Heart and Life to God: Our becoming the Temples of the living God, separate from all profane, sinful Practices, to the Lords only Use and Service.

Conversion denotes the great change it self which the Spirit causeth upon the Soul, turning it by a sweet irreducible Efficacy from the Power of Sin and Satan, to God in Christ.

Now all these are imported in, and done by the Application of Christ to our Souls: For when once the Efficacy of Christs Death, and the Vertue of his Resurrection, come to take Place upon the Heart of any Man, he cannot but turn from Sin to God, and become a new Creature, living and acting by new Principles and Rules. So the Apostle observes, 1 Thes. 5. 6. speaking of the effect of this Work of the Spirit upon that People, *Our Gospel (saith he) came not to you in Word only, but in Power; and in the Holy Ghost: There was the effectual Application of Christ to them*

them. And you became followers of us, and of the Lord, ver. 6. there was their effectual Call. And ye turned from dumb Idols to serve the living and true God, ver. 9. there was their Conversion. So that ye were examples to all that believe, ver. 7. there was their Life of Sanctification or Dedication to God. So that all these are comprehended in effectual Application.

Propof. 2. *The Application of Christ to the Souls of Men, is that great Project and Design of God in this World, for the Accomplishment whereof all the Ordinances, and all the Officers of the Gospel, are appointed and continued in the World.*

This the Gospel expressly declared to be its direct and great End, and the great business of all its Officers, Eph. 4. 11, 12. *And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers: Till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and the Knowledge of the Son of God; to a perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, (i. e.) the great aim and scope of all Christ's Ordinances and Officers, is to bring Men into Union with Christ, and to build them up to Perfection in him: Or to Unite them to, and confirm them in Christ: And when it shall have finished this Design, then shall the whole Frame of Gospel Ordinances be taken down, and all its Officers disbanded. The Kingdom (i. e. this present economy, Manner and Form of Government) shall be delivered up, 1 Cor. 15. 24. What are Ministers, but the Bridegrooms Friends, Ambassadors for God to beseech Men to be reconciled? When therefore all the Elect are brought home in a reconciled State to Christ, when the Marriage of the Lamb is come, our Work and Office expire together.*

Propof. 3. *Such is the Importance and great Concernment of the Personal Application of Christ to us by the Spirit, that whatsoever the Father hath done in the Contrivement, or the Son hath done in the Accomplishment of our Redemption, is all invaluable and inefficual to our Salvation without this.*

It is confessedly true, that God's good Pleasure appointing us from Eternity to Salvation, is in its kind a most full and sufficient Impulsive Cause of our Salvation, and every way able (for so much as it is concerned) to produce its Effect. And Christ's Humiliation and Sufferings are a most compleat and sufficient meritorious Cause of our Salvation, to which nothing can be added to make it more apt and able to procure our Salvation, than it already is: Yet neither the one or other can actually save any Soul without the Spirit's Application of Christ to it: For where there are divers *social causes or con-causes*, necessary to produce one Effect, there the Effect cannot be produced until the last Cause have wrought: Thus it is here, The Father hath elected, and the Son hath redeemed; but until the Spirit (who is the last Cause) have wrought his Part also, we cannot be saved. For he comes in the Fathers and in the Sons Name and Authority, to put the last hand to our Salvation work, by bringing all the Fruits of Election and Redemption home to our Souls in this Work of Effectual Vocation: Hence the Apostle, 1 Pet. 1. 2. noting the Order of Causes in their Operations, for the bringing about of our Salvation, thus States it: *Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit unto Obedience, and*

sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ: Here you find God's Election and Christ's Blood, the two great Causes of Salvation, and yet neither of these alone, nor both together can save us; there must be added the Sanctification of the Spirit, by which God's Decree is executed; and the sprinkling (i. e.) the Personal Application of Christ's Blood) as well as the shedding of it, before we can have the saving Benefit of either of the former Causes.

Propof. 4. *The Application of Christ with his saving Benefits, is exactly of the same extent and latitude with the Fathers Election, and the Son's Intention in Dying, and cannot possibly be extended to one Soul farther.*

Whom he did predestinate, them be also called, Rom. 8. 30. And Acts 13. 48. As many as were ordained to Eternal Life, believed; 2 Tim. 1. 9. Who hath saved and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works; but according to his own Purpose and Grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the World.

The Father, Son and Spirit (betwixt whom was the Council of Peace) work out their Design in a perfect Harmony and Consent: As there was no Jarr in their Council, so there can be none in the Execution of it: Those whom the Father before all Time did chuse; they, and they only are the Persons whom the Son, when the fulness of Time for the Execution of that Decree was come, Died for, John 17. 6. *I have manifested thy Name unto the Men which thou gavest me out of the World; thine they were, and thou gavest them me: And ver. 19. For their sakes I sanctifie myself: (i. e.) consecrate, devote, or set my self apart for a Sacrifice for them. And those for whom Christ died, are the Persons to whom the Spirit effectually applies the Benefits and Purchases of his Blood: He comes in the Name of the Father and Son; but the World cannot receive him, for it neither sees, nor knows him, John 14. 17. They that are not of Christ's sheep, believe not, John 10. 26.*

Christ hath indeed a fulness of Saving Power, but the Dispensation thereof is limited by the Fathers Will: Therefore he tells us, *Matt. 20. 23. It is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father: In which Words he no Way denies his Authority, to give Glory as well as Grace; only shews that in the Dispensation proper to him as Mediator, he was limited by his Fathers Will and Counsel.*

And thus also are the Dispensations of Grace by the Spirit in like manner limited, both by the Counsel and Will of the Father and Son. For as he proceeds from them, so he Acts in the Administration proper to him, by Commission from both. *John 14. 26. The Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my Name: And as he comes forth into the World by this joint Commission, so his Dispensations are limited in his Commission: For it's said, John 16. 13. He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: (i. e.) He shall in all Things Act according to his Commission which the Father and I have given him.*

The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do, *Job. 5. 19. And the Spirit can do nothing of himself, but what he hears from the Father and Son: And it's impossible it should be otherwise, considering not only the Unity of their Nature, but also of their Will and Design. So that you see the Applications of Christ,*

and Benefits by the Spirit, are commensurable with the Fathers secret Counsel, and the Sons deligh in Dying, which are the Rule, Model and Pattern of the Spirits working.

Propof. 5. *The Application of Chrift to Souls, by the regenerating work of the Spirit, is that which makes the first internal Difference and Distinction among Men.*

It is very true, that in respect of God's foreknowledge and purpose, there was a Distinction betwixt one Man and another, before any Man had a Being, one was taken, another left: And with respect to the Death of Christ, there is a great Difference betwixt one and another: He laid down his Life for the Sheep, he prayed for them, and not for the World; but all this while, as to any relative Change of State, or real Change of Temper, they are upon a level with the rest of the miserable World. The Elect themselves are by Nature Children of Wrath even as others, Eph. 2. 3. And to the same Purpose the Apostle tells the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 6. 11. (when he had given in that black Bill, describing the most lewd, profligate, abominable Wretches in the World, Men whose Practices did stink in the very Nostrils of Nature, and were able to make the more sober Heathens blush; after this he tells the Corinthians) *And such were some of you, but ye are washed, &c. q. d. look, these were your Companions once: As they are, you lately were.*

The Work of the Spirit doth not only evidence and manifest that Difference which God's Election hath made between Man and Man, as the Apostle speaks, 1 Thes. 1. 4, 5. But it also makes a twofold Difference it self, namely in State and Temper; whereby they visibly differ not only from other Men, but also from themselves: After this Work, though a Man be the who, yet not the what he was. This Work of the Spirit makes us new Creatures, namely for Quality and Temper, 2 Cor. 5. 17. *If any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature: Old things are past away, behold all things are become new.*

Propof. 6. *The Application of Chrift by the work of Regeneration, is that which yields unto Men all the sensible sweetness and refreshing Comforts that they have in Christ, and in all that he hath done, suffered, or purchased for Sinners.*

An un sanctified Person may relish the natural sweetness of the Creature, as well as he that is sanctified; he may also seem to relish and taste some sweetness in the delicious Promises and Discoveries of the Gospel by a Misapplication of them to himself: But this is like the Joy of a Beggar dreaming he is a King; but he awakes and finds himself a Beggar still: But for the rational, solid and genuine Delights and Comforts of Religion, no Man tastes it, till this work of the Spirit have first past upon his Soul: It is an enclosed Pleasure, a stranger intermeddles not with it. *The white Stone and the new Name,* (denoting the pleasant results and fruits of Justification and Adoption) *no Man knows but he that receives it,* Revel. 2. 7. There are all those Things wanting in the un sanctified (tho' Elect) Soul, that should capacitate and enable it to relish the sweetness of Christ and Religion, namely, Propriety, Evidence, and Suitableness of Spirit.

Propriety is the sweetest Part of any Excellency, therefore Luther was wont to say, That the

sweetness of the Gospel lay mostly in *Pronouns*, as *me, my, thy, &c.* who loved [me] and gave himself for me, Gal. 2. 20. Christ Jesus [my] Lord, Phil. 3. 18. So Mat. 9. 2. *Son be of good cheer [thy] Sins are forgiven:* Take away Propriety, and you deflower the very Gospel of its Beauty and Delicousness: And as Propriety, so

Evidence is requisite to Joy and Comfort, yea, so necessary, that even Interest and Propriety afford no sensible sweetness without it. For as to Comfort, it's all one not to appear, and not to be. If I be before Registered in the Book of Life, and know it not, what Comfort can my Name there afford me? Besides, to capacitate a Soul for the Sweetness and Comfort of Christ, there is also an agreeable Temper of Spirit required; for how can Christ be sweet to that Mans Soul, whose Thoughts reluctant, decline, or nauseate so Holy and Pure an Object? Now, all these Requisites being the proper Effects and Fruits of the Spirits sanctifying Operations upon us, it is beyond Controversie that the Consolations of Christ cannot be tasted, until the Application of Christ be first made.

Propof. 7. *The Application of Chrift to the Soul effectually, though it be so far wrought in the first saving work of the Spirit, as truly to intitle the Soul to Chrift, and save it from the danger of perishing; yet is it a work gradually advancing in the Believers Soul, whilst it abides on this side Heaven and Glory.*

It's true indeed, that Christ is perfectly and completely applied to the Soul in the first Act for Righteousness. Justification being a relative Change, properly admits no Degrees, but is perfected together, and at once, in one only simul ac se-Act; though as to its Manifestation and Sense, it hath various Degrees: But the Application of Christ to us for Wisdom and Sanctification, is not perfected in one single Act, but rises by many and slow Degrees to its just Perfection.

And though we are truly said to be come to Christ when we first believe, Jobn 6. 35. yet the Soul after that is still coming to him by farther Acts of Faith: 1 Pet. 2. 4. *To whom [come- ing] as unto a living Stone: The Particle notes*

a continued Motion, by which the Soul gains Ground, and still gets nearer and nearer to Christ: Growing still more inwardly acquainted with him, the Knowledge of Christ grows upon the Soul as the Morning-light, from its first spring, to the perfect Day: Prov. 4. 18. every Grace of the Spirit grows, if not sensibly, yet really, for it is in discerning the growth of Sanctification, as it is in discerning the growth of Plants; which we perceive rather *crevisse, quam crescere:* To have grown, than to grow. And as it thrives in the Soul, by deeper Radications of the Habits, and more promptitude and Spirituality in the Actings; so Christ and the Soul proportionably close more and more inwardly and efficaciously, till at last it be wholly swallow'd up in Christs full and perfect Enjoyment.

Propof. 8. *Lastly, Although the several Privileges and Benefits forementioned be all truly and really bestowed with Christ upon Believers, yet they are not communicated to them in one and the same way and manner; but differently and diversly, as their respective Natures do require.*

These

These four illustrious Benefits are convey'd from Christ to us in three different Ways and Methods: His Righteousness is made ours by *Imputation*: His Wisdom and Sanctification by *Regeneration*: His Redemption, by our *Glorification*.

I know the Communication of Christ's Righteousness to us by *Imputation*, is not only denied, but * scoffed at by *Papists*; who own no Righteousness, but what is (at least) confounded with that which is inherent in us: And for *imputative* (blasphemously styled by them *putative*) Righteousness; they flatly deny it, and look upon it as a most absurd Doctrine, every where endeavouring to load it with these and such like Absurdities. That if God impute Christ's Righteousness to the Believer, and accepts what Christ hath performed for him; as if he had performed it himself: Then, we may be accounted as Righteous as Christ. Then we may be the Redeemers of the World. False and groundless Consequences: As if a Man should say, my Debt is paid by my Surety, therefore I am as Rich as he: When we say the Righteousness of Christ is made ours by *Imputation*, we think not it's made ours according to it's universal Value, but according to our particular Necessity: Not to make others Righteous, but to make us so: Not that we have the formal intrinsic Righteousness of Christ in us, as it is in him, but a relative Righteousness, which makes us Righteous even as he is Righteous, not as to the Quantity, but as to the Truth of it: Nor is it imputed to us, as though Christ designed to make us the *Causes* of Salvation to others, but the *Subjects* of Salvation our selves; it is *inherently* in him, *communicatively* it becomes ours: By *Imputation* the Sin of the first Adam became ours, and the same Way the Righteousness of the second Adam becomes ours, *Rom.* 5. 17. This way the Redeemer became Sin for us, and this way we are made the Righteousness of God in him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. This way *Abraham* the Father of Believers was justified, therefore this Way all Believers, the Children of *Abraham* must be justified also, *Rom.* 4. 22, 23. And thus is Christ's Righteousness made ours.

But in conveying and communicating his Wisdom and Sanctification, he takes another Method, for this is not *imputed*, but really *imparted* to us, by the illuminating, and regenerating Work of the Spirit: These are Graces really inherent in us: Our Righteousness comes from Christ as a Surety, but our Holiness comes from him as a quickening Head, sending vital Influences into all his Members.

Now these gracious Habits being subjected and seated in the Souls of poor imperfect Creatures, whose Corruptions abide and work in the very same Faculties where Grace hath its residence, it cannot be, that our Sanctification should be so perfect and compleat, as our Justification is, which inheres only in Christ. See *Gal.* 5. 17. Thus are Righteousness and Sanctification communicated and made ours: But then,

For *Redemption*, that is to say, Absolute and Plenary Deliverance from all the sad remains, effects and consequences of Sin, both upon Soul and Body: This is made ours, (or to keep to the Terms) *Christ is made Redemption to us by Glorification*; then, and not before, are these

miserable Effects removed; we put off these together with the Body. So that look, as *Justification* cures the guilt of Sin, and *Sanctification* the Dominion and Power of Sin, so *Glorification* removes together with its Existence and Being, all those *Miseries* which it let in (as at a flood-gate) upon our whole Man, *Eph.* 5. 26, 27.

And thus of God, Christ is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; namely, by *Imputation*, *Regeneration*, and *Glorification*.

I shall next improve the Point in some useful Inferences.

Inference 1. Learn from hence what a naked, destitute, and empty Thing a poor Sinner is, in his Natural and Unregenerate State.

He is one that naturally and inherently hath neither Wisdom, nor Righteousness, Sanctification, nor Redemption; all these must come from without himself, even from Christ; who is made all this to a Sinner, or else he must Eternally Perish.

As no Creature (in respect of external Abilities) comes under more natural weakness into the World than Man, naked and empty, and more shiftless and helpless than any other Creature; so it is with his Soul, yea, much more than so: All our Excellencies are borrowed Excellencies, no Reason therefore to be proud of any of them; 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. What hast thou received? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou Glory, as if thou hadst not received it? q. d. What intolerable insolence, and vanity, would it be for a Man that wears the rich and costly Robe of Christ's Righteousness, in which there is not one Thread of his own spinning; but all made by free Grace, and not by free Will; to jett proudly up and down the World in it, as if himself had made it; and he were beholding to none for it? O Man! thine Excellencies, whatever they are, are borrowed from Christ, they oblige thee to him, but he can be no more obliged to thee, who wearest them, than the Sun is obliged to him that borrows its Light, or the Fountain to him that draws its Water for his Use and Benefit.

And it hath ever been the Care of Holy Men, when they have viewed their own gracious Principles, or best Performances; still to disclaim themselves, and own Free Grace as the sole Author of all. Thus Holy Paul viewing the Principles of Divine Life in himself, (the richest Gift bestowed upon Man in this World by Jesus Christ) how doth he renounce himself, and deny the least Part of the Praise and Glory as belonging to him, *Gal.* 2. 20. Now I live, yet not I; but Christ liveth in me: And so for the best Duties that ever he performed for God (and what meer Man ever did more for God?) yet when in a just and necessary Defence he was constrain'd to mention them, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. how carefully is the like [Yet not I] presently added? I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I; but the Grace of God which was with me.

Well then, let the Sense of your own emptiness by Nature humble and oblige you the more to Christ, from whom you receive all you have.

Inference 2. Hence we are informed, that none can claim Benefit by imputed Righteousness, but

those only that live in the Power of inherent holiness: To whomsoever Christ is made righteousness, to him he also is made sanctification.

The Gospel hath not the least Favour for licentiousness: It is every way as careful to press Men to their Duties, as to instruct them in their Privileges, Titus 3. 8. *This is a faithful saying; and these things I will that thou affirm constantly; That they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good Works*: It is a loose Principle, divulged by Libertines, to the reproach of Christ and his Gospel, that Sanctification is not the Evidence of our Justification: And Christ is as much wronged by them who separate Holiness from Righteousness (as if a sensual vile Life were consistent with a justified State) as he is the contrary extremity by those who confound Christ's Righteousness with Mans Holiness, in the Point of Justification: Or that own no other Righteousness but what is inherent in themselves: The former Opinion makes him a Cloak for Sin, the latter a needless Sacrifice for Sin.

It's true, our Sanctification can't justify us before God; but what then, can't it Evidence our Justification before Men? Is there no necessity or use for Holiness, because it hath no hand in our Justification? Is the preparation of the Soul for Heaven, by altering its Frame and Temper, nothing? Is the glorifying of our Redeemer, by the exercises of Grace in this World, nothing? Doth the Work of Christ render the Work of the Spirit needless? God forbid: *He came not by Blood only, but by Water also*, 1 Joh. 5. 6. And when the Apostle saith, in Rom. 4. 5. *But unto him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly; his Faith is counted for Righteousness*: The Scope of it is, neither to characterize and describe the justified Person, as one that is lazy and slothful, and hath no mind to Work, or rebellious and refractory, refusing Obedience to the Commands of God; but to represent him as a nimble sinner, who is convinced of his inability to Work out his own Righteousness by the Law, and sees all his endeavours to obey the Law fall short of Righteousness, and therefore is laid in a Law sense not to Work, because he doth not Work so as to answer the purpose and end of the Law, which accepts of nothing beneath perfect Obedience.

And when (in the same Text) the ungodly are said to be justified, that Character describes not the Temper and Frame of their Hearts and Lives after their justification, but what it was before, not as it leaves, but as it found them.

Infer. 3. *How unreasonable and worse than brutish is the Sin of Infidelity, by which the Sinner rejects Christ, and with him all those Mercies and Benefits which alone can relieve and cure his misery!*

He is by Nature blind and ignorant, and yet refuses Christ, who comes to him with heavenly Light and Wisdom: He is condemned by the terrible sentence of the Law to eternal wrath, and yet rejects Christ who tenders to him complete and perfect Righteousness: He is wholly polluted and plunged into Original and actual Pollutions of Nature and Practice, yet will have none of Christ, who would become Sanctification to him: He is oppressed in Soul and Body with the deplorable effects and miseries Sin hath brought upon him, and yet is so in love with his Bondage, that he will neither accept Christ, nor the Re-

demption he brings with him to Sinners.

Oh what Monsters! What Beasts hath Sin turned its Subjects into! *You will not come unto me that you may have Life*, Joh. 5. 40. Sin hath stabb'd the sinner to the Heart, the Wounds are all mortal, eternal Death is in his Face; Christ hath prepared the only Plaster that can cure his Wounds, but he will not suffer him to apply it: He acts like one in love with Death, and that judges it sweet to perish. So Christ tells us, Prov. 8. 36. *All they that hate me love Death*: Not in it self, but in its causes; with which it is inseparably connected: They are loth to burn, yet willing to Sin; tho' Sin kindle those everlasting Flames. So that in two things the unbeliever shews himself worse than brutish, he can't think of Damnation the effect of Sin, without horror, and yet cannot think of Sin the cause of Damnation, without pleasure: he is loth to perish to all Eternity without remedy, and yet refuses and declines Christ as if he were an Enemy, who only can and would deliver him from that eternal Perdition.

How do Men act therefore as if they were in love with their own ruin? Many poor wretches, now in the way to Hell, what an hard shift do they make to cast themselves away! Christ meets them many times in the Ordinances; where they studiously shun him: Many times checks them in their way by Convictions, which they make an hard shift to overcome and conquer: Oh how willing are they to accept a Cure, a benefit, a remedy, for any thing but their Souls! You see then that Sinners cannot, (should they Study all their Days to do themselves a mischief) take a readier course to undo themselves, than by rejecting Christ in his gracious offers.

Surely the Sin of Sodom and Gomorrah is less than this Sin, Mercy it self is exasperated by it, and the Damnation of such as reject Christ (so prepared for them, with whatever they need, and so seriously and frequently offer'd to them upon the Knee of Gospel Intreaty) is just, inevitable, and more intolerable than any in the World beside them. It is just, for the Sinner hath but his own option, or choice: He is but come to the end which he was often told his way would bring him to. It is inevitable, for there is no other way to Salvation but that which is rejected: And it will be more intolerable than the Damnation of others, because neither Heathens nor Devil ever aggravated their Sins by such an horrid circumstance, as the wilful refusing of such an apt, offered, and only remedy.

Infer. 4. *What a tremendous Symptom of Wrath, and sad Character of Death, appears upon that Mans Soul to which no effectual application of Christ can be made by the Gospel!*

Christ with his Benefits is frequently tendered to them in the Gospel, they have been beseeched once and again upon the Knee of Importunity to accept him, those entreaties and persuasions have been urged by the greatest Arguments, the Command of God, the Love of Christ, the inconceivable happiness or misery which unavoidably follows the accepting or rejecting of those offers, and yet nothing will flick: All their Pleas for Infidelity have been over and over confuted, their Reasons and Consciences have stood convinced, they have been Speechless as well as Christless: Not one found Argument

Non quod quisque ita infans, ut sciens & volens diligit mortem; quam omnes naturae exhorrescimus: sed quia ista est frangere spiritus sapientiae Dei, ut mortem tandem afferat. Lat. in loc.

Deus justificat impium antequam crediderit, non consequenter. Parens.

is found with them to defend their Infidelity : They confels in general, that such courses as theirs is, lead to Destruction : They will yield them to be happy Souls that are in Christ : And yet when it comes to the point, their own clothing with him, nothing will stick : All Arguments, all Entreaties, return to us without success.

Lord ! What is the reason of this unaccountable obstinacy ! In other things it is not so : If they be sick, they are so far from rejecting a Physician that offers himself, that they will send and pray, and pay him too. If they be Arrested for Debt, and any one will be a Surety, and pay their Debts for them, words can hardly express the sense they have of such a kindness ; but tho' Christ would be a Physician and Surety, and whatever else their needs require, they will rather perish to Eternity than accept him : What may we fear to be the reason of this, but because they are not of Christs Sheep, *Job. 10. 26.* The Lord open the Eyes of poor Sinners, to apprehend not only how great a Sin, but how dreadful a sign this is.

Infer. 5. If Christ with all his Benefits be made ours by Gods special application ; what a Day of Mercies then is the Day of Conversion ! What multitudes of choice blessings visit the converted Soul in that Day !

*This day (saith Christ to Zaccheus, Luk. 19. 9.) is Salvation come to this House : In this Day Christ cometh into the Soul, and he comes not empty, but brings with him all his Treasures of Wisdom and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. Troops of Mercies, yea, of the best of Mercies, come with him. It is a Day of singular gladness and joy to the Heart of Christ when he is Espoused to, and received by the believing Soul : It is as a Coronation-day to a King. So you read, *Cant. 3. 11. Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the Crown wherewith his Mother crowned him in the Day of his Espousals, and in the Day of the gladness of his Heart.**

Where under the Type of Solomon in his greatest Magnificence and Glory, when the Royal Diadem was set upon his Head, and the People shouted for joy, so that the Earth did ring again, is shadowed out the joy of Christs Heart, when poor Souls by their high Estimation of him, and consent to his Government, do, as it were, Crown him with Glory and Honour, and make his Heart glad.

Now if the Day of our Espousals to Christ, be the Day of the gladness of his Heart, and he reckons himself thus honoured and glorified by us, what a Day of joy and gladness should it be to our Hearts, and how should we be transported with joy, to see a King from Heaven with all his Treasures of Grace and Glory bestowing himself freely and everlastingly upon us, as our Portion ! No wonder *Zaccheus* came down joyfully, *Luke 19. 6.* That the *Ennuch* went home rejoicing, *Acts 8. 39.* That the Jaylor rejoiced, believing in God with all his Household, *Acts 16. 34.* That they that were converted, did eat their Meat with gladness, praising God, *Acts 2. 41, 46.* That there was great joy among them of *Samarita*, when Christ came among them in the preaching of the Gospel, *Acts 8. 5, 8.* I say, it's no wonder, we read of joy accompanying Christ into the Soul, when we consider that in one Day so many Blessings meet together in it, the least of which is

not to be exchanged for all the Kingdoms of this World, and the Glory of them. Eternity itself will but suffice to bless God for the Mercies of this one Day.

Infer. 6. If Christ be made all this to every Soul unto whom he is effectually applied, what cause then have those Souls, that are under the preparatory Work of the Spirit, and are come nigh to Christ and all his Benefits, to stretch out their Hands with vehement desire to Christ, and give him the most importunate invitation into their Souls !

The whole World is distinguishable into three Classes, or Sorts of Persons, such as are far from Christ, such as are not far from Christ ; and such as are in Christ : They that are in Christ have heartily received him : Such as are far from Christ will not open to him ; their Hearts are fast barred by Ignorance, Prejudice and Unbelief against him ; but those that are come under the preparatory workings of the Spirit nigh to Christ, who see their own indispensable necessity of him, and his suitableness to their necessities, in whom also encouraging hopes begin to dawn, and their Souls are waiting at the Foot of God for power to receive him, for an Heart to close sincerely and universally with him ; oh what vehement Desires ! What strong Pleas ! What moving Arguments should such Persons urge and plead to win Christ, and get Possession of him ! They are in sight of their only Remedy : Christ and Salvation are come to their very Doors : There wants but a few things to make them blessed for ever : This is the Day in which their Souls are exercised greatly betwixt hopes and fears : Now they are much alone ; and deep in thoughtfulness, they weep and make supplication for an Heart to believe, and that against the great discouragements with which they encounter.

Reader, if this be the case of thy Soul, it will not be the least piece of Service I can do for thee, to suggest Pleas as in this case are proper to be urged for the attainment of thy desires, and the closing of the Match betwixt Christ and thee.

First, Plead the absolute necessity which now drives thee to Christ : Tell him thy hope is utterly perished in all other refuges : Thou art come like a starving Beggar to the last Door of Hope : Tell him thou now beginnest to see the absolute necessity of Christ : Thy Body hath not so much need of Bread, Water, or Air, as thy Soul hath of Christ, and that Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption that are in him.

Secondly, Plead the Fathers gracious design in furnishing and sending him into the World, and his own design in accepting the Fathers call. Lord Jesus, wast thou not anointed to Preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound ? Behold an Object suitable to thine Office : While I was ignorant of my Condition, I had a proud rebellious Heart, but conviction and self-acquaintance have now meeked it : My Heart was harder than the nether Millstone, and it was as easie to dissolve the obdurate Rocks into Syrup, as to thaw and melt my Heart for Sin ; but now God hath made my Heart soft, I sensibly feel the Misery of my Condition. I once thought

Thought my self at perfect Liberty, but now I see what I conceived to be perfect Liberty, is perfect Bondage; and never did a poor Prisoner sigh for deliverance more than I. Since then thou hast given me a Soul thus qualified (though still unworthy) for the Exercise of thine Office, and Execution of thy Commission: Lord Jesus, be according to thy Name a *Jesus* unto me.

Thirdly, Plead the unlimited and general Invitations made to such Souls as you are, to come to Christ freely. Lord, thou hast made open Proclamation; *Ho every one that thirsteth come ye to the Waters*, Isa. 55. 1. and *Revel. 22. 17. Him that is athirst come*: In Obedience to thy call, lo I come, had I not been invited, my coming to the (dear Lord Jesus) had been an Act of Presumption, but this makes it an Act of Duty and Obedience.

Fourthly, Plead the unprofitableness of thy Blood to God. Lord there is no Profit in my Blood, it will turn to no more Advantage to thee to destroy, than it will to save me; if thou send me to Hell (as the Merit of my Sin calls upon thy Justice to do) I shall be there dishonouring thee to all Eternity, and the Debt I owe thee never paid: But if thou apply thy Christ to me for Righteousness, Satisfaction for all that I have done will be laid down in one full round Sum; indeed, if the Honour of thy Justice lay as a Bar to my Pardon, it would stop my Mouth; but when thy Justice, as well as Mercy, shall both rejoice together, and be glorified and pleased in the same Act, what hinders but that Christ be apply'd to my Soul; since in so doing, God can be no loser by it?

Fifthly; Lastly, Plead thy Compliance with the Terms of the Gospel: Tell him, Lord, my Will complies fully and heartily to all thy gracious Terms. I can now subscribe a Blank: Let God offer his Christ on what Terms he will, my Heart is ready to comply. I have no Exception against any Article of the Gospel; and now, Lord, I wholly refer my self to thy Pleasure; do with me what seemeth good in thine Eyes, only give me an Interest Jesus Christ: As to all other concerns I lie at thy Feet, in full Resignation of all to thy Pleasure. Never yet did any perish in that posture and frame; and

I hope I shall not be made the first Instance and Example.

Infer. 7. *Lastly, If Christ with all his Benefits, be made ours by special Application; how contented, thankful, comfortable and hopeful, should Believers be in every Condition which God casts them into in this World!*

After such a Mercy as this, let them never open their Mouths any more to repine and grudge at the outward Inconveniences of their Condition in this World: What are the Things you want, compared with the Things you enjoy? What is a little Money, Health or Liberty, to Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption? All the Crowns and Scepters in the World, sold to their full Value, are no Price for the least of these Mercies: But I will not insist here, your Duty lies much higher than Contentment.

Be Thankful as well as Content in every State: *Blessed be God* (saith the Apostle) *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all [spiritual Blessings] in heavenly Places in Christ*: O think what are Men to Angels, that Christ should pass by them to become a Saviour to Men! And what art thou among Men, that thou shouldst be taken, and others left! And among all the Mercies of God, what Mercies are comparable to these conferr'd upon thee? O bless God in the lowest Ebb of outward Comforts, for such Privileges as these.

And yet you will not come up to your Duty in all this, except you be joyful in the Lord, and rejoice evermore after the Receipt of such Mercies as these, *Philip. 4. 4. Rejoice in the Lord ye Righteous, and again I say Rejoice*: For hath not the poor Captive reason to rejoice, when he hath recovered his Liberty? The Debtor to rejoice, when all scores are cleared and he owes nothing? The weary Traveller to rejoice, though he be not owner of a Shilling, when he is come almost home where all his wants shall be supplied? Why this is your Case, when Christ once becomes yours; you are the Lords Freemen, your Debts to Justice are all satisfied by Christ: And you are within a little of complete Redemption, from all the Troubles and Inconveniences of your present State.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

Serm. 2.

The Second S E R M O N.

JOHN XVII. xxiii.

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.

Wherein the Believers Union with Christ is stated, and opened as a principal part of Gospel Application.

THE Design and End of the Application of Christ to Sinners, is the Communication of his Benefits to them: But seeing all Communications of Benefits necessarily imply *Communion*, and all Communion as necessarily pre-supposes *Union* with his Person: I shall therefore in this Place, and from this Scripture, treat of the *Mystical Union* betwixt Christ and Believers: This Union being

the principal Act wherein the Spirits Application of Christ consists; of which I spake (as to its general Nature) in the former Sermon.

In this Verse (omitting the Contexture) we find a Threefold Union: One betwixt the Father and Christ, a second betwixt Christ and Believers; a third betwixt Believers themselves.

First, *Thou in me*: This is a glorious ineffable Union, and is fundamental to the other two:

The

The Father is not only in Christ, in respect of dear Affection, as one Friend is in another, who is as his own Soul: Nor only essentially, in respect of the identity and sameness of Nature and Attributes, in which respect Christ is the express Image of his Person, Heb. 1. 3. But he is in Christ also as Mediator, by communicating the fulness of the Godhead which dwells in him as God-Man, in a transcendent and singular Manner; so as it never dwelt, nor can dwell in any other, Col. 2. 9.

Secondly, *I in them*: Here is the Mystical Union betwixt Christ and the Saints, q. d. Thou and I are one essentially, they and I are one mystically: Thou and I are one by the Communication of the Godhead, and singular fulness of the Spirit to me as Mediator; and they and I are one, by my Communication of the Spirit to them in measure.

Thirdly, From hence results a Third Union betwixt Believers themselves: That they may be made perfect in one: The same Spirit dwelling in them all, and equally uniting them all to me, as living Members to their Head of Influence, there must needs be a dear and intimate Union betwixt themselves as Fellow-Members of the same Body.

Now, my Business at this Time lying in the second Branch, namely, the Union betwixt Christ and Believers, I shall gather up the Substance of it into this Doctrinal Proposition, to which I shall apply this Discourse.

Doct. That there is a strict and dear Union betwixt Christ, and all true Believers.

The Scriptures have borrowed from the Book of Nature four elegant and lively Metaphors to help the Nature of this Mystical Union with Christ into our Understandings; namely, That of two Pieces of Timber, united by Glew; That of a Graff taking hold of its Stock, and making one Tree: That of the Husband and Wife, by the Marriage Covenant becoming one Flesh: And that of the Members and Head animated by one Soul, and so becoming one Natural Body. Every one of these is more lively and full than the other, and what is defective in one, is supplied in the other; but yet, neither any of these singly, or all of them jointly, can give us a full and compleat Account of this Mystery.

Not that of two Pieces united by Glew, 1 Cor. 6. 17. He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit, *nošimur*, glewed to the Lord. For though this cementeth, and strongly joins them in one, yet this is but a faint and imperfect shadow of our Union with Christ; for though this Union by glew be intimate, yet it is not vital, but so is that of the Soul with Christ.

Nor that of the Graff and Stock mentioned Rom. 6. 5. for though it be there said that Believers are *nošimur*, implanted, or ingrafted by way of Incision, and this Union betwixt it and the Stock be vital, for it partakes of the vital Sap and Juice of it; yet here also is a remarkable defect, for the graff is of a more excellent Kind and Nature than the Stock, and upon that Account the Tree receives its Denomination from it, as from the more noble and excellent Part; but Christ, into whom Believers are ingrafted, is infinitely more excellent

than they, and they are denominated from him.

Nor yet that Conjugal Union by Marriage-Covenant betwixt a Man and his Wife; for though this be exceeding dear and intimate, so, that a Man leaves Father and Mother, and cleaves to his Wife, and they two become one Flesh: Yet this Union is not indissoluble, but may and must be broken by Death; and then the Relief lives alone without any Communion with, or Relation to the Person that was once so dear: But this betwixt Christ and the Soul can never be dissolved by Death, it abides to Eternity.

Nor lastly, That of the Head and Members united by one Vital Spirit, and so making one Physical Body, mentioned Eph. 4. 15, 16. for though one Soul actuates every Member, yet it doth not knit every Member alike near to the Head, but some are nearer, and others removed farther from it; but here every Member is alike nearly United with Christ the Head, the weak are as near to him as the strong.

Two Things are necessary to be opened in the Doctrinal Part of this Point. 1. The Reality. 2. The Quality of this Union.

First, For the Reality of it, I shall make it appear that there is such a Union betwixt Christ and Believers: It is no *Ens rationis*, empty Notion, or cunningly devised Fable; but a most certain demonstrable Truth, which appears,

First, From the Communion which is betwixt Christ and Believers: In this the Apostle is express, 1 John 1. 3. Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: *nošimur*. It signifies such Fellowship or Copartnership, as Persons have by a Joynt Interest in one and the same Enjoyment, which is in common betwixt them. So Heb. 3. 14. we are *nošimur*, partakers of Christ. And Psalm 45. 7. *nošimur*, here the Saints are called the Companions, Consorts, or Fellows of Christ: And that not only in respect of his Assumption of our Mortality, and investing us with his Immortality, but it hath a special Reference and Respect to the Union of the Holy Ghost, or Graces of the Spirit of which Believers are partakers with him and through him. Now this Communion of the Saints with Christ, is entirely and necessarily Dependunt upon their Union with him, even as much as the Branches Participation of the Sap and Juice, depends upon its Union and Coalition with the Stock: Take away Union, and there can be no Communion, or Communications, which is clear from 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. All is yours, and ye are Christs, and Christ is Gods: Where you see how all our Participation of Christ's Benefits, is built upon our Union with Christ's Person.

Secondly, The Reality of the Believers Union with Christ, is evident from the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness to him for his Justification. That a Believer is justified before God by a Righteousness without himself is undeniable from Rom. 3. 24. Being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus: And that Christ's Righteousness becomes ours by Imputation, is as clear from Rom. 4. 23, 24. but it can never be imputed

puted to us, except we be united to him, and become one with him: Which is also plainly asserted in 1 Cor. 1. 30. *But of him are ye (in Christ Jesus) who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*: He communicates his Merits unto none but those that are in him: Hence all those vain Cavils of the Papists disputing against our Justification by the Righteousness of Christ, and asserting it to be by inherent Righteousness, are solidly answered.

When they demand, how can we be justified by the Righteousness of another? Can I be rich with another Mans Money, or preferred by anothers Honours? Our Answer is, Yes, if that other be my Surety or Husband: Indeed Peter cannot be justified by the Righteousness of Paul; but both may be justified by the Righteousness of Christ imputed to them; they being Members jointly knit to one common Head: *Principal* and *Surety* are one in Obligation, and Construction of Law: Head and Members are one Body, Branch, and Stock are one Tree, and it's no strange thing to see a Graff live by the Sap of another Stock, when once it is ingrafted into it.

Thirdly, The *Sympathy* that is betwixt Christ and Believers proves a Union betwixt them: Christ and the Saints smile and sigh together. St. Paul, in Colos. 1. 2, 4. tells us, that he did fill up that which is behind, *καὶ ὑπερβύναται* — the Remainders of the Sufferings of Christ in his Flesh: Not as if Christ's Sufferings were imperfect, (*for by one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, Heb. 10. 14.) but in these Two Scriptures Christ is consider'd in a Twofold Capacity: He suffer'd once in *Corporis proprio*, in his own Person as Mediator; these Sufferings are compleat and full, and in that Sense he suffers no more: He suffers also in *Corporis Mystico*, in his Church and Members; thus he still suffers in the Sufferings of every Saint for his sake: And tho' these Sufferings in his Mystical Body, are not equal to the other, either *pondere* & *mensura*, in their Weight and Value, nor yet designed *ex Officio*, for the same Use and Purpose, to satisfy by their proper Merit offended Justice; nevertheless they are truly reckoned the Sufferings of Christ, because the Head suffers when the Members do: And without this Supposition, that Place, Acts 9. 5. is never to be understood, when Christ the Head in Heaven cries out, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* When the Toe was trod upon on Earth: How doth Christ sensibly feel our Sufferings or we his, if there be not a Mystical Union betwixt him and us.

Fourthly and Lastly, The Way and Manner in which the Saints shall be raised at the last Day, proves this *Mystical Union* betwixt Christ and them; for they are not to be raised as others, by the naked Power of God without them, but by the Vertue of Christ's Resurrection as their Head, sending forth vital quickening Influences into their dead Bodies, which are united to him as well as their Souls. For so we find it, Rom. 8. 11. *But if*

the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you: He that raised up Christ from the Dead shall also quicken your Mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you: Even as it is in our awakening out of natural Sleep, first the *Animal Spirits* in the Head begin to rouse and play there, and then the Senses and Members are loosed throughout the whole Body.

Now it's impossible the Saints should be raised in the last Resurrection, by the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them; if that Spirit did not knit and unite them to him, as Members to their Head. So then, by all this it is proved there is a real Union of the Saints with Christ.

Next I shall endeavour to open the *Quality* and *Nature* of this Union; and shew you what it is according to the weak Apprehensions we have of so sublime a Mystery; and this I shall do in a

General
and
Particular } Account of it.

First, More *Generally*, it is an intimate Conjunction of Believers to Christ, by the imparting of his Spirit to them, whereby they are enabled to believe and live in him.

All Divine Spiritual Life is *originally* in the Father, and cometh not to us but by, and through the Son, John 5. 26. to him hath the Father given to have an *ἐνδοξον* — a quickening, enlivening Power in himself: But the Son communicates this Life which is in him, to none but by and through the Spirit, Rom. 1. 2. *The Spirit of Life, which is in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death*.

The Spirit must therefore first take hold of us, before we can live in Christ; and when he doth so, then we are enabled to exert that vital Act of Faith, whereby we receive Christ: All this lies plain in that one Scripture, John 6. 57. *As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me (that is by Faith applies me) even he shall live by me*. So that these two, namely, the Spirit on Christ's Part, and Faith his Work, on our Part, are the two Ligaments by which we are knit to Christ.

So that the Spirits Work in uniting or engraffing a Soul into Christ, is like the cutting off the graff from its native Stock (which he doth by his Illuminations and Conviditions) and cloving it with the living when it is thus prepared, and so enabling it (by the Infusion of Faith) to suck and draw the vital Sap, and thus it becomes one with him. Or as the many Members in the natural Body, being all quickened and animated by the same vital Spirit, become one Body with the Head which is the principal Member, Ephes. 4. 4. *There is one Body, and one Spirit*.

More *Particularly*, we shall consider the Properties of this Union, that so we may the better understand the Nature of it. And here I shall open the Nature of it both *Negatively*, and *Affirmatively*.

First,

First, Negatively, by removing all false Notions and misapprehensions of it. And we say,

First, The Saints Union with Christ is not a *meer mental Union*, only in Conceit and Notion, but really exists *extra mentem*, whether we conceit it or not. I know the Atheistical World censures all these things as Fancies, and idle imaginations, but Believers know the reality of them. *Job. 14. 20. At that Day you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.* This Doctrine is not *Phantastical*, but *Scientific*.

Secondly, the Saints Union with Christ is not a *Physical Union*, such as is betwixt the Members of a Natural Body and the Head: Our Nature indeed is assumed into Union with the Person of Christ, but it is the singular Honour of that Blessed and Holy Flesh of Christ, to be so united, as to make one Person with him: That Union is *Hypostatical*, this only *Mystical*.

Thirdly, Nor is it an *Essential Union*, or Union with the Divine Nature, so as our Beings are thereby swallowed up and lost in the Divine Being.

Some there be indeed that talk at that wild rate, of being Godded into God, and Christed into Christ: And those unwary Expressions of *Greg. Naz. Ονομαστικῶς*, and *Χριστικῶς*, do but too much countenance those daring Spirits: But oh there is an infinite distance betwixt us and Christ in respect of Nature and Excellency, notwithstanding this Union.

Fourthly, The Union I here speak of, is not a *federal Union*; or an Union by Covenant only: Such a Union indeed there is betwixt Christ and Believers, but that is consequential to, and wholly dependent upon this.

Fifthly, and Lastly, It is not a *meer Moral Union* by Love and Affection: Thus we say, one Soul is in two Bodies, a Friend is another Self: The Lover is in the Person loved: Such a Union of Hearts and Affections there is also betwixt Christ and the Saints, but this is of another Nature: That we call a *Moral*, this a *Mystical Union*: That only knits our *Affections*, but this our *Persons* to Christ.

Secondly, Positively, and First, Tho' this Union neither makes us one Person, or Essence with Christ, yet it knits our Persons most intimately and nearly to the Person of Christ: The Church is Christ's Body, *Colos. 1. 24.* not his *Natural*, but his *Mystical* Body. That is to say, his Body is a Mystery, because it is to him as his Natural Body. The Saints stand to Christ, in the same Relation that the Natural Members of the Body stand to the Head, and he stands in the same Relation to them, that the Head stands in to the Natural Members: And consequently, They stand related to one another, as the Members of a Natural Body do to each other.

Christ and the Saints are not one as the *Oak* and the *Joy* that clasps it are one; but as the *Graft* and *Stock* are one: It is not a Union by *adhesion*, but *incorporation*. Husband and Wife are not so near, Soul and Body are not so near as Christ and the believing Soul are near to each other.

Secondly, The Mystical Union is wholly Supernatural: Wrought by the alone Power of

God. So it's said, *1 Cor. 1. 30. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus*: We can no more Unite our selves to Christ, than a Branch can incorporate it self into another Stock: It is of him (i. e.) of God, his proper and alone Work.

There are only two Ligaments, or Bands of Union, betwixt Christ and the Soul, *viz.* The Spirit on his part, and Faith on ours: But when we say Faith is the Band of Union on our part, the meaning is not, that it's so our own act, as that it springs naturally from us, or is educed from the power of our own wills; no, for the Apostle expressly contradicts it, *Eph. 2. 8. It is not of your selves, it is the gift of God*: But we are the Subjects of it, and tho' the act on that account be ours, yet the Power enabling us to believe is God's, *Eph. 1. 19, 20.*

Thirdly, The Mystical Union is an *Immediate Union*: Immediate I say, not as excluding Means and Instruments, for several Means, and many Instruments, are employ'd for the effecting of it: But Immediate as excluding Degrees of nearness among the Members of Christ's Mystical Body.

Every Member in the Natural Body stands not as near to the Head as another; but so do all the Mystical Members of Christ's Body to him: Every Member, the smallest, as well as the greatest, hath an immediate coalition with Christ, *1 Cor. 1. 2. To the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus; called to be Saints: with all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs, and ours.*

Among the *factions* in this Church at Corinth, those that said *I am of Christ*; as arrogating Christ to themselves; were as much a *Faction*, as those that said *I am of Paul*, *1 Cor. 1. 30.* To cure this he tells them, he is both *theirs* and *ours*. Such Inclosures are against Law.

Fourthly, The Saints Mystical Union with Christ is a *fundamental Union*: It's fundamental by way of *Sustentation*: All our Fruits of Obedience depend upon it, *Job. 15. 4. As the Branch cannot bear Fruit except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye except abide in me.* It's fundamental to all our Privileges and comfortable claims, *1 Cor. 3. ult. All is yours; for ye are Christ's.* And it is fundamental to all our hopes, and expectations of Glory; for it is *Christ in you the hope of Glory*, *Col. 1. 27.* So then destroy this Union, and with it you destroy all your Fruits, Privileges, and Eternal Hopes, at one stroke.

Fifthly, The Mystical Union is a most *Efficient Union*, for through this Union the Divine Power flows into our Souls, both to quicken us with the Life of Christ, and to conserve and secure that Life in us, after it is so infused.

Without the *Union* of the Soul to Christ, which is to be conceived efficiently as the Spirit's act, there can be no *Union* formally considered; and without these, no communications of Life from Christ to us, *Eph. 4. 16.* And there is that *ἐνεργημα*, or effectual Working of the Spirit of Life in every part, which he there speaks of, (as who should say, the first Buildings of a new Life, a Spiritual

M m

vitality

vitality diffused through the Soul, which ere while was dead in Sin; yet still this Union with Christ is as necessary to the maintaining, as before it was to the producing of it.

For why is it that this Life is not again distinguished and wholly suffocated in us, by so many deadly Wounds as are given it by Temptations and Corruptions? Surely no reason can be assigned more satisfying than that which Christ himself gives us in, *John 14. 19. Because I live, ye shall live also.* q. d. Whilst there is y^est Sap in me the Root, you that are Branches in me, cannot wither and die.

Sixthly, The Mystical Union is an indissoluble Union: There is an everlasting tie betwixt Christ and the Believer: And herein also it is beyond all other Unions in the World: Death dissolves the dear Union betwixt the Husband and Wife, Friend and Friend, yea betwixt Soul and Body; but not betwixt Christ and the Soul: The Bands of this Union rot not in the Grave: *What shall separate us from the Love of Christ?* Saith the Apostle, *Rom. 8. 35, 38, 39.* He bids Defiance to all his Enemies, and Triumphs in the firmness of this Union, over all Hazards that seem to threaten it. It is with Christ and us, in respect of the *Mystical Union*, as it was with Christ himself, in respect of the *Hypostatical Union*: That was not dissolved by his Death when the *Natural Union* betwixt his Soul and Body was; nor can this Mystical Union of our Souls and Bodies with Christ be dissolved, when the Unions betwixt us and our dearest Relations, yea betwixt the Soul and Body, are dissolved by Death. God calls himself the God of *Abraham*, long after his Body was turned into Dust.

Seventhly, It is an *honorable Union**, yea the highest Honour that can be done unto Men: The greatest Honour that was ever done to our common Nature, was by its assumption into Union with the Second Person Hypostatically, and the highest Honour that was ever done to our single Persons, was their Union with Christ *Mystically*. To be a Servant of Christ, is a Dignity transcendent to the highest Advancement among Men; but to be a Member of Christ, how matchless and singular is the Glory thereof! And yet such Honour have all the Saints, *Eph. 5. 30. We are Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones.*

Eighthly, It is a most *Comfortable Union*: Yea, the Ground of all solid Comfort both in Life and Death: Whatever Troubles, Wants, or Distresses befall such, in this is abundant Relief and Support. Christ is mine, and I am his; what may not a good Soul make out of that! If I am Christ, then let him take Care for me, and indeed in so doing, he doth but Care for his own: He is my Head, and to him it belongs to Consult the Safety and Welfare of his own Members, *Eph. 1. 22, 23.* He is not only an Head to his own by way of Influence, but to all things else by way of *Dominion* for their good: How comfortable may we repose our selves under that cheering Consideration upon him at all times, and in all difficult Cases!

Ninthly, It is a *fruitful Union*: The immediate end of it is Fruit, *Rom. 7. 4. We are married to Christ, that we should bring forth Fruit to God*: All the Fruit we bear before our ingrat-

ture into Christ, is worse than none: Till the Person be in Christ, the Work cannot be Evangelically good, and acceptable to God: *We are made accepted in the beloved, Eph. 1. 6.* Christ is a fruitful Root, and makes all the Branches that live in him so too, *Job. 15. 8.*

Tenthly and Lastly, It is an *enriching Union*: For by our Union with his Person, we are immediately interested in all his Riches, *1 Cor. 1. 30.* How Rich and Great a Person do the little Arms of Faith clasp and embrace! *All is yours, 1 Cor. 3. 22.* All that Christ hath, becomes ours, either by Communication to us, or Improvement for us: His Father, *Job. 20. 17.* His Promises, *2 Cor. 1. 20.* His Providences, *Rom. 8. 28.* His Glory, *Job. 17. 24.* It's all ours by Vertue of our Union with him.

Th^{us} you see briefly what the Mystical Union is. Next we shall improve it.

Inter. 1. *If there be such a Union betwixt Christ and Believers, ob then what transcendent Dignity hath God put upon Believers!*

Well might *Constantine* prefer the Honour of being a Member of the Church, before that of being Head of the Empire, for it is not only above all Earthly Dignities and Honours, but in some respect above that Honour which God hath put upon the Angels of Glory.

Great is the Dignity of the Angelical Nature, they are the highest and most honourable Species of Creatures: They also have the Honour continually to behold the Face of God in Heaven, and yet in this one Respect, the Saints are prefer'd to them, they have a Mystical Union with Christ as their Head of Influence, by whom they are quickned with Spiritual Life, which the Angels have not.

It is true, there is an *aggregation*, or gathering together of all in Heaven and Earth under Christ as a common Head: He is the Head of *Angels*, as well as *Saints*, but in different Respects: To Angels he is an Head of *Dominion* and Government, but to Saints he is both an Head of *Dominion* and *Vital Influence* too: They are his chief and most honourable Subjects, but not his Mystical Members: They are as the *Barons* and *Nobles* in his Kingdom, but the *Saints* as the dear *Spouse* and Wife of his Bosom: This dignifies the Believer above the greatest Angel. And as the Nobles of the Kingdom think it a Preference and Honour to serve the *Queen*, so the glorious *Angels* think it no degradation or dishonour to them to serve the *Saints*: For to this honourable Office they are appointed, *Eph. 1. 14.* to be ministring or servicable Spirits for the good of them that shall be Heirs of Salvation: The chiefest Servant disdains not to Honour, and Serve the *Heir*.

Some imperious Grantees would frown, should some of these Persons but presume to Approach their Presence, but God sets them before his Face with delight, and Angels delight to serve them.

Inter. 2. *If there be such a strict and inseparable Union betwixt Christ and Believers, then the Graces of Believers can*

si vis vir
vinitatis
appellari,
indue te
Christum,
qui est Dei
virtus &
sapientia;
& in omni-
bus adju-
re te domi-
no, ita ut
unus cum
eo spiritus
fias, & tunc
vir virtuti-
tis effice-
ris. Orig.
Hom. in
Numb.

31.
Eph. 1.
10.

* *Apxe-
pat, & ver-
tex nobili-
tatis est
Christus,
sine quo
nihil est in
voto hoc
sublimari
orbe terra-
rum nobi-
le, cuius
solum est
caelum, &
cujus sca-
bellum est
terra; terra
inquam, in
qua horum
omnis cog-
natio &
nobilitas
fita est &
collocata,
divinus il-
lius pedi-
bus sub-
struitur.*
Laurent.
Humfre-
dus de no-
bilitate,
lib. 2. p.
176.

never totally fail : *Immortality is the Privilege of Grace, because sanctified Persons are inseparably united to Christ the Fountain of Life : Your Life is hid with Christ in God, Col. 3. 3.* Whilst the Sap of Life is in the Root, the Branches live by it : Thus it is betwixt Christ and Believers, *Joh. 14. 19. Because I live, ye shall live also.* See how Christ binds up their Life in one Bundle with his own, plainly intimating it is as impossible for them to die, as it is for himself, he cannot live without them.

True it is, the Spiritual Life of Believers is encountered by many strong and fierce Oppositions : It is also brought to a low Ebb in some, but we are always to remember there are some things which pertain to the Essence of that Life, in which the very Being of it lies, and some things that pertain only to its well-being : All those things which belong to the well-being of the new Creature, as Manifestations, Joys, Spiritual Comforts, &c. May for a time fail, yea, and Grace it self may suffer great losses and remissions in its Degrees notwithstanding our Union with Christ ; but still the Essence of it is immortal, which is no small relief to gracious Souls : When the means of Grace fail, as it is threatned, *Amos 8. 11.* When temporary formal Professors drop away from Christ like withered Leaves in a Windy-Day, *2 Tim. 2. 18.* And when the natural Union of their Souls and Bodies are suffering a dissolution from each other by Death, when that *Silver Cord* is loosed, this *Golden Chain* holds firm, *1 Cor. 3. 23.*

Infer. 3. Is the Union so intimate betwixt Christ and Believers ? How great and powerful a Motive then is this, to make us open-banded and liberal in relieving the necessities and wants of every gracious Person ! For in relieving them we relieve Christ himself.

Christ Personal is not the Object of our Piety and Charity, he is at the Fountain Head of all the Riches in Glory, *Eph. 4. ver. 10.* But Christ Mystical is exposed to Necessities and Wants, he feels Hunger and Thirst, Colds and Pains in his Body the Church : And he is refreshed, relieved and comforted in their Refreshments and Comforts : Christ the Lord of Heaven and Earth, in this consideration is sometimes in need of a Penny ; he tells us his Wants and Poverty, and how he is relieved, *Mat. 25. 35, 40.* A Text believed and understood by very few, *I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat. I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink. I was a Stranger, and ye took me in : Then shall the Righteous answer, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, &c. And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it to me.*

It was the saying of a great Divine, that he thought scarce any Man on Earth did fully understand and believe this Truth, and he conceives so much hinted in the very Text where the Righteous themselves reply, *Lord, when saw we thee Sick, &c.* Intimating in the Question, that they did not thoroughly understand the nearness, yea, oneness of those Persons with Christ, for whom they did these things. And indeed, it is incredible that a Christian can be hard hearted, and close handed, to

that necessitous Christian, in refreshing and relieving of whom he verily believes that he Ministers refreshment to Christ himself.

O think again and again upon this Scripture, consider what forcible and mighty Arguments are here laid together to engage relief to the wants of Christians.

Here you see their near Relation to Christ : They are Mystically one Person : What you did to them, you did to me. Here you see also how kindly Christ takes it at our Hands : Acknowledging all those kindnesses that were bestowed upon him, even to a bit of Bread : He is you see content to take it as a Courtesy, who might demand it by Authority ; and bereave you of all immediately upon refusal.

Yea, here you see this one single Branch or Act of Obedience, (our charity to the Saints) is singled out from among all the Duties of Obedience, and made the Test and Evidence of our sincerity in that great Day, and Men blessed or cursed according to the love they have manifested this way to the Saints.

O then henceforth let none, that understand the Relation the Saints have to Christ, as the Members to the Head, or the Relation they have to each other thereby as fellow Members of the same Body, from henceforth suffer Christ to hunger, if they have Bread to relieve him, or Christ to be thirsty, if they have to refresh him ; this Union betwixt Christ and the Saints, affords an Argument beyond all other Arguments in the World to prevail with us : Methinks a little Rhetorick might persuade a Christian to part with any thing he hath to Christ, who parted with the Glory of Heaven, yea, and his Hearts Blood to boot, for his sake.

Infer. 4. Do Christ and Believers make but one Mystical Person ? How unnatural and absurd then are all those acts of unkindness, whereby Believers wound and grieve Jesus Christ ! This is as if the Hand should wound his own Head, from which it receives Life, Sense, Motion, and Strength.

When Satan smites Christ by a wicked Man, he then wounds him with the Hand of an Enemy ; but when his Temptations prevail upon the Saints to Sin, he wounds him as it were with his own Hand : As the *Eagle* and *Tree* in the *Fable* complain'd, the one he was wounded by an Arrow winged with his own Feathers, the other, that it was rived a sunder by a *Wedge* hewen out of his own Limbs.

Now the Evil and disingenuity of such Sins, is to be measured not only by the near Relation Christ sustains to Believers as their Head, but more particularly, from the several Benefits they receive from him as such : For in wounding Christ by their Sins,

First, They wound their head of influence ; through whom they live, and without whom they had still remain'd in the State of Sin and Death, *Eph. 4. 16.* Shall Christ send Life to us, and we return that which is as Death to him ? O how absurd, how disingenuous is this !

Secondly, They wound their head of Government. Christ is a guiding, as well as a quickening head, *Col. 1. 18.* he is your Wisdom, he guide you by his Counsels to Glory ; but must he be thus required for all his faithful Conduct ! What do you when you Sin, but rebel against his Government,

M m 2

refusing.

Qui respicit
in Ecclesia
non movetur,
vel Christi
contemplatione
mores non
quasi non
cogit in
labore et
negotio
conferunt
vel dominum
cogit in
labore et
negotio
conferunt
vel dominum
cogit in
labore et
negotio
conferunt

returning to follow his Counsels, and obeying in the mean time a Deceiver rather than him.

Thirdly, They wound their *Consulting Head*, who cares, provides, and projects for the Welfare and Safety of the Body. Christians, You know your Affairs below have not been steered and managed by your own Wisdom, but that Orders have been given from Heaven for your Security and Supply from Day to Day. *I know, O Lord* (saith the Prophet) *that the way of man is not in himself, neither is it in him that walks to direct his own steps*, Jer. 10. 23.

It's true, Christ is out of your sight, and you see him not; but he sees you, and orders every thing that concerns you. And is this a due Requital of all that Care he hath taken for you? Do ye thus requite the Lord for all his Benefits? What? recompence Evil for Good! O let shame cover you.

Fourthly and Lastly, They wound their *Head of Honour*. Christ your Head, is the Fountain of Honour to you: This is your Glory, that you relate to him as your Head: You are on this account (as before noted) exalted above Angels.

Now then Consider, how vile a thing it is to reflect the least dishonour upon him, from whom you derive all your Glory. O consider and bewail it.

Infer. 5. Is there so strict and intimate a relation and union betwixt Christ and the Saints? Then surely they can never want what is good for their Souls or Bodies.

Qui misit filium, immisit spiritum promissionis, quid tandem denegabit?

Every one naturally cares and provides for his own, especially for his own Body; yet we can more easily violate the Law of Nature, and be cruel to our own Flesh, than Christ can be so to his Mystical Body. I know it's hard to rest upon and rejoice in a Promise, when Necessities pinch, and we see not from whence Relief should arise; but Oh! what sweet Satisfaction and Comfort might a necessitous Believer find in these Considerations, would he but keep them upon his Heart in such a day of strait.

First, Whatever my distresses are for quality, number, or degree, they are all known even to the least Circumstance, by Christ my Head: He looks down from Heaven upon all my afflictions, and understands them more fully than I that feel them, Psalm 38. 9. *Lord all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee.*

Secondly, He not only knows them, but feels them, as well as knows them, *We have not an High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities*, Heb. 4. 15. In all your Afflictions he is afflicted; tender Sympathy cannot but flow from such intimate Union; therefore in *Mat. 25. 35*, he saith, *I was an hungred, and I was athirst, and I was naked*. For indeed his Sympathy and tender Compassion gave him as quick a Resentment, and as tender a Sense of their Wants, as if they they had been his own: Yea,

Thirdly, He not only knows and feels my Wants, but hath enough in his Hand, and much more than enough to supply them all; for all Things are delivered to him by the Father, *Luke 10. 22*, all the Store-houses in Heaven and Earth are his, *Phil. 4. 10*.

Fourthly, He bestows all earthly good things even to superfluity and redundancy upon his very Enemies, *They have more than Hearts can wish*, *Psalm 73. 7*. He is bountiful to Strangers, he loads his

very Enemies with these things, and can it be supposed he will in the mean while starve his own, and neglect those whom he loves as his own flesh? It cannot be. Moreover,

Fifthly, Hitherto he hath not suffered me to perish in any former straits; when and were was it that he forsook me? this is not the first plunge of Trouble I have been in; Have I not found him a God at a pinch? How oft have I seen him in the Mount of Difficulties!

Sixthly and Lastly, I have his Promise and Engagement that he will never leave me nor forsake me, *Heb. 13. 5*, and *John 14. 18*, a Promise never crackt since the Hour it was first made. If then, the Lord Jesus knows and feels all my wants, hath enough and more than enough to supply them, if he gives even to redundancy unto his Enemies, hath not hitherto forsaken me, and hath promised he never will; why then is my Soul thus disquieted in me? Surely there is no cause it should be so.

Infer. 6. If the Saints are so nearly united to Christ, as the members to the head; O then how great a sin, and full of danger is it for any to wrong and persecute the Saints! For in so doing, they must needs persecute Christ himself.

Saul, Saul (saith Christ) *why persecutest thou discrete souls?* Acts 9. 4. The righteous God holds himself thus obliged to vindicate oppressed innocency, tho' vehemently it be in the Person of a wicked Man, how much more when it is in a Member of Christ? *He that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of mine Eye*, Zech. 13. 2. 8. And is it to be imagined, that Christ will sit still, and suffer his enemies to thrust out all the very Apples of his Eyes? No, no, *He hath ordained his arrows against the persecutors*, *Psalm 7. 13*.

O it were better thy Hand should wither, and thyne Arm fall from thy shoulder, than ever it should be lifted up against Christ in the poorest of his Members. Believe it, Sirs, not only your violent Actions, but your hard Speeches are all set down upon your Dooms-day Book; and you shall be brought to an Account for them in the great Day, *Jude 15*. Beware what Arrows you shoot, and be sure of your Mark before you shoot them.

Infer. 7. If there be such a Union betwixt Christ and the Saints as hath been described, upon what comfortable Terms then, may Believers part with their Bodies at Death!

Christ your head is above water, therefore you cannot be lost: Nay, he is not only risen from the dead himself, but is also become the first fruits of them that sleep, *1 Cor. 15. 20*: Believers are his Members, his Fulness, he cannot therefore be complete without you: A part of Christ cannot perish in the Grave, much less born in Hell: Remember when you feel the Natural Union dissolving, that this Mystical Union can never be dissolved: The pangs of Death cannot break this Tie: As there is a peculiar Excellency in the Believers Life, so there is a singular Support and peculiar Comfort in his Death; *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*, *Phil. 1. 21*.

Infer. 8. If there be such a Union betwixt Christ and Believers, How doth it concern every man to examine his Estate, whether he is really united with Christ or not; by the natural and proper Effects which always flow from this Union? As,

First, The real Communication of Christ's holiness to the Soul: We cannot be united with this

Agellus meus est, se vehementer, cum non haberi instat, numero qui laderant eos qui Deo supplicarent vel Deum vererentur; quo innuit, eos non tantum Sacramentum, sed etiam crilegum, et quod seque deus tiffos, aut complurim ornatum, spoliantur; sed eos.

qui deorum ministrorum, et praecones consumuliz

affinitas, Amyl. Prob.

Templum Dei in quo spiritus inhabitat patris et membra

Christi non participare in perditionem redigi debere; quomodo non maxime

non maxime

lib. 5.

this root, and not partake of the vital sap of Sanctification from him; all that are planted into him, are planted into the likeness of his Death, and of his Resurrection, *Rom. 6. 3, 6.* viz. by Mortification and Vivification.

Secondly, They that are so nearly united to him as Members to the Head, cannot but love him and value him above their own Lives; as we see in Nature, the Hand and Arm will interpose to save the Head; the nearer the Union, the stronger always is the Affection.

Thirdly, The Members are subject to the Head: Dominion in the Head must needs infer subjection in the Members, *Eph. 5. 24.* is vain do we claim Union with Christ as our Head, whilst we are governed by our own Wills, and our Lusts give us Law.

Fourthly, All that are united to Christ, do bear fruit to God, *Rom. 7. 4.* Fruitfulness is the next End of our Union: There are no barren Branches growing upon this fruitful Root.

Infer. 9. *Lastly, How much are Believers engaged to walk as the Members of Christ, in the visible exercises of all those Graces and Duties, which the Consideration of their near relation to him excalls from them! As,*

First, How contented and well-pleased should we be with our outward Lot, however Providence hath cast it for us in this World. O do not repine, God hath dealt bountifully with you; upon others he hath bestowed the good things of this World, upon you, himself in Christ.

Secondly, How humble and lowly in spirit should you be under your great Advancement! It's true, God hath magnified you greatly by this

Union, but yet don't swell, *You bear not the root, but the root you,* *Rom. 11. 18.* You shine, but it is as the Sars, with a borrowed Light.

Thirdly, How zealous should you be to honour Christ, who hath put so much honour upon you! Be willing to give Glory to Christ, tho' his Glory should rise out of your Shame. Never reckon that Glory that goes to Christ to be lost to you; when you lie at his feet in the most particular heart-breaking Confessions of sin, yet let this please you, that therein you have given him glory.

Fourthly, How exact and circumspect should you be in all your Ways, remembering whose you are, and whom you represent! Shall it be said that a Member of Christ was convicted of unrighteous and unholy Actions! God forbid: *If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie,* *1 Joh. 1. 6.* And be that faith he abideth in him, ought also himself to walk even as he walked, *1 Joh. 2. 6.*

Fifthly, How studious should you be of Peace among your selves, who are all so nearly united to such a Head, and thereby are made fellow Members in the same Body! The Heathen World was never acquainted with such an Argument as the Apostle urges for Unity, in *Eph. 4. 3, 4.*

Sixthly and Lastly, How joyful and comfortable should you be, to whom Christ with all his Treasures and Benefits is effectually applied in this blessed Union of your Souls with him! This brings him into your possession: Oh how great! how glorious a Person do the little weak arms of your Faith embrace!

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

Serm. 3.

The Third SERMON.

2 Cor. V. 20.

Now then, we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you, we pray you in Christ's stead; be ye reconciled to God.

Opening the nature and use of the Gospel Ministry, as an external means of applying Christ.

THE Effectual Application of Christ principally consists in our Union with him, but (ordinarily) there can be no Union without a Gospel Tender and Overture of him to our Souls; for *How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher; and how shall he preach except he be sent?* *Rom. 10. 14.*

If God be upon a Delign of marrying poor Sinners to his Son, there must be a Treaty in order to it; that Treaty requires Interlocution betwixt both the Parties concerned in it; but such is our frailty, that should God speak immediately to us himself, it would confound and overwhelm us: God therefore graciously condescends and accommodates himself to our Infirmary, in treating with us in order to our Union with Christ by his Ambassadors, and these not Angels, whose Converses we cannot bear, but Men like our selves, commissioned for the effecting of this great Business betwixt Christ and us. *Now then we are Ambassadors for God, &c.* In which Words you have,

First, Christ's Ambassadors Commissioned.

Secondly, Their Commission opened.

First, Christ's Ambassadors Commissioned.

Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ. The Lord Jesus thought it not sufficient to print the Law of Grace and Blessed Terms of our Union with him in the Scriptures, where Men may read his willingness to receive them, and see the just and gracious Terms and Conditions upon which he offers to become theirs; but hath also set up and established a standing-Office in the Church to expound that Law, inculcate the Precepts, and urge the Promises thereof; to woo and couple Souls to Christ, *I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ,* *2 Cor. 11. 20.* and this not simply from their own afflictions and compassions to miserable Sinners, but also by virtue of their Office and Commission, whereby they are authorized and appointed to that Work. *We then are Ambassadors for Christ.*

Secondly, Their Commission opened: Wherein we find,

1. Their

1. Their *Work* appointed.
2. Their *Capacity* described.
3. And the *Manner* of their Acting in that Capacity described.

First, The Work whereunto the Ministers of the Gospel are appointed, is to reconcile the World to God; to work these sinful, vain, rebellious hearts which have a strong Aversion from God naturally in them; to clove with him according to the Articles of Peace contained in the Gospel, that thereby they may be capable to receive the Mercies and Benefits purchased by the Death of Christ, which they cannot receive in the state of Enmity and Alienation.

Secondly, Their Capacity described, they act in Christ's stead as his *Viceregents*. He is no more in this World to treat personally with sinners, as once he did in the Days of his flesh; but yet he still continues the Treaty with this lower World by his Officers, requiring Men to look upon them, and obey them as he would himself if he were Corporally present, *Luke 10. 16. He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.*

Thirdly, The Manner of their acting in that Capacity prescribed; and that is by humble, sweet, and condescending Entreaties and Beseechings: This best suits that meek and Lamb-like Saviour whom they represent. Thus he dealt with poor Sinners himself, when he conversed among them; he would not break a bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flax, *Isa. 42. 3.* This is the way to allure and win the Souls of Sinners to Christ.

From hence the Note is:

Doct. That the preaching of the Gospel by Christ's Ambassadors, is the means appointed for the reconciling and bringing home of Sinners to Christ.

This is clear from *Rom. 10. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 21.* and many other Scriptures.

Here we shall take into Consideration these three Things.

First, What is implied in Christ's treating with Sinners by his Ambassadors or Ministers.

Secondly, What the great Concernment they are to treat with Sinners about is.

Thirdly, What and when is the Efficacy of preaching to bring Sinners to Christ.

First, We will open what is implied and imported in Christ's Treaty with Sinners by his Ambassadors or Ministers.

And here we find these six Things implied.

First, It necessarily implies the defection and fall of Man from his Estate of favour and friendship with God; if no War with Heaven, what need of Ambassadors of Peace? The very Office of the Ministry, is an Argument of the Fall. Gospel Ordinances and Officers came in upon the Fall, and expire with the Mediators dispensatory Kingdom, *1 Cor. 15. 24, 25. Then shall he deliver up the Kingdom to God even the Father: Thenceforth no more Ordinances, no more Ministers; what use can there be of them, when the Treaty is ended? They have done and accomplished all they were ever intended and designed for, when they shall have reconciled to God all the number of his Elect, that lay dispersed among the lost and miserable Posterity of Adam, and have brought them home to Christ in a perfect state, Eph. 4. 12, &c.*

Secondly, It implies the singular Grace and

admirable Condescension of God to sinful Man. That God will admit any Treaty with him at all is wonderful Mercy, it's more than he would do for the Angels that fell, *Jude 6.* They are reserved in everlasting Chains under Darkness unto the judgment of the great Day. Christ took not on him their Nature, but suffered Myriads of them to perish, and fills up their vacant Places in Glory, with a number of sinful Men and Women, to whom the Law awarded the same punishment.

But that God will not only treat, but entreat and beseech sinful Men to be reconciled, is yet more wonderful. Barely to propound the Terms of Peace, had been an astonishing Mercy, but to wooe and beseech stubborn Enemies to be at Peace, and accept their Pardon, Oh how unparallel'd was this Condescension!

Thirdly, It implies the great Dignity and Honour of the Gospel Ministry. *We are Ambassadors for Christ*, Ambassadors represent and personate the Prince that sends them; and the Honours or Contempts done to them reflect upon, and are reckon'd to the Person of their *Stique* per-Master, *Luke 10. 16. He that heareth you, hear-eth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me.*

Neither their Persons, nor Parts, are the proper ground and reason of our respects to them; but their Office and Commission from *Jesus Christ*.

We are fallen into the Dregs of Time, where in a vile Contempt is poured not only upon the Persons, but the very Office of the Ministry; and I could heartily wish that Scripture, *Mal. 2. 7.* *8, 9.* were thoroughly considered by us, possibly it might inform us of the true Cause and Reason of this fore Judgment; but surely Christ's faithful Ministers deserve a better Entertainment than they ordinarily find in the World; and if we did but seriously bethink our selves, in whose Name they come, and in whose stead they stand, we should receive them as the *Galatians* did *Paul*, *Gal. 4. 14.* as Angels of God, even as *Jesus Christ*.

Fourthly, Christ's treating with Sinners by his Ministers who are his Ambassadors, implies the strict Obligation they are under to be faithful in their Ministerial Employment. Christ counts upon their faithfulness whom he puts into the Ministry, *1 Tim. 1. 12.* They are accountable to him for all Acts of their Office, *Eph. 13. 17.* If they be silent, they cannot be innocent: *Necessity is laid upon them, and woe to them if they preach not the Gospel, 1 Cor. 9. 16.*

Yea, Necessity is not only laid upon them to preach, but to keep close to their Commission in preaching the Gospel, *1 Thes. 2. 3, 4, 5.* *Our Exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile, but as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing Men, but God, which trieth our hearts: The Word is not to be corrupted to please Men, 2 Cor. 2. 17.* their Business is not to make them their Disciples, but Christ's, not to seek theirs but them, *2 Cor. 12. 14.* to keep close to their Instructions, both in the matter, manner, and end of their Ministry. So did Christ himself the Treasure of Wisdom and Knowledge, yet being sent by God, he saith, *John 7. 16. My Doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.* And so he expects and requires that his Ambassadors keep close to the Commission he hath given them, and be (according to their measure) faithful to their trust,

as he was to his. *Paul* is to deliver to the People, that which he also received from the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 11. And *Timothy* must keep that which was committed to him, 2 *Tim.* 1. 14.

Fifthly, It implies the removal of the Gospel Ministry to be a very great judgment to the People. The remanding of *Ambassadors*, presages an ensuing War. If the reconciling of Souls to God be the greatest Work, then the removal of the means and instruments thereof must be the forest Judgment. Some account the falling of the Salt upon the Table ominous, but surely the falling of them, whom Christ calls the Salt of the Earth, is so indeed.

What are those once famous and renowned Places from whence Christ (as he threatened) hath removed the Candle-stick, but *magna latrocinia*, Dens of Robbers, and Mountains of Prey?

Sixthly and Lastly, It implies both the Wisdom and Condescension of God to sinful Men, in carrying on a Treaty of Peace with them by such *Ambassadors*, negotiating betwixt him and them: Without a Treaty there will be no Reconciliation; and no Method to carry on such a Treaty like this: For had the Lord treated with Sinners personally and immediately, they had been overwhelmed with such an awful Majesty. The Appearances of God confound the Creature, *Let me not bear again the voice of the Lord my God (saith Israel) neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not: Yea, so terrible was that sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.* Deut. 18. 16. Heb. 12. 21.

Or had he commissioned *Angels* for this Employment, though they stand at such an infinite distance from us as God doth, yet such is the excellence of their Glory (being the highest species and order of Creatures) that their appearances would be more apt to astonish than persuade us: Besides, they being Creatures of another rank and kind, and not partaking with us either in the misery of the Fall, or Benefit of the Recovery by Christ; 'tis not to be supposed they should speak to us so feelingly and experimentally, as these his Ministers do; they can open to you the Mysteries of Sin, feeling the workings thereof daily in their own Hearts; they can discover to you the Conflicts of the Flesh and Spirit, as being daily exercised in that Warfare; and then being Men of the same mould and temper, they can say to you as *Elihu* did to *Job*, Chap. 33. 6, 7. *Behold, I am according to thy wish, in God's stead, I also am formed out of the Clay; behold, my Terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my Hand be heavy upon thee.*

So that in this Appointment much of the Divine Wisdom and Condescension to Sinners is manifested: *We have this Treasure in earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us,* 2 *Cor.* 4. 7: God's Glory and Man's advantage are both promoted in this dispensation. Secondly, Next we are to consider that great Office of Concurrence, about which these *Ambassadors* of Christ are to treat with sinners; and that (as the Text informs us) is their Reconciliation to God.

Now Reconciliation with God, is the restoring of Men to that former Friendship they had with God; which was broken by the Fall, and is still continued by our Enmity and Aversion, whilst we continue in our Natural and Unrege-

nerate Estate. Now this is the greatest and most blessed Design that ever God had in the World; an astonishing and invaluable Mercy to Men, as will clearly appear by considering these Particulars following.

First, That God should be reconciled after such a dreadful Breach as the Fall of Man made, is wonderful: No sin, all things considered, was ever like to this Sin: Other sins, like a single Bullet, kill particular Persons, but this, like a Chain-shot, cuts off multitudes, multitudes as the land upon the Sea-shore, which no Man can number.

If all the Posterity of *Adam* in their several Generations, should do nothing else but bewail and lament this Sin of his, whilst this World continues, yet would it not be enough lamented; for a Man so newly created out of nothing, and admitted the first moment into the highest Order, Crowned a King over the Works of God's Hands, *Psal.* 8. 5. a Man perfect and upright, without the least inordinate Motion, or sinful Inclination: A Man whose Mind was most clear, bright and apprehensive of the Will of God, whose Will was free, and able to have easily put by the strongest Temptation: A Man in a Paradise of Delights, where nothing was left to desire for the advancing the happiness of Soul or Body: A Man understanding himself to be a publick, complexive Person, carrying not only his own, but the happiness of the whole World in his Hand; so soon, upon so slight a Temptation, to violate the Law of his God, and involve himself and all his Posterity with him, in such a Gulph of Guilt and Misery; all which he might so easily have prevented! O wonderful amazing Mercy, that ever God should think of being reconciled, or have any purposes of Peace towards so vile an Apostate Creature as Man.

Secondly, That God should be reconciled to Men, and not to *Angels*, a more high and excellent Order of Creatures, is yet more astonishing: When the *Angels* fell they were lost irrecoverably: No Hand of Mercy was stretched out to save one of those *Myriads* of excellent Beings, but Chains of Darkness were immediately clapt on them, to reserve them to the Judgment of the great Day, *Jude ver. 6.*

That the milder Attribute should be exercised to the inferior, and the severer Attribute to the more excellent Creature, is just matter for Eternal Admiration: Who would cast away Vessels of Gold, and save earthen Potsherds! Some indeed undertake to shew us the Reasons, why the Wisdom of God made no provision for the Recovery of *Angels* by a Mediator of Reconciliation; partly from the high Degree of the malignity of their Sin, who sinned in the Light of Heaven, partly because it was decent that the first Breach of the Divine Law should be punished, to secure Obedience for the future. And besides, the Angelical Nature was not entirely lost, *Myriads* of *Angels* still continuing in their Innocency and Glory; when as all Mankind was lost in *Adam*.

But we must remember still the Law made no distinction, but awarded the same punishment, and therefore it was Mercy alone that made the difference, and Mercy for ever to be admired by Men; how astonishing is the Grace of God, that moves in a way of Reconciliation to us,

ost

Reconcili-
are nihil
aliud est,
quam ami-
citiarum of-
fensione a-
liqua gravi
dilectionem
refrascere,
et sic in-
micos in
pristinam
concordiam
reducere.
Daven. in
1 Col. 20.

out of Design to fill up the vacant places in Heaven from which Angels fell, with such poor Worms as we are! Angels excluded, and Men received. O stupendous Mercy!

Thirdly, That God should be wholly and thoroughly reconciled to Men, so that no Fury remains in him against us; according to that Scripture, *Isa. 27. 4.* is still matter of farther wonder.

The Design he sends his Ambassadors to you about is not the allaying, and mitigating of his Wrath (which yet would be matter of great joy to the damned) but thoroughly to quench all his Wrath, so that no degree thereof shall ever be felt by you. O Blessed Embassy! *Beautiful upon the Mountains are the feet of them that bring such Tidings.* God offers you a full Reconciliation, a plenary Remission.

Fourthly, That God should be freely reconciled to Sinners, and discharge them without any the least satisfaction to his Justice from them, is, and for ever will be marvelous in their Eyes.

Oh what Mercy would the Damned account it, if after a thousand years Torments in Hell, God would at last be reconciled to them, and put an End to their Misery! But Believers are discharged without bearing any part of the Curse, not one Farthing of that Debt is levied upon them.

If you say, How can this be, when God stands upon full satisfaction to his Justice, before any Soul be discharged, and restored to favour? freely reconciled, and yet fully satisfied, how can this be?

Very well, for this Mercy comes freely to your Hands, how costly soever it proved to Christ; and that free Remission and full Satisfaction, are not contradictory and inconsistent things, is plain enough from that Scripture, *Rom. 3. 24.* *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; freely, and yet in the way of Redemption.*

For tho' Christ your Surety have made satisfaction in your name and stead, yet it was his Life, his Blood, and not yours, that went for it, and this Surety was of God's own Appointment and Providing without your Contrivement or Thoughts. O blessed Reconciliation, happy is the People that hear the joyful Sound of it.

Fifthly and Lastly, That God should be finally reconciled to Sinners, so that never any new Breach shall happen betwixt him and them any more, so as to dissolve the League of Friendship, is a most ravishing and transporting Mess-age.

Two Things give Confirmation and full Security to reconciled Ones, viz. The Terms of the Covenant, and the Intercession of the Mediator.

The Covenant of Grace gives great Security to Believers against new Breaches betwixt God and them. It's said, *Jer. 32. 40.* *And I will make an Everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* The Fear of the Lord is a choice Preservative against second Revolts, and therefore taken into the Covenant. It is no hindrance but a special guard to Assurance.

There is no doubt of God's Faithfulness, that

part of the Promise is easily believed, that he will not turn away from us to do us good, all the doubt is of the Inconstancy of our Hearts with God, and against that danger this Promise makes Provision.

Moreover the Intercession of Christ in Heaven secures the Saints in their reconciled state, *1 Job. 2. 1, 2.* *If any Man sin we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation:* He continually appears in Heaven before the Father, *As a Lamb that had been slain,* *Rev. 5. 6.* And as the *Bow in the Clouds,* *Rev. 4. 3.* So that as long as Christ thus appears in the presence of God for us, it is not possible our state of Justification and Reconciliation can be again dissolved.

And this is that blessed Embassy Gospel Ministers are employed about; he hath committed to them the Word of his Reconciliation.

In the last place, we are to enquire what and whence is this Efficacy of Preaching, to reconcile and bring home Sinners to Christ.

That it's Efficacy is great in Convincing, Humbling and Changing the Hearts of Men, is past all Debate and Question. *The Weapons of our Warfare* (saith the Apostle) *are not carnal but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth is self against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,* *2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.* No Heart so hard, no Conscience so stupid, but this Sword can pierce and wound; in an instant it can cast down all those vain Reasonings and fond Imaginations, which the Carnal Heart hath been building all its Life long, and open a fair Passage for Convictions of Sin, and the Fears and Terrors of Wrath to come into that Heart that never was afraid of these things before. *So Ab's 2. 37.* *When they heard this they were pricked to the heart, and said unto Peter, and the rest of the Apostles, Men and Brethren, what shall we do?*

What shall we do? Is the doleful Cry of Men at their Wits end? The Voice of one in deepest Distress, and such Outcries have been no Rarities under the Preaching of the Word; its Power hath been felt by Persons of all Orders and Conditions; the great and honourable of the Earth, as well as the poor and despicable. The Learned and the Ignorant, the Civil and Profane, the Young and the Old, all have felt the heart-piercing Efficacy of the Gospel.

If you ask, whence hath the Word preached this mighty Power? The Answer must be, Neither from it self, nor him that preaches it, but from the Spirit of God whose Instrument it is, by whose Blessing and Concurrence with it, it produceth its blessed Effects upon the Hearts of Men.

First, This Efficacy and wonderful Power is not from the Word it self; take it in an abstract Notion, separated from the Spirit, it can do nothing: It is called the *foolishness of preaching,* *1 Cor. 1. 21.* Foolishness not only because the World so accounts it, but because in it self it is a weak and unsuitable, and therefore a very improbable way to reconcile the World to God; that the stony Heart of one Man should be broken by the Words of another Man, that one poor sinful Creature should be used to breath Spiritual Life into another, this could never

never be if this Sword were not managed by an Omnipotent Hand.

And besides, we know what works Naturally, works Necessarily; if this Efficacy were inherent in the Word, so that we should suppose it to work as other Natural Agents do, then it must needs convert all to whom it is at any time preached, except its Effect were miraculously hindered, as the Fire when it could not burn the three Children; but alas, thousands hear it, that never feel the saving Power of it, *IJa. 53. 1. and 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.*

Secondly, It derives not this Efficacy from the Instrument by which it is ministered; let their Gifts and Abilities be what they will, it's impossible that ever such Effects should be produced from the strength of their Natural or Gracious Abilities, *2 Cor. 4. 7. We have this Treasure (saith the Apostle) in earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

*Ex hoc in
noto
exhibetur.* The Treasure of the Gospel Light is carried in *earthen Vessels*, as Gideon and his Men had their Lamps in earthen Pitchers or in *Cyster-shells*, for so the Word also signifies, the *Cyster-shell* is a base and worthless thing in it self; however, there lies the rich and precious *Pearl* of great Value: And why is this precious Treasure lodged in such weak worthless Vessels? Surely it is upon no other Design but to convince us of the Truth I am here to prove, That the Excellency of the Power is of God, and not of us; as it follows in the next Words. To the same purpose speaks the same Apostle, *1 Cor. 3. 7. So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither is he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.*

Not any thing! What can be more diminutively spoken of the Gospel Preachers? but we must not understand these Words in a simple and absolute, but in a comparative and relative Sense: Not as if they were not necessary and useful in their place, but that how necessary soever they be, and what excellent Gifts soever God hath furnished them with; yet it is neither in their Power, nor Choice, to make the Word they preach effectual to Men: If it were, then the Damnation of all that hear us must needs lie at our Door: Then also, many thousands would have been reconciled to God, which are yet in the state of Enmity, but the Effect of the Gospel is not in our Power.

Thirdly, But what Efficacy it hath to reconcile Men to God, it derives from the Spirit of God, whose Co-operation and Blessing (which is arbitrarily dispensed) gives it all the Fruit it hath.

* Mr. Anthony Burges. Ministers, saith one *, are like Trumpets which make no Sound, if Breath be not breathed into them. Or like *Ezekiels* Wheels, which move not, unless the Spirit move them; or *Elisha's* Servant, whose Presence doth no good except *Elisha's* Spirit be there also: For want of the Spirit of God, how many thousands of Souls do find the Ministry to be nothing to them? If it be something to the purpose to any Soul, it is the Lord that makes it so. This Spirit is not limited by Mens Gifts or Parts; he concurs not only with their Labours, who have excellent Gifts, but oftentimes blesses mean, despicable Gifts, with far greater Success: Beautiful Ra-

chis is barren, and bleat-ey'd *Lea's* bears Children.

Suppose, saith *Austin*, there be two Conduits in a Town, one very plain and homely, the other built of polished Marble, and adorned with Excellent Images, as Eagles, Lions, Angels; the Water refreshes as it is Water, and not as it comes from such or such a Conduit. 'Tis the Spirit that gives the Word all that Virtue it hath: He is the Lord of all saving Influences: He hath Dominion over the Word, over our Souls, over the *Times and Seasons* of Conversion; and if any poor Creature attend the Ministry without Benefit, if he go away as he came, without fruit, surely we may lay in this Case as *Martha* said to *Christ*, in reference to her Brother *Lazarus*, Lord, if thou hast been here, my Brother had not dy'd; so, Lord, if thou hadst been in this Prayer, in this Sermon, this poor Soul had not gone dead, and carnal from under it. And now what remains, but that we apply this Truth in those Uses that it gives us.

First Use of Information.

Is the Preaching of the Gospel by Christ's Ambassadors the Way which God takes to reconcile Sinners to himself? Then how inexcusable are all those that continue in their state of Enmity; tho' the Ambassadors of peace have been with them all their Lives long, wooing and beseeching them to be reconciled to God?

O invincible, obdurate, incurable Disease, which is aggravated by the only proper Remedy! Hath God been wooing and beseeching you by his Ambassadors so many years to be reconciled to him, and will you not yield to any Intreaties? Must he be made to speak in vain, to charm the deaf *Adder*? Well, when the milder Attribute hath done with you, the severer Attribute will take you in hand.

The Lord hath kept an Account of every Year and Day of his Patience towards you, *Luke 13. 7. These three years I came seeking fruit on this Fig-tree, and find none; and Jer. 25. 3. These three and twenty years have I spoken unto you, rising early and speaking, but ye have not hearkened.*

Well, be you assured, that God hath both the Glafs of your Time, and the Vials of his Wrath by him; and so much of his abused Patience as runs out of one, so much of his incensed Wrath runs into the other: There is a Time when this Treaty of Peace will end, when the Master of the House will rise up, and the Doors be shut, *Luke 13. 25.* Then will you be left without Hope, and without Apology.

We read indeed of some poor and ineffectual Pleas that will be made by some at the last day; so *Mat. 7. 22. We have prophesied in thy name, &c.* These Pleas will not avail, but as for you what will you plead? Possibly many thousand *Idots*, or poor weak-headed Persons, may perish; many young Ones that had little or no Time in the World to acquaint themselves with Matters of Religion, or understand the Way of Salvation: Many Millions of Heathens, that never heard the Name of Christ, nor came within the Sound of Salvation; who will yet perish, and that justly.

Now whatsoever Apologies any of these will make for themselves in the last Day, to be sure you can make none. God hath given you a Capacity, and Competent Understanding; N a many

many of you are wise and subtil in all your other Concernments, and only shew your Folly in the great Concernments of your Salvation: You cannot plead want of Time, some of you are grown gray-headed under the Gospel; you cannot plead want of Means and Opportunities, the Ordinances and Ministers of Christ have been with you all your Life long to this Day, sure if you be *Christless* now, you must also be *speechless* then.

Infer. 2. Hence it also follows, *That the World owes better Entertainment than it gives to the Ministers of Christ. Christ's Ambassadors deserve a better Welcome than they find among Men.*

Your respects to them is founded upon their Office and Employment for you, *Heb.* 13. 17. and *1 Thes.* 5. 12. They watch for your Souls, dare any of you watch for their Ruine? They bring glad Tidings, shall they return with sad Tidings to him that sent them? They publish Peace, shall they be rewarded with Trouble? O ungrateful World! We read in *Eph.* 6. 20. of an *Ambassador in Bonds*, and he no ordinary One neither: We read also a strange Challenge made by another at his own Death, *Acts* 7. 52. *Which of all the Prophets have not your Fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which shewed before the Coming of the Just One.* Some that break the Bread of Life to you, might want Bread to eat, for any regard you have to them. The Office of the Ministry, speaks the abundant Love of God to you, your Contempt and Abuse of it, speaks the abundant Stupidity or Malignity of your Hearts towards God; what a sad Protestation doth *Jeremy* make against his ungrateful People, *Jer.* 18. 20. *Shall evil, saith he, be recompensed for good? for they have digged a pit for my Soul; remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy Wrath from them.*

God's Mercy is eminently discovered in the *Institution*, and Satan's Malice is eminently discovered in the *Opposition* of the Ministerial Office. Satan is a great and jealous Prince, and it is no Wonder he should raise all the Forces he can to oppose the *Ambassadors* of Christ: When, saith One, the Gospel comes into his Dominions, it doth, as it were, by Sound of Trumpet, and Beat of Drum, proclaim Liberty to all his Slaves and Vassals, if they will quit that Tyrant that hath so long held their Souls in Bondage, and come under the sweet and easie Government of Christ: And can the Devil endure this, think you? If Christ send forth *Ambassadors*, no Wonder if Satan send forth *Opposers*; he certainly owes them a Spite, that undermine his Government in the World.

Infer. 3. Hence it follows, *That it nearly concerns all Christ's Ambassadors, to see that they be in a State of Reconciliation with God themselves.*

Shall we stand in Christ's stead by Office, and yet not be in Christ by Union? Shall we entreat Men to be reconciled to God, and yet be at Enmity with him our selves? O let us take heed, *Left after we have preached to others, we our selves be as cast-aways*, *1 Cor.* 9. 27. O! all Men living, we are the most miserable if we be *Christless* and *Graceless*: Our Consciences will make more terrible Applications of our Doctrine to us in Hell, than ever we made to the vilest of Sinners on Earth. O it's far easier

to study and press a thousand Truths upon others, than to feel the Power of one Truth upon our own Hearts; to teach others *Faciendo quam faciendo*: Duties to be done, than Duties by doing them.

They are sad *Dilemma's* with which a Learned ^{Gilds} Writer poses such graceless Ministers: If Sin ^{Salv.p.15,} be evil, why do you live in it? If it be not, why do you dissuade Men from it? If it be dangerous, how dare you venture on it? If it be not, why do you tell Men so? If God's Threatnings be true, why don't you fear them? If they be false, why do you trouble Men needlessly with them, and put them into such Frights without a Cause?

Take heed to your selves, lest you should cry down sin, and not overcome it; lest while you seek to bring it down in others, you bow to it, and become its Slaves your selves: It's easier to chide at sin, than to overcome it. That is a smart Question, *Rom.* 2. 21. *Tbon that teachest another, teachest thou not thy self?* A prophane Minister was converted by reading that Text once, but how many have read it as well as he, who never trembled at the Consideration of it as he did?

2 Use for Conviction.

Is this the Method God uses to reconcile Men to himself? O then Examine your selves, whether yet the Preaching of the Gospel hath reconciled you to God. It's too manifest that many among us are in the State of Enmity unto this Day: We may say with the Prophet, *Isaiah* 53. 1. *Who hath believed our Report? and to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?* We offer you Peace upon Gospel Terms and Articles, but our Peace returns to us again: Enemies you were to God, and Enemies you still continue. The Evidence is undeniable; for,

1. Evidence.

Many of you were never convinced to this Day of your State of Enmity against God, and without Conviction of this, Reconciliation is impossible; without Repentance there can be no Reconciliation, and without Conviction there can be Repentance: When we repent we lay down our Weapons; *Isa.* 27. 4, 5. But how few have been brought to this? Alas! if a few poor, cold, heartless, ineffectual Confessions of Sin, may pass for a due Conviction, and serious Repentance, then have we been convinced, then have we repented; but you will find if ever the Lord intend to reconcile you to himself, your Convictions and Humiliations for Sin will be other Manner of Things: This will cost you more than a few cheap Words against Sin, *2 Cor.* 7. 11. *In that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what Carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of your selves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what reverence?*

2. Evidence.

Many of us never treated seriously with the Lord about Peace, and how then are we reconciled to him? What, a Peace without a Treaty? Reconciliation without any Consideration about it? It can never be: When was the Time, and Where was the Place, that you were found in secret upon your Knees, mourning over the Sin of your Nature,

and

and the Evils of your Ways? Certainly you must be brought to this, you must with a broken Heart bewail your Sin and Misery.

Friend, That stony Heart of thine must feel Remorse and Anguish for Sin, it will cost thee some sad Days and sorrowful Nights, or ever thou canst have Peace with God: It will cost thee many a Groan, many a Tear, many a Hearty Cry to Heaven; if ever the Peace be made betwixt God and thee, thou must take to thee Words and turn to the Lord, saying, Take away all Iniquity, and receive me graciously. O for one Smile, one Token of Love, one Hint of Favour! The Child of Peace is not born without Pangs, and Agonies of Soul.

3. Evidence.

Many of us are *not reconciled* to the Duties of Religion, and Ways of Holiness, and how then is it possible we should be reconciled to God? What, reconciled to God, and unreconciled to the Ways of God? By Reconciliation we are *made nigh*: In Duties of Communion we *draw nigh*, and can we be made nigh to God, and have no Heart to draw nigh to God? It can never be.

Examine your Hearts, and say, is not the Way of Strictness a Bondage to you? Had you not rather be at Liberty to fulfil the Desires of the Flesh and of the Mind? Could you not with that the Scriptures had not made some things else your Sins, and other things your Duties? Do you delight in the Law of God after the inner Man, and esteem his *Judgments concerning all things to be right*? Do you love secret Prayer, and delight in Duties of Communion with God; or rather are they not an ungrateful Burden, and irksome Imposition? Give Conscience leave to speak plain.

4. Evidence.

Many of us are *not Enemies to Sin*, and how then are we reconciled to God? What, Friends with God, and our Lusts too? it cannot be. *Psal. 97. 10. He that love the Lord hate evil*: The same hour our Reconciliation is made with God, there is an Everlasting Breach made with Sin: This is one of the Articles or Conditions of our Peace with God, *Isa. 55. 7. Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous Man his thoughts, and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.*

But it's manifest in many of us, that we are no Enemies to Sin, we secretly indulge it, what bad Names soever we call it: We will commit ten Sins to cover one: We cannot endure the most serious, faithful, seasonable, private, tender, and necessary Reproofs of Sin, but our Hearts swell and rise at it: Sure we are not reconciled to God, whilst we embrace his Enemy in our Bosoms.

5. Evidence.

We *love not the Children of God*, nor are reconciled to them that bear his Image, and how then can we be reconciled to God? *1 John 5. 1. He that loveth him that begat, loveth them also that are begotten*: What, at Peace with the Father, and at War with the

Children! It cannot be: Do not some that hope they have made their Peace with God, hate, revile and persecute the Children of God? Surely in that Day we are reconciled to the Lord, we are reconciled to all his People: We shall then love a Christian as a Christian, and by this we know we are passed from Death to Life.

6. Evidence.

Lastly, How can any Man think himself to be reconciled to God, who *never closed heartily with Jesus Christ* by Faith, who is the only Days-man and Peace-maker; the alone Mediator of Reconciliation betwixt God and Man.

This is a sure Truth, that all whom God accepts into Favour, are *made accepted in the Beloved*, *Eph. 1. 6*. If any Man will make Peace with God, he must take hold of his strength, accept and close with Christ, who is the Power of God, or he can never make Peace, *Isa. 27*. He must be made nigh by the Blood of Christ, *Eph. 2. 13*. But alas, both Christ and Faith are Strangers to many Souls, who yet persuade themselves to be at Peace with God: O fatal Mistake!

3. Use of Exhortation.

Lastly, This Point deserves a close, vigorous Application in a Threefold Exhortation.

First, To Christ's Ambassadors who treat with Souls in Order to their Reconciliation with God.

Secondly, To those that are yet in their Enmity and unreconciled State.

Thirdly, To those that have embraced the Terms of Peace, and submitted to the Gospel Overtures.

First, *To the Ambassadors of Reconciliation*. God hath put a great deal of Honour upon you in this High and Noble Employment: Great is the Dignity of your Office, to some you are *The Saviour of Death unto Death, and to others a favour of Life unto Life*; and who is sufficient for these things? *2 Cor. 2. 16*. But yet the Duty is no less than the Dignity. O what manner of Men should we be for Judgment, Seriousness, Affections, Patience and Exemplary Holiness, to whom the Management of so great a Concern betwixt God and Man is committed!

First, For Judgment and Prudence, how necessary is it in so weighty and difficult a Business as this! He had need be a Man of Wisdom, that is to inform the Ignorant of the Nature and Necessity of this Great Work, and win over their Hearts to consent to the Articles of Peace propounded in the Gospel; that hath so many subtil Temptations to answer, and so many intricate Cafes of Conscience to resolve: There are many strong Holds of Satan to be battered, and many stout and obstinate Resistances made by the Hearts of Sinners which must be overcome; and he had need be no Novice in Religion, to whom so difficult a Province is committed.

Secondly, Let us be *serious* in our Work as well as judicious. Remember, O ye Ambassadors

dors of Christ, you bring a Message from the God of Heaven of Everlasting Consequence to the Souls of Men. The Eternal Decrees are executed upon them in your Ministry: To some you are the *favour of Life unto Life*, and to some the *favour of Death unto Death*, 2 Cor. 2. 16. Heaven and Hell are Matters of most awful and solemn Consideration. O what an Account have we also shortly to give unto him that sent us!

These are Matters of such deep Concernment, as should swallow up our very Spirits; the least they can do, is to compose our Hearts unto seriousness in the Management of them.

Vide
Bowels Pa-
stor Evang.
p. 136.

Thirdly, Be filled with tender Affections toward the Souls of Men, with whom you treat for Reconciliation: You had need be Men of *Bowels* as well as Men of *Brains*: You see a Multitude of poor Souls upon the brink of Eternal Misery, and they know it not, but Promise themselves Peace, and fill themselves with vain Hopes of Heaven: And is there a more moving, melting Spectacle in the World than this! O think with what Bowels of Commiseration *Moses* and *Paul* were filled, when the one desired rather to be blotted out of God's Book, and the other to be accused from Christ, than that *Israel* should not be saved, *Exod.* 32. 33. and *Rom.* 9. 3. Think how the Bowels of Christ yearned over *Jerusalem*, *Mat.* 23. 37. And over the Multitude, *Mat.* 9. 36. Let the same Mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus.

Fourthly, Be patient and long-suffering towards Sinners: Such is the value of one Soul, that it's worth waiting all our Days to save it at last: *The Servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness, instructing them that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance*, 2 Tim. 2. 24, 25. The Lord waits with Patience upon Sinners, and well may you. Consider your selves, how long was God treating with you, ere you were won to him? Be not discouraged, if success presently Answer not Expectation.

Fifthly and Lastly, Be sure to back your Exhortations with drawing Examples, else you may Preach out your last Breath before you gain one Soul to God. The Devil and the Carnal Hearts of your Hearers, will put hindrances enough in the way of your Labours, don't you put the greatest of all your selves. O study not only to Preach exactly, but to Live exactly; let the misplacing of one Action in your Lives, trouble you more than the misplacing of Words in your Discourses: This is the way to Succeed in your Embassy, and give up your Account with Joy.

Secondly, The Exhortation speaks to all those that are yet in a state of Enmity, and unreconciled to God unto this Day. O that my Words might prevail, and that you would now be intreated to be reconciled to God! The Ambassadors of Peace are yet with you, the Treaty is not yet ended, the Master of the House is not yet risen up, nor the Door of Mercy and Hope finally shut: Hitherto God hath waited to be gracious, O that the long-suffering of God might be your Salvation: A Day is hastening when God will treat with you no more, when a Gulph shall be fixed betwixt him and you for ever, *Luke*

13. 25. O what will you do when the Season of Mercy, and all Hopes of Mercy shall end together! When God shall become inaccessible, inexorable, and unreconcilable to you for evermore.

O what wilt thou do, when thou shalt find thy self shut up under Eternal Wrath! When thou shalt feel that Misery thou art now warned of! Is this the Place where I must be! Are these the Torments I must endure! What, for ever! Yea, for ever: Will not God be satisfied with the Sufferings of a Thousand Years? No, nor of Millions of Years! Ah Sinners, did you but clearly see the present and future Misery of unreconciled ones, and what that Wrath of the great and terrible God is, which is coming as fast as the Wings of Time can bring it upon you, it would certainly drive you to Christ, or drive you out of your Wits. O 'tis a dreadful Thing to have God for your Eternal Enemy: To have the great and terrible God setting on Work his Infinite Power, to avenge the abuse of his Grace and Mercy.

Believe it Friends, it's a fearful Thing to fall into Hands of the living God: Knowing the Terrors of the Lord we persuade Men: An Eternal Weight hangs upon an inch of Time. O that you did know the Time of your Visitation! That you would not dare to Adventure, and run the hazard of one Day more in an unreconciled State.

Thirdly and Lastly, This Point speaks to those who have believed our Report, who have taken hold of God's Strength, and made Peace with him: Who had not obtained Mercy, but now have obtained Mercy: Who once were as far off, but now are made nigh by the Blood of Christ: With you I would leave a few Words of Exhortation, and I have done.

First, *Admire and stand amaz'd at this, Mercy. I will praise thee O Lord* (saith the Church, *Isa.* 12. 1.) *Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. O how over-whelming a Mercy is here before you! God is at Peace, at Peace with you that were Enemies in your Minds by wicked Works, Colos.* 1. 21. At Peace with you, and at Enmity with Millions as good by Nature as you: At Peace with you that sought it not: At Peace for ever, no dissolving this friendship for evermore. O let this Consideration thaw your Hearts before the Lord, and make you cry, What am I Lord, that Mercy should take in me, and shut out fallen Angels, and Millions of Men and Women as capable of Mercy as my self! O the Riches! O the Depths of the Mercy and Goodness of God!

Secondly, *Beware of New Breaches with God: God will speak Peace to his People and to his Saints, but let not them return any more to Folly*, *Palm* 85. 8. What if this State of Friendship can never be dissolved, yet it is a dreadful Thing to have it clouded: You may lose the Sense of Peace, and with it all the Joy of your Hearts, and Comforts of your Lives, in this World.

Thirdly, *Labour to reconcile others to God*, especially those that are endeared to you by the Bonds of natural Relation: When *Paul* was reconciled to God himself, his Heart was full of heaviness for others that were not reconciled, for his Brethren and Kinsmen according to the

Fleish,

Flesh, Rom. 9. 2, 3. When Abraham was become God's Friend himself, then, O that Ishmael might live before thee! Gen. 17. 18.

Fourthly and Lastly, Let your Reconciliation with God relieve you under all Burdens of Affliction you shall meet with in your way to Heaven: Let them that are at Enmity with God, droop

under Crosses and Afflictions, but don't you do so. *Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia*, Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3. Let the Peace of God keep your Hearts and Minds. As nothing can Comfort a Man that must to Hell at last, so nothing should deject a Man that shall through many Troubles win Heaven at last.

Serm. 4.

The Fourth S E R M O N.

JOHN VI. xlv.

No Man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him.

Explaining the Work of the Spirit, as the internal and most effectual means of the Application of Christ.

OUR Last Discourse informed you of the usefulness and influence of the Preaching of the Gospel, in order to the Application of Christ to the Souls of Men: There must be (in God's ordinary way) the external Ministerial offer of Christ, before Men can have Union with him.

But yet all the Preaching in the World, can never Effect this Union with Christ in it self, and in its own Vertue, except a supernatural and mighty Power go forth with it for that End and Purpose. Let Boanerges and Barnabas try their Strength, let the Angels of Heaven be the Preachers; till God draw, the Soul cannot come to Christ.

No saving Benefit is to be had by Christ without Union with his Person, no Union with his Person without Faith, no Faith ordinarily wrought without the Preaching of the Gospel by Christ's Ambassadors, there Preaching hath no saving Efficacy without God's drawings, as will evidently appear by considering these Words, and the Occasion of them.

Cameron's
Myrothes.
p. 139.

The Occasion of these Words is found (as Learned Cameron well observes) in the 42 verse. *And they said, Is not this Jesus the Son of Joseph, whose Father and Mother we know?* Christ had been pressing upon them in his Ministry, the great and necessary Duty of Faith, but notwithstanding the Authority of the Preacher, the Holiness of his Life, the Miracles by which he confirmed his Doctrine, they still objected against him, *is not this the Carpenters Son?* From whence Christ takes the Occasion of these Words: *No Man can come unto me, except my Father which hath sent me draw him*, q. d. In vain is the Authority of my Person urged, in vain are all the Miracles wrought in your sight, to confirm the Doctrine preached to you, till that secret Almighty Power of the Spirit be put forth upon your Hearts, you will not, you cannot come unto me.

The Words are a Negative Proposition.

In which the Author, and powerful Manner of Divine Operation in working Faith are contained: There must be drawing before believing, and that drawing must be the drawing of God: Every Word hath its weight, we will consider them in the Order they lie in the Text. *Who* — *No Man* not one, let his natural Qualifications by what they will, let his external Advantages, in respect of Means and Helps,

be never so great: It is not in the Power of any Man: All Persons, in all Ages, need the same Power of God, one as well as another: Every Man is alike dead, impotent, and averse to Faith in his Natural Capacity. No Man, or — not one, among all the Sons of Men.

Who — *Can*] or is able: He speaks of impotency to special and saving Actions, such as believing in Christ is: No Act that is saving, can be done without the Concurrence of special Grace. Other Acts that have a remote tendency to it, are performed by a more general concurrence and common Assistance, so Men may come to the Word, and attend what is spoken, remember, and consider what the Word tells them; but as to believing, or coming to Christ, that no Man can do of himself, or by a general and common Assistance. No Man can.

Who — *draws me*] (i. e.) believe in me unto Salvation. Coming to Christ, and believing in him, are Terms *equivalent*, and are indifferently used to express the Nature of saving Faith, as is plain from ver. 35. *He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst*: It Notes the Terms from which, and to which the Soul moves, and the voluntariness of the Motion, notwithstanding that Divine Power by which the Will is drawn to Christ.

Who — *Except my Father*] not excluding the other Two Persons, for every Work of God relating to the Creatures is common to all the Three Persons, nor only to Note that the Father is the first in order of working: But the Reason is hinted in the next Words.

Who — *Who hath sent me*] God having entered into Covenant with the Son and sent him, stands obliged by that *Pactum* to bring the promised Seed to him, and that he doth by drawing them to Christ by Faith: So the next Words tell us the Father doth.

Who — *Draw him*] that is, powerfully and effectually incline his Will to come to Christ: Not by a violent Co-action, but by a benevolent bending of the Will which was averse; and as it is not in the way of Force and Compulsion, so neither is it by a simple Moral *suggestion*, by the bare Proposal of an Object to the Will, and so leaving the Sinner to his own Election, but it is such a Persuasion as hath a mighty overcoming Efficacy accompanying it: Of which more anon.

The

The Words thus opened, the Observation will be this:

Doct. That it is utterly impossible for any Man to come to Jesus Christ, unless he be drawn unto him by the special and mighty Power of God.

No Man is compelled to come to Christ against his Will, he that cometh, comes willingly, but even that will and desire to come is the Effect of Grace, *1 Thil. 2. 13. It is God that worketh in you both to will, and to do, of his own good Pleasure.*

U ergo desideremus adiutorium, hoc quoque est gratia; ipsa namque incipit effundere, ut incipiat perficere. *Fulg. 6. ad Theod.*

If we desire the Help and Assistance of Grace (saith *Fulgentius*) even the Desire is of Grace; Grace must first be shed forth upon us, before we can begin to desire it: By Grace are ye saved through Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God, *Eph 2. 8.* Suppose the utmost degree of natural Ability, let a Man be as much disposed and prepared as Nature can dispose or prepare him, and to all this add the Proposal of the greatest Arguments and Motives to induce him to come; let all these have the Advantage of the fittest Season to work upon his Heart; yet no Man can come till God draw him: We move as we are moved; as Christs coming to us, so our coming to him are the pure Effects of Grace.

Three Things require Explication in this Point before us.

First, *What the drawing of the Father imports.*

Secondly, *In what Manner he draws Men to Christ.*

Thirdly, *How it appears that none come till they be so drawn.*

First, *What the drawing of the Father imports.*

To open this, let it be considered, that Drawing is usually distinguish'd in *Physical* and *Moral*. The former is by Co-action, force, and Compulsion, this by a sweet congruous Efficacy upon the Will: As to Violence and Compulsion, it is none of God's Way and Method, it being both against the Nature of the Will of Man which cannot be forced, and against the Will of Jesus Christ, who loves to reign over a free and willing People, *Psaln 110. 4. The People shall be willing in the Day of thy Power:* Or as that Word may be rendered, they shall be *voluntarinesses*, as willing as willingness it self: It is not then by a forcible Co-action, but in a *Moral* way of Persuasion, that God the Father draws Men to Jesus Christ: He draws with the Bands of a Man, as they are called, *Hos. 11. 14. (i. e.)* in a way of rational Conviction of the Mind and Conscience, and effectual Persuasion of the Will.

But yet by *Moral Persuasion*, we must not understand a simple and bare Proposal, or tender of Christ and Grace, leaving it still at the Sinners choice, whether he will comply with it or no. * For though God do not force the Will contrary to its Nature, yet there is a real internal Efficiency implied in this drawing, or an immediate Operation of the Spirit upon the Heart and Will, which in a way congruous and suitable to its Nature, takes away the Rebellion and Reluctance of it, and of unwilling makes it willing to come to Christ: And in this Respect we own a *Physical*, as well as a *Moral* Influence of the Spirit in this Work: And so the Scriptures expresse it, *Eph. 1. 19, 20. That we may patiently know what is the exceeding greatness of his Power towards us who believe, according to the working*

of his mighty Power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the Dead: Here is much more than a naked Proposal made to the Will, there is a Power as well as a tender, greatness of Power, and yet more, the exceeding greatness of his Power; and this Power hath an actual Efficiency ascribed to it, he Works upon our Hearts and Wills according to the working of his mighty Power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead: Thus he fulfils in us all the good Pleasure of his Will, and the Work of Faith with Power, *2 Thes. 1. 11.*

And this is that which the Schools call *gratia Efficax*, effectual Grace, and others *vis Frix* *Delectatio*, an overcoming conquering Delight: Thus the Work is carried on with a most efficacious sweetness. So that the Liberty of the Will is not infringed, whilst the Obstinacy of the Will is effectually subdued and over-ruled: For want of this there are so many almost Christians in the World, hence are all those vanishing imperfect Works which come to nothing, called in Scripture a *Morning Cloud*, an *Early Dew*: Had this mighty Power gone forth with the Word, they had never vanished, or perished like *Embryos* as they do. So then, God draws not only in a Moral way, by proposing a suitable Object to the Will, but also in a *Physical* way, or by immediate powerful Influence upon the Will: Not infringing the Liberty of it, but yet infallibly and effectually perswading it to come to Christ.

Secondly, Next let us consider the marvellous Way and Manner, in which the Lord draws the Souls of poor Sinners to Jesus Christ, and you will find he doth it.

1. Gradually,
2. Congruously,
3. Powerfully,
4. Effectually, and
5. Finally.

First, This blessed Work is carried on by the Spirit *gradually*, bringing the Soul, step by step, in the due Method and Order of the Gospel to Christ; Illumination, Conviction, Compunction, prepare the Way to Christ; and then Faith unites the Soul to him: Without Humiliation there can be no Faith, *Mat. 21. 32. Ye repented not, that ye might believe:* 'Tis the burdensome Sense of Sin that brings the Soul to Christ for rest, *Mat. 11. 28. Come unto me ye that are weary and heavy laden:* But without Conviction there can be no Compunction, no Humiliation; be that is not convinced of his Sin and Misery, never bewails it, nor mourns for it: Never was there one Tear of true Repentance seen to drop from the Eye of an unconvinced Sinner.

And without *Illumination*, there can be no Conviction, for what is Conviction but the Application of the Light which is in the Understanding or Mind of a Man to his Heart and Conscience? *Act. 2. 37.* In this Order therefore the Spirit (ordinarily) draws Souls to Christ, he shines into their Minds by Illumination, applies that Light to their Consciences by effectual Conviction, breaks and wounds their Hearts for Sin in Compunction, and then moves the Will to embrace and close with Christ, in the way of Faith, for Life and Salvation.

These several steps are more distinctly discerned in some Christians than in others; they are

more

* Non videmus Deum concionantem, docentem, tacum ac si videmus, credimus, habet enim omnis veritas vim inclinativam, & major, majorem; & maxima, maximum: contra-ry to its Nature, yet there is a real internal Efficiency implied in this drawing, or an immediate Operation of the Spirit upon the Heart and Will, which in a way congruous and suitable to its Nature, takes away the Rebellion and Reluctance of it, and of unwilling makes it willing to come to Christ: And in this Respect we own a *Physical*, as well as a *Moral* Influence of the Spirit in this Work: And so the Scriptures expresse it, *Eph. 1. 19, 20. That we may patiently know what is the exceeding greatness of his Power towards us who believe, according to the working*

more clearly to be seen in the *Adult Convert*, than those that were drawn to Christ in their Youth; in such as were drawn to him out of a State of Prophaneness, than those that had the Advantage of a pious Education; but in this Order the Work is carried on ordinarily in all, however it differ in Point of clearness in the one, and in the other.

Secondly, He draws Sinners to Christ *Congruously*, and very agreeably to the Nature and Way of Man. So he speaks, *Hosia* 11. 4. *I drew them with the Cords of a Man, with Bands of Love*: Not as Beasts are drawn, but as Men are inclined and wrought to Compliance by rational Conviction of their Judgments, and powerful Persuasion of their Wills; the Minds of Sinners are naturally blinded by Ignorance, *2 Cor.* 4. 3, 4. And their Affections are twitted to their Lusts, *Gal.* 3. 4. and whilst it is thus, no Arguments or Intreaties can possibly prevail to bring them off from the ways of Sin to Christ.

The way therefore which the Lord takes to win and draw them to Christ, is by rectifying their false Apprehensions, and shewing them infinitely more good in Christ than in the Creature, and in their Lusts; yea, by satisfying their Understandings that there is Goodness enough in Jesus Christ, to whom he is drawing them.

First, To out-bid all Temporal Good, which is to be denied for his sake.

Secondly, To preponderate all Temporal Evils which are to be suffered for his sake.

First, That there is more good in Christ than in all Temporal good Things, which we are to deny, or forsake, upon his Account: This being once clearly and convincingly discovered to the Understanding, the Will is thereby prepared to quit all that which entangles and withholds it from coming to Christ: There is no Man that loves Money so much, but he will willingly Part with it for that which is more worth to him than the Sum he Parts with to purchase it: *Mat.* 13. 45, 46. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a Merchant-Man, seeking goodly Pearls, who when he hath found one Pearl of great Price, heeth it.*

Such an invaluable Pearl is Jesus Christ, infinitely more worth than all that a poor Sinner hath to part with for him, and is a more real good than the Creature. These are but vain Shadows, *Prov.* 23. 5. Christ is a solid substantial Good: Yea, he is, and by Conviction appears to be a more suitable Good than the Creature: The World cannot justify and save, but Christ can. He is a more durable Good than any Creature-comfort is, or can be: *The fashion of this World passeth away*, *1 Cor.* 7. 31. But durable Riches and Righteousness are in him, *Prov.* 8. 17. Thus Christ appears in the Day of Conviction infinitely more excellent than the World, he out-bids all the offers that the World can make, and this gives the main stroke to this Work, of drawing a Soul to Jesus Christ.

Secondly, And then (to remove every block out of the way to Christ) God discovers to the Soul enough in him to preponderate, and much more than recompence, all the Evils and Sufferings it can endure for his sake.

'Tis true, they that close with Christ, close with his Cross also: They must expect to save no more but their Souls by him: He tells us what we must trust to, *Luke* 14. 26, 27. *If any Man*

come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters; yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple: And whosoever doth not bear his Cross, and come after me, cannot be my Disciple.

To read such a Text as this, with such a Comment upon it as Satan and our own Flesh can make, is enough to scare a Man from Christ for ever: Nor is it possible, by all the Arguments in the World, to draw any Soul to Christ upon such Terms as these, till the Lord convince it, that there is enough, and much more than enough in Jesus Christ, to recompence all these Sufferings and Losses we endure for him.

But when the Soul is satisfied, that these Sufferings are but external upon the vile Body, but the Benefit that comes by Christ is internal in a Mans own Soul, these Afflictions are but Temporal, *Rom.* 8. 18. But Christ and his Benefits are Eternal: This must needs prevail with the Will to come over to Christ, notwithstanding all the evils of Suffering that Accompany him, when the reality of all this is discovered by the Lord, and the Power of God goes along with these Discoveries. Thus the Lord draws in our own way, by rational Convictions of the Understanding, and Allurements of the Will.

And it's possible, this may be the Reason why some poor Souls mis-judge the workings of the Spirit of God upon themselves, thinking they never had that wonderful and mighty Power of God in Conversion acting upon their Hearts, because they find all that is done upon their Hearts that way, is done in the ordinary Course and Method of Nature: They consider, compare, are convinced, and then resolve to chuse Christ and his Ways; whereas they expect to feel some strange Operations that shall have the visible Characters of the immediate Power of God upon them, and such a Power they might discern, if they would consider it as working in this Way and Method: But they cannot distinguish Gods Acts from their own, and that puzzles them.

Thirdly, The drawings of the Father are very powerful. *The Arm of the Lord is revealed in this Work*, *Isa.* 53. 1. It was a powerful Word indeed, that made the Light at first shine out of Darkness, and no less Power is required to make it shine into our Hearts, *2 Cor.* 5. 14. That Day in which the Soul is made willing to come to Christ, is call'd the *Day of his Power*, *Psalm* 110. 3. The Scripture expresth the Work of Conversion by a Threefold Metaphor, viz.

That of a Resurrection from the dead, *Rom.* 6. 4.

That of Creation, *Ephes.* 2. 10. And

That of Victory or Conquest, *2 Cor.* 10. 4, 5. All these set forth the Infinite Power of God in this Work, for no less than Almighty Power is required to each of them; and if you strictly examine the distinct Notions, you shall find the Power of God more and more illustriously display'd in each of them.

To raise the Dead is the Effect of Almighty Power, but then the Resurrection supposeth pre-existent Matter. In the Work of Creation, there is no pre-existent Matter, but then there is no Opposition: That which is not, rebels not against the Power that gives it Being. But Victory and Conquest supposeth Opposition, all the Power of corrupt Nature arming it self, and fighting against God, but yet not able to frustrate his Design. Let

*Furibis
humana-
(i.e.) humanis
Non
quibus tra-
hi ac deduci
soleret.*

*Suavis mor-
tus in ver-
bo fortis
radix in
Dro. Est
enim qua-
dam ne-
cessitas vo-
luntaria.
Moulin.
Anat. Ar-
min.*

Let the Soul whom the Father draws, strug-
gle and reluctate as much as it can, it shall
come, yea, and come willingly too, when the
drawing Power of God is upon it. O the Self-
conflicts, the contrary resolves with which the
Soul finds it self distracted and rent asunder !
The hopes and fears, the encouragements and
discouragements, they will, and they will not !
But victorious Grace conquers all opposition at
last. We find an excellent Example of this in

** Ita dua
vo. n. nes
mea, una
verus, alia
mors, illa
carnalis,
illa spiri-
tualis con-
flictabat
inter se atq;
disceden-
do diffra-
bant ani-
mam me-
am.—ibi
enim ma-
gis jam
non ego,
quia ex
magna par-
te id pati-
ebar invir-
tus, quod
faciebam
volens.*

blest *Augustine*, * who speaks of this very
Work, the drawing of his Soul to Christ, and
how he felt in that Day two Wills in himself,
one old, the other new ; one Carnal, the other
Spiritual, and how in these their contrary Mo-
tions and Conflicts he was torn asunder in his
own Thoughts and Resolutions, suffering that
unwillingly, which he did willingly. And cer-
tainly, if we consider how deep the Soul is
rooted by natural Inclination, and long con-
tinued custom in Sin, how extremely averse it
is to the Ways of strict Godliness, and Mortifica-
tion, how Satan, that invidious Enemy, that
strong Man armed, fortifies the Souls to de-
fend his possession against Christ, and intren-
ches himself in the Understanding, Will, and Af-
fections, by deep rooted prejudices against Christ
and Holiness, it is the Wonder of Wonders to
see a Soul quitting all its beloved Lusts, and
fleshy Interests and Endearments, and coming
willingly under Christ's Yoke.

*Aug. con-
f. lib. 8.
c. 5.*

Fourthly, The drawings of God are very ef-
fectual : There is indeed a common and ineffec-
tual Work upon Hypocrites and Apostates, call'd
in Scripture a *morning Cloud*, an *early
Dew*, *Hos. 6. 4.* These may believe for a time,
and fall away at last, *Luke 8. 13.* Their Wills
may be half won, they may be drawn half way
to Christ, and return again. So it was with

*Suadere
est com-
mis, persua-
dere effici-
entis: Sua-
des qui
consulti,
persuades
qui quo
vult indi-
cis bom-
nem.
Erasim.*

Agrippa, *Acts 26. 28.* *is in me miser*, within a
very little thou perswadedest me to be a Christi-
an : But in God's elected ones it is effectual :
Their Wills are not only almost, but altogether
perswaded to Embrace Christ, and quit the
Ways of Sin, how pleasant, gainful and dear
soever they have been to them : The Lord not
only draws, but draws home those Souls to
Christ, *John 6. 37.* *All that the Father hath giv-
en me, shall come to me.*

It is confessed, that in the drawing home of
the very elect to Christ, there may be, and fre-
quently are, many pauses, stands, and demurs ;
they have Convictions, Affections and Resolutions
stirring in them, which like early Blossoms
seem to be nipt and die away again. There is
frequently (in young ones especially) an hopeful
appearance of Grace, they make Conscience of
Sins, and Duties : They have sometimes notable
rouzings and awakenings under the Word, they
are observed to affect retirements for Meditation
and Prayer, and delight to be in the Company of
Christians ; and after all this, youthful Lusts and
Vanities are found to rise and choak these hope-
ful beginnings, and the work seems to stand (it
may be some years) at a pause, however at last
the Lord makes it victorious over all opposition,
and sets it home with Power upon their Hearts.

Fifthly, To conclude, Those whom the Father
draws to Christ, he draws to him finally and for-
ever. *The gifts and calling of God are without Re-
pentance*, *Rom. 11. 29.* They are so as to God

the giver, he never repents that he hath called
his People into the Fellowship of his Son Christ
Jesus : And they are so on the Believers part,
he is never sorry, whatever he afterwards meets
with, that he is come to Christ.

There is a time when Christians are drawn
to Christ, but there shall never be a time in
which they shall be drawn away from Christ,
Jer. 10. 29. There's no plucking them out of
the Fathers Hand. It was common to a Proverb
in the Primitive Times, when they would ex-
press an Impossibility, *You may as soon draw a
Christian from Christ as do it* : When Christ asked
that Question of the Disciples, *Will ye also go
away ?* Lord (saith Peter in the name of them all)
*to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the Words of eternal
Life*, *John 6. 68.* They that are thus drawn, do
with full purpose of Heart, cleave unto the Lord.
And thus of the manner and quality of effectual
drawing.

Thirdly, In the last place, I am to evince the
impossibility of coming to Christ without the Fa-
thers drawings : And this will evidently appear
upon the consideration of these two particulars.

First, The difficulty of this Work is above all
the power of nature to overcome.

Secondly, That little Power and Ability that
Nature hath, it will never Employ to such a pur-
pose as this, till the drawing Power of God be
upon the Will of a Sinner.

First, If all the power of Nature were employ'd
in this design, yet such are the difficulties of this
Work, that it surmounts all the Abilities of
Nature : This the Scripture roundly and plain-
ly affirms, *Eph. 2. 8.* *By Grace are ye saved
through Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the
Gift of God.* To think of Christ is easy, but to
come to Christ is (to Nature) impossible : To
send forth lazy and ineffectual wishes to Christ
we may, but to bring Christ and the Soul to-
gether, requires the Almighty Power of God,
Eph. 1. 19. The Grace of Faith by which we
come to Christ, is as much the free Gift of
God, as Christ himself who is the Object of
Faith, *Phil. 1. 29.* *To you it is freely given to be-
lieve.* And this will easily let it self into your
Understandings, if you but consider.

Subject, { of this Work of Faith, or com-
The { Act, and { ing to Christ.
Enemies }

First, Consider the Subject of Faith in which
it wrought, or what it is that is drawn to
Christ : 'Tis the Heart of a Sinner ; which is nat-
urally as indisposed to this Work, as the Wood
which *Elijah* laid in order upon the Altar was
to catch Fire, when he had poured so much Wa-
ter upon it as did not only wet the Wood,
but also fill'd up the Trench round about it,
1 Kings 18. 33. For it's naturally a dark, blind,
and ignorant Heart, *Job 11. 12.* And such a
Heart can never believe, till he that command-
ed the light to shine out of darkness do shine
into it, *2 Cor. 5. 15.*

Nor will it avail any thing to say, though Man
be born in darkness and ignorance, yet after-
wards he may acquire knowledge in the use of
means, as we see many natural Men do in a very
high degree : For this is not that light that brings
the Soul to Christ, yea, this natural unassisted
light blinds the Soul, and prejudices it more a-
gainst Christ than ever it was before, *1 Cor. 1. 21, 26.*

As

As it is a blind and ignorant Heart, so it's a selfish Heart by Nature: All its deligns and aims terminate in Self: This is the centre and weight of the Soul, no Righteousness but 'tis own is fought after, that, or none, *Rom. 10. 3.* Now for a Soul to renounce and deny Self in all its forms, modes, and interests, as every one doth that cometh to Christ; to disclaim and deny natural, moral, and religious Self, and come to Christ, as a poor, miserable, wretched, empty Creature; to live upon his Righteousness for ever, is as supernatural and wonderful, as to see the Hills and Mountains start from their Bases and Centres, and fly like wandering Atomes in the Air.

Nay, this Heart which is come to Christ, is not only dark and selfish, but full of pride. O 'tis a desperate proud Heart by Nature, it cannot submit to come to Christ as *Benhadads* Servants came to the *King of Israel*, with Sackcloth on their Loyns, and Ropes upon their Heads. To take guilt, shame and confusion of Face to our selves, and acknowledge the Righteousness of God in our eternal Damnation; to come to Christ naked and empty, as one that justifies the ungodly: I say, Nature left to it self, would as soon be Damned as do this: The proud Heart can never come to this, till the Lord have humbled and broken it by his power.

Secondly, Let us take the *All* of Faith into consideration also, as it is here described, by the *Souls coming to Jesus Christ*, and you will find a necessity of the Fathers drawings, for this evidently implies that which is *against the stream* and current of corrupt Nature, and that which is *above the Sphere* and Capacity of the most refined and accomplished Nature.

First, it's against the stream and current of our corrupt Nature to come to Christ. For let us but consider the *Term* from which the Soul departs when it comes to Christ. In that Day it leaves all its Lusts and ways of Sin, how pleasant, sweet and profitable soever they have been unto it, *Isa. 55. 7.* Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous Man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord: Way and thoughts, (i. e.) Both the practice, and delight of Sin, must be forsaken, the outward and inward Man must be cleansed from it. Now there are in the bosoms of unregenerate Men such darling Lusts, that have given so much *practical* and *speculative* pleasure, which have brought so much profit to them, which have been born and bred up with them, and which, upon all these accounts, are endeared to their Souls in that degree, that it's easier for them to die, than to forsake them: Yea, nothing is more common among such Men, than to venture eternal Damnation, rather than suffer a separation from their Sins.

And which is yet much more difficult in coming to Christ, the Soul forsakes not only its *'sinful self'*, but its *righteous self*: (i. e.) not only its worst Sins, but its best performances, accomplishments, and excellencies. Now this is one of the greatest straits that Nature can be put to: *Righteousness* by Works was the first Liquor that ever was put into a Vessel, and it still retains the tang and favour of it, and will to the end of the World, *Rom. 10. 3.* For they being ignorant of Gods righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the Righteousness of God. i. e. *in unbelief*, they

have not submitted: To come naked and empty to Christ, and receive all from him as a free Gift, is to proud corrupt Nature the greatest abasement and submission in the World.

Let the Gospel furnish its Table with the richest and costliest Dainties that ever the Blood of Christ purchased, such is the pride of Nature, that it disdains to taste them, except it may also pay the reckoning. If the old *Hive* be removed from the place where it was wont to stand, the *Bees* will come home to the old place, yea, and many of them you shall find will die there, rather than go to the *Hive*, though it stand in a far better place than it did before. Just so stands the case with Men. The *Hive* is removed, (i. e.) we are no more to expect Righteousness as *Adam* did, by obeying and working, but by believing, and coming to Christ; but Nature had as lieve be damned as do this: It still goes about to establish its own Righteousness.

Virtues, Duties, and Moral Excellencies, these are the Ornaments of Nature, here is Nature set off in its sumptuous attire and rich Embellishments, and now to renounce it, disclaim and condemn it as dross and dung in comparison of Christ as believers do, *Phil. 3. 8.* This, I say, is against the grain of Nature. We reckon it the strange effect of Self-denial in *Mahomet the Great*, who being so enamoured with his beautiful *Irene*, ^{Known to be the History of the Turks.} would be persuaded, upon reasons of State, with his own Hand to strike off her Head, and that when he appeared with all her rich Ornaments before him, rather like such a *Goddeſs*, as the Poets in their ecstasies use to feign, than a Mortal Creature: And yet certainly this is nothing to that Self-denial which is exercised in our coming to Christ.

Secondly, And if we look to the other *Term* to which the Soul moves, we shall find it acting as much above the *Sphere* and Ability of improved Nature, as here it acts and moves against the stream and current of corrupted Nature: For how wonderful and supernatural an Adventure is that, which the Soul makes in the Day that it comes to Jesus Christ!

Surely, for any poor Soul to venture it self for ever upon Jesus Christ whom it never saw, nay, upon Christ whose very existence its own unbelief calls into Question whether he be or no: And that when it's even weighed down to the Dust, with the burdensome Sense of its own villainess and total unworthiness, feeling nothing in it self but Sin and Misery, the workings of Death and fears of Wrath: To go to Christ, of whose pardoning Grace and Mercy it never had any the least experience, nor can find any ground of hope in it self that it shall be accepted; this is as much above the power of Nature, as it is for a Stone to rise from the Earth, and fix it self among the Stars: Well might the *Apostle* ascribe it to that Almighty Power which raised up Christ from the dead, *Eph. 1. 19, 20.* If the Lord draw not the Soul, and that with an omnipotent Pull, it can never come from it self to Christ. And yet farther,

Thirdly, The Natural impossibility of coming to Christ will more clearly appear, if we consider the *Enemies* to Faith, or what blocks are rold by *Saran* and his Instruments into the way to Christ: To mention (in this place) no more but our carnal reason, as it's armed and managed

by the subtilty of *Satan*, what a wonder is it that any Soul should come to Christ?

These are the strong Holds (mentioned 2 Cor. 10. 4.) out of which those objections, fears and discouragements fall, by which the Soul is fiercely assaulted in the way to Christ?

Wilt thou forsake all thy pleasures, merry Company, and sensible comforts, to live a sad, retired, pensive life? Wilt thou beggar and undo thy self, let go thy comforts in hand, for an hope of that which thine Eyes never saw, nor hast thou any certainty that it's any more than a fancy? Wilt thou, that hast lived in Reputation and Credit all thy life, now become the scorn and contempt of the World? Thinkest thou thy self able to live such a strict, severe, mortified and self-denying a life, as the Word of God requires? And what if Perfection should arise, (as thou must expect it will) canst thou forsake Father and Mother, Wife and Children, yea, and give up thine own life too, to a cruel and bloody Death? Be advised better, before thou resolve in so important a matter: What thinkest thou of thy Fore-fathers, that lived and died in that way thou art now leaving? Art thou wiser than they? Do not the generality of Men walk in the same Paths thou hast hitherto walked in? If this way lead to Hell as thou fearest it may, think then how many Millions of Men must perish as well as thy self, and is such a supposition consistent with the gracious and Merciful Nature of God? Besides, think what sort of People those are unto whom thou art about to join thy self in this new way? Are there not to be found among them many things to discourage thee, and cool thy Zeal? They are generally of the lower and baser sort of Men, poor and despicable: Seest thou not tho' their Profession be Holy, how earthly, carnal, proud, factious, and hypocritical, many of them are found to be! And doubtless the rest are like them, though their Hypocrisie be not yet discovered.

O what stands and demurs! What hesitations and doubts is the Soul clogg'd with in its way to Christ! But yet none of these can withhold and detain the Soul, when the Father draws: Greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the World: And thus you see the Nature, Manner, and Efficacy of Divine drawings, and how impossible it is for any Soul to come to Christ without them.

The Inferences and Improvements of the Point follow.

Infer. 1. *How deeply and thoroughly is the Nature of Man corrupted, and what an Enemy is every Man to his own happiness, that he must be drawn to it?* Joh. 5. 40. *You will not come unto me, that ye might have life.*

Life is desirable in every Mans Eyes, and Eternal is the most excellent Life; yet in this the World is agreed rather to die and perish for ever, than come to Christ for Life. Had Christ told us of Fields and Vineyards, Sheep and Oxen, Gold and Silver, Honours and Sensual Pleasures, who would not have come to him for these? But to tell him of Mortification, Self-denial, strictness of Life, and Sufferings for his sake, and all for an happiness to be enjoyed in the World to come, Nature will never like such a Proposition as this.

You see where it sticks, not in a simple inability

to believe, but in an inability complicated with enmity, they neither can come, nor will come to Christ: 'Tis true, all that do come to Christ come willingly, but thanks to the Grace of God that hath freed and persuaded the Will, else they had never been willing to come: Who ever found his own Heart first stir and move towards Christ? How long may we wait and expect, before we shall feel our Hearts naturally burn with desires after, and love to Jesus Christ?

This aversion of the Will and Affections from God, is one of the Master Roots of Original Sin. No Argument can prevail to bring the Soul to Christ, till this be master'd and over-powered by the Fathers drawings. In our motions to Sin we need *trigging*, but in all our motions to Christ we as much need *drawing*. He that comes to Heaven may say, Lord, if I had had my own way and will, I had never come here: If thou hadst not drawn me, I should never have come to thee. O the Riches of the Grace of God! Oh unparallel'd Mercy and Goodness! Not only to prepare such a Glory of this for an *unworthy* Soul, but to put forth the exceeding greatness of thy power, afterwards to draw an *unwilling* Soul to the enjoyment of it.

Infer. 2. *What enemies are they to God and the Souls of Men, that do all they can to discourage and hinder the Conversion of Men to Christ? God draws forward, and these do all that in them lies to draw backward, (i. e.) to prejudice and discourage them from coming to Jesus Christ in the way of Faith: This is a direct opposition to God, and a plain confederacy with the Devil.*

O how many have been thus discouraged in their way to Christ, by their carnal Relations, I cannot say Friends! Their greatest Enemies have been the Men of their own House: These have pleaded (as if the Devil had hired and feed'd them) against the everlasting welfare of their own Flesh. O cruel Parents, Brethren, and Sisters, that jeer, frown, and threaten, where they should encourage, assist and rejoice! Such Parents are the Devils Children. *Satan* chuses such Instruments as you are above all others for this Work: He knows what Influence and Authority you have upon them, and over them: And what fear, love, and dependance they have for you, and upon you: So that none in all the World are like to manage the design of their Damnation so effectually as you are like to do it.

Will you neither come to Christ your selves, nor suffer your dear Relations that would? Had you rather find them in the *Ac-house*, than in the Closet? Did you instrumentally give them their Being, and will you be the Instruments of ruining for ever those Beings they had from you? Did you so earnestly desire Children, so tenderly Nurse and provide for them, take such delight in them, and after all this do what in you lies to Damn and Destroy them? If these lines shall fall into any such Hands, O that God would set home the Conviction and Sense of this horrid Evil upon their Hearts.

And no less guilty of this Sin are scandalous and loose Professors, who serve to furnish the Devil with the greatest arguments he hath to dissuade Men from coming to Christ: 'Tis your Looseness and Hypocrisie by which he hopes to scare others from Christ. It's said, *Cant. 2. 7. I charge you by the Roses and Hinds of the Field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my beloved till he please.* Roes

Roes and Hinds (like young Converts, and comers towards Christ) are shy and timorous Creatures that start at the least sound, or yelp of a Dog, and fly away : Take heed what you do in this case, lest you go down to Hell under the guilt of damning more Souls than your own.

Infer. 3. *Learn hence the true ground and reason of those strange, amazing, and supernatural effects, that you behold and so admire in the World, as often as you see Sinners forfaking their pleasant profitable Corruptions and Companions, and embracing the ways of Christ, Godliness, and Mortification.*

It is said, 1 Pet. 4. 4. *They think it strange that you run not with them into the same excess of Riot*: The Word is in ὁ ἐνικουῶν, they stand at a gaze as the Hen that hath hatch'd Partridge Eggs doth, when she sees them take the Wing and fly away from her.

Beloved, it is the Worlds Wonder to see their Companions in Sin forsake them : Those that were once as prophane and vain as themselves, it may be more, to forsake their Society, retire into their Closets, mourn for Sin, spend their time in Meditation and Prayer, embrace the severest Duties, and content to run the greatest hazards in the World for Christ ; but they see not that Almighty Power that draws them, which is too strong for all the sinful ties and engagements in the World to withhold and detain them.

A Man would have wonder'd to see *Elifha* leave the Oxen and run after *Elijah*, saying, *Let me go, I pray thee, and kiss my Father and Mother, and then I will follow thee*; when *Elijah* had said nothing to persuade him to follow him, only as he pass'd by him, he cast his Mantle on him, *1 Kings* 10 19, 20. Surely, that Soul whom God draws must needs leave all and follow Christ, for the Power of God reſteth on it: All carnal ties and engagements to Sin, break and give way, when the Father draws the Soul to Christ in the Day of his Power.

Infer. 4. Is this the first spring of spiritual Motion after Christ? Learn then from hence, how it comes to pass that so many excellent Sermons and powerful Persuasions are ineffectual, and cannot draw and win the Soul to Christ. Surely it is because Ministers draw alone, and the special saving Power of God goes not forth at all times alike with their endeavours.

Paul was a chosen Vessel, fill'd with a greater Measure of Gifts and Graces by the Spirit, than any that went before him, or followed after him; and as his Talents, so his Diligence in improving them was beyond any recorded Example we read of amongst Men: He rather * flew like a *Seraphim*, than travelled upon his Masters errand about the World. *Apollo* was an eloquent Preacher, and mighty in the Scriptures, yet *Paul* is nothing, and *Apollo* nothing; but God that gives the increase, 1 Cor. 3. 7. We are too apt to admire Men, yea, and the best Men are but too apt to go forth in the strength of their own Parts and Preparations; but God secures his own Glory, and magnifies his own Power frequently in giving success to weaker endeavours, and Men of lower abilities, when the withholds it from Men of more raised, refined, and excellent Gifts and Abilities.

It is our great Honour, who are the Ministers of the Gospel, that we are *evangelists*; ¹ *workers so-*

gether with God, 1 Cor. 3. 9. in his Strength we can prevail, the Weapons of our Warfare are mighty through God, 2 Cor. 10. 4. But if his Presence, blessing and assistance, be not with us, we are nothing, we can do nothing.

If we prepare Diligently, pray Heartily, preach Zealously, and our hearers go as they came, without any spiritual Effects and Fruits of our Labours; what shall we say, but as *Martha* said to Christ, *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died*: Had the Spirit of God gone forth with his especial Efficacy and Blessing with this Prayer, or that Sermon, these Souls had not departed Dead and Senseless from under it.

Infer. 5. Doth all Success and Efficacy depend upon the Fathers drawings? Let none then despair of their unregenerate and carnal Relations, over whose obstinacy they do, and have cause to mourn.

What if they have lain as many Years under the preaching of the Gospel as that poor Man did at the Pool of *Bethesda*, and hitherto to no purpose ? A time may come at last (as it did for him) when the Spirit of God may move upon the Waters ; I mean, put a quickening and converting power into the means, and then the desire of your Souls for them shall be fulfilled.

It may be you have poured out many Prayers and Tears to the Lord for them, you have cried for them as *Abraham* for his Son, *O that Ishmael might live before thee!* O that this poor Husband: Wife, Child, Brother, or Sister, might live in thy sight, and still you see they continue at one rate, carnal, dead and senseless: Well, but yet give not up your hopes, nor cease your pious endeavours, the time may come when the Father may draw as well as you, and then you shall see them quit all, and come to Christ; and nothing shall hinder them. They are now drawn away of their own Lufts, they are easily drawn away by their sinful Companions, but when God draws, none of these shall withdraw them from the Lord Jesus. What is their Ignorance, Obstinance, and hardness of Heart, before that mighty Power that subdues all things to it self? Go therefore to the Lord by Prayer for them, and say, Lord, I have laboured for my poor Relations in vain, I have spent my Exhortations to little purpose: The Work is too difficult for me, I can carry it no farther, but thou canst: O let thy power go forth, they shall be willing in the Day of thy Power.

Infer. 6. If none can come to Christ except the Father draw them, then surely none can be drawn from Christ except the Father leave them: That power which at first drew them to Christ, can secure and establish them in Christ to the end, John 10. 29. My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and no Man is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand.

When the power of God at first draws us out of our natural state to Christ, it finds us not only *impotent*, but *obdurate*, not only unable, but unwilling to come; and yet this power of God prevails against all opposition: How much more is it able to preserve and secure us, when his fear is put into our inward parts, so that we dare not depart, we have no will to depart from him? Well then, if the World say I will enslave thee, if the Devil say I will destroy thee, if the Flesh say I will betray thee, yet

thou art secure and safe, as long as God hath said, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*, Heb. 13. 5.

Infer. 7. *Let this engage you to a constant Attendance upon the Ordinances of God, in which this drawing Power of God is sometimes put forth upon the Hearts of Men.*

Beloved, there are certain Seasons in which the Lord comes nigh to Men in the Ordinances and Duties of his Worship, and we know not at what Time the Lord cometh forth by his Spirit upon this Design: He many Times comes in an Hour when we look not for him, when we think not of him; *I am found of them that sought me not*, Isa. 65. 1. It's good therefore to be found in the way of the Spirit: Had that poor Man, that lay so long at the Pool of Bethesda, reasoned thus with himself, So long have I lain here in vain expecting a Cure, it's to no purpose to wait longer, and so had been absent at that very Time when the Angel came down, he had in all likelihood carried his Disease to the Grave with him.

How dost thou know but this very Sabbath, this Sermon, this Prayer, which thou hast no Heart to attend, and art tempted to neglect, may be the Season, and Instrument, wherein the Lord may do that for thy Soul, which was never yet done upon it?

Infer. 8. *To conclude, How are all the Saints engaged to put forth all the Power and Ability they have for God, who hath put forth his Infinite Almighty Power to draw them to Christ!*

God hath done great Things for your Souls, he hath drawn you out of the miserable State of Sin and Wrath, and that when he lets others go, by Nature as good as you, he hath drawn you into Union with Christ, and Communion with his glorious Privileges. O that you would henceforth employ all the Power you have for God in Duties of Obedience, and in drawing others to Christ as much as in you lies, and say continually with the Church, *Draw me, we will run after thee*, Cant. 1. 4.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

Serm. 5.

The Fifth SERMON.

EPHES. II. i.

And you hath be quickened, who were Dead in Trespasses and Sins.

Opening that Work of the Spirit more particularly, by which the Soul is enabled to apply Christ.

IN the former Sermons we have seen our Union with Christ in the general Nature of it, and the Means by which it is effected, both External by the Preaching of the Gospel, and Internal by the Drawings of the Father. We are now to bring our Thoughts yet closer to this great Mystery, and consider the Bonds or Ligaments by which Christ and Believers are knit together in a blessed oneness.

And if we heedfully observe the Scripture Expressions, and ponder the Nature of this Union, we shall find there are Two Bands which knit Christ and the Soul together, viz.

1. The Spirit on Christs part.
2. Faith on our part.

The Spirit on Christs part, quickening us with Spiritual Life, whereby Christ first takes hold of us, and Faith on our Part, when thus quickened, whereby we take hold of Christ: Accordingly this Union with the Lord Jesus is expressed in Scripture sometimes by one, and sometimes by the other of these Means or Bonds by which it is effected. Christ is sometimes said to be in us; so Col. 1. 27. *Christ in you the hope of Glory*: And Rom. 8. 10. *And if Christ be in you, the Body is Dead because of Sin*. And other Times it is expressed by the other Bond on our Part, as 1 John 5. 20. *We are in him that is true, even in his Son Christ Jesus*: And 2 Cor. 5. 17. *If any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature*.

The Difference betwixt both these, is thus aptly expressed by a late Author, "Christ is in Believers by his Spirit, 1 John 4. 13. The Believer is in Christ by Faith, 1 John 12. Christ is in the Believer by Inhabitation, Rom. 8. 10. The Believer is in Christ by Implantation, Rom. 6. 35. Christ is in the Believer as

"the Head is in the Body, Col. 1. 18. As the Root in the Branches, John 15. 5. Believers are in Christ as the Members are in the Head," Eph. 1. 23. or as the Branches are in the Root, John 15. 1, 7. Christ in the Believer implieth Life and Influence from Christ, Col. 3. 4. The Believer in Christ implieth Communion, and Fellowship with Christ, 1 Cor. 1. 30. When Christ is said to be in the Believer, we are to understand it in Reference to Sanctification; when the Believer is said to be in Christ, it is in Order to Justification.

Thus we apprehend, being our selves first apprehended by Jesus Christ, Phil. 3. 12. We cannot take hold of Christ, till first he take hold of us, no Vital Act of Faith can be exercised, till a Vital Principle be first inspired: Of both these Bonds of Union we must speak distinctly, and first of the first, *Christ quickening us by his Spirit, in order to our Union with him*, of which we have an Account in the Scripture before us, *You hath be quickened who were Dead in Trespasses and Sins*: In which Words we find these two Things noted; viz.

1. The Infusion of a Vital Principle of Grace.
2. The Total indisposedness of the Subject by Nature.

First, The Infusion of a Vital Principle of Grace, *You hath be quickened*. These Words [hath be quickened] are a Supplement, made to clear the Sense of the Apostle, which else would have been more obscure by Reason of that long Parenthesis, betwixt the first and the fifth verses, for as the * Learned observe, this Word *quickens*, you, is governed of the Verb *and quickens*, *hath be quickened*, verse 5. So that here the Words are transposed from the plain Grammatical Order,

Mount Pisgab, p. 22, 23.

der, by Reason of the Interjection of a long Sentence, therefore with good warrant our Translators have put the Verb into this first Verse, which is repeated Verse the fifth, and so keeping faithfully to the Scope, have excellently cleared the Syntax and Order of the Words. Now this Verb *excitavit*, hath he quickened, imports the first Vital Act of the Spirit of God, or his first enlivening Work upon the Soul, in Order to its Union with Jesus Christ: For look, as the Blood of Christ is the Fountain of all Merit, so the Spirit of Christ is the Fountain of all Spiritual Life: And until he quicken us, (i. e.) infuse the Principle of the Divine Life into our Souls, we can put forth no Hand, or Vital Act of Faith, to lay hold upon Jesus Christ.

This his quickening Work, is therefore the first in Order of Nature to our Union with Christ, and fundamental to all other Acts of Grace done and performed by us from our first closing with Christ throughout the whole course of our Obedience: And this quickening Act is said, Verse the fifth, to be together with Christ: Either noting (as some expound it) that it is the Effect of the same Power by which Christ was raised from the Dead, according to Eph. 1. 19. or rather to be quickened together with Christ, notes that new Spiritual Life which is infused into our Dead Souls in the Time of our Union with Christ: For it is Christ to whom we are conjoined and united in our Regeneration, out of whom, as a Fountain, all Spiritual Benefits flow to us, among which this Vivification or quickening is one, and a most sweet and precious one.

Zanby, Rodins, and many others, will have this quickening to comprize both our Justification and Regeneration, and to stand opposed both to Infernal and Spiritual Death, and it may well be allowed; but it most properly imports our Regeneration, wherein the Spirit, in an ineffable and mysterious Way, makes the Soul to live to God, yea, to live the Life of God which was before Dead in Trespasses and Sins: In which Words we have.

Secondly, In the next Place, the total indispofedness of the Subjects by Nature: For as it is well noted by a * Learned Man, the Apostle doth not say of these Ephesians that they were half Dead, or Sick and Infirm, but Dead wholly, altogether Dead, destitute of any Faculty or Ability so much as to think one good Thought, or perform one good Act: You were Dead in respect of Condemnation, being under the damning Sentence of the Law, and you were Dead in respect of the Privation of Spiritual Life, Dead in Opposition to Justification, and Dead in Opposition to Regeneration and Sanctification: And the fatal Instrument by which their Souls Died is here shewed them, you were Dead in, or by *Trespasses and Sins*; this was the Sword that kill'd your Souls, and cut them off from God. Some do curiously distinguish betwixt *Trespasses and Sins*, as if one pointed at *Original*, the other at *Actual Sins*; but I suppose they are promiscuously used here, and serve to express the Cause of their Ruine, or Means of their Spiritual Death and Destruction: This was their Case when Christ came to quicken them, *dead in Sin*, and being so, they could not move themselves towards Union with Christ, but as they were moved by the quickening Spirit of God.

Hence the Observation will be this, Doct. That those Souls which have Union with Christ, are quickened with a Supernatural Principle of Life by the Spirit of God in Order thereunto.

The Spirit of God is not only a living Spirit, formally considered, but he is also the Spirit of Life effectively or causally considered: And without his breathing or infusing Life into our Souls, our Union with Christ is impossible.

It is the Observation of Learned Camero, that there must be an Union before there can be a Union with Christ. Union is to be conceived efficiently as the Work of God's Spirit, joyning the Believer to Christ, and Union is to be conceived formally, the joyning it self of the Persons together: We close with Christ by Faith, but that Faith being a Vital Act, presupposes a Principle of Life communicated to us by the Spirit; therefore it's said, John 11. 26. *Whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never Die*: The Vital Act and Operation of Faith springs from this quickening Spirit: So in Rom. 8. 1, 2. The Apostle having in the first Verse opened the Blessed Estate of them that are in Christ, shews us in the second Verse how we come to be in him: *The Spirit of Life* (saith he) *which is in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death*. *Observandum est unionem & unionem inter se differe: unio adus, qui forma rationem habet, nempe adus recurre unitatem unitatum qua unita sunt: unio autem sem adus significat causam efficiendi, &c.* Camero de Ecclesiis p. 222.

There is indeed a quickening Work of the Spirit, which is subsequent to Regeneration, consisting in his exciting, recovering, and actualizing of his own Graces in us; and from hence is the *liveliness* of a Christian; and there is a quickening Act of the Spirit in our Regeneration, and from hence is the first Spiritual Life of a Christian, of this I am here to speak, and that I may speak profitably to this Point, I will in the Doctrinal Part labour to open these five Particulars.

First, What this Spiritual Life is in its Nature and Properties.

Secondly, In what Manner it is wrought or inspired into the Soul.

Thirdly, For what end, or with what Design this Life is so inspired.

Fourthly, I shall shew this Work to be wholly Supernatural.

And then, Fifthly, Why this quickening must be Antecedent to our actual closing with Christ by Faith.

First, We will enquire into the Nature and Properties of this Life, and discover (as we are able) what it is. And we find it to consist in that wonderful change which the Spirit of God makes upon the Frame and Temper of the Soul, by his infusing or implanting the Principles of Grace in all the Powers and Faculties thereof.

A change it makes upon the Soul, and that a marvellous one, no less than from Death to Life, for though a Man be *Physically* a living Man (i. e.) his natural Soul hath Union with his Body, yet his Soul having no Union with Christ, he is *Theologically* a dead Man, Luke 15. and Col. 2. 13. Alas, it deserves not the Name of Life, to have a Soul serving only to Season, and preserve the Body a little while from stinking: To carry it up and down the World, and only enable it to eat and drink, and talk and laugh, and then Die: Thien do we begin to live, when we begin to have Union with Christ the Fountain of Life, by his Spirit communicated to us:

Ex Christo
conjunctio
nobiscum
capite cum
membris
profundum in
nos omnia
beneficia in
quorum nu-
mero est vi-
vificatio.
Rolloc. in
Loco.

* Non vocas hic semimortuos ac agrotos ac infirmos, sed profusos mortuos, omnis facultatis bene cogitandi aut agendi destituti. Rolloc. in Loc.

* *Hic facit
Similitu-
dinem
multorum
fuit, ipse
sepius dicitur
vixit.*

us: From this Time we are to reckon our Life as some have done: There be many changes made upon Men besides this, many are changed from Prophaneness to Civility, and from meer Civility to Formality, and a shadow of Religion, who still remain in the State and Power of Spiritual Death notwithstanding; but when the Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us, to quicken us with the new Spiritual Life, this is a wonderful change indeed: It gives us an *Esse Supernaturale*, a new Supernatural Being, which is therefore call'd a *new Creature*, the *new Man*, the *hidden Man of the Heart*: The natural Essence and Faculties of the Soul remain still, but it is divested of the old Qualities, and endowed with new Ones, 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Old things are past away, behold all things are become new.*

And this Change is not made by altering and rectifying the Disorders of the Life only, leaving the Temper and Frame of the Heart still carnal; but by the Infusion of a supernatural permanent Principle into the Soul, John 4. 14. *It shall be in him a Well of Water*: Principles are to a course of Actions, as Fountain or Springs are to the Streams and Rivers that flow from them, and are maintain'd by them: And hence is the evenness and constancy of renewed Souls in the course of Godliness.

Nor is this Principle or Habit acquired by accustoming our selves to Holy Actions, as natural Habits are acquired by frequent Acts, which beget a *Disposition*, and thence grow up to an *Habit* or second Nature, but it is infused or implanted into the Soul by the Spirit of God. So we read, Ezek. 36. 25, 26. *A new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you*: It grows not up out of our Natures, but is put, or infused into us: As it's said of the two Witnesses, Rev. 11. 11. who lay Dead in a *Civil Sense* three Days and an half, that the *Spirit of Life from God entered into them*; so it is here in a *Spiritual Sense*, the Spirit of Life from God enters into the dead, carnal Heart: It's all by Way of supernatural Infusion.

Nor is it limited to this or that Faculty of the Soul, but Grace of Life is poured into all the Faculties: *Behold all things are become new*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. The *Understanding*, *Will*, *Thoughts* and *Affections*, are all renewed by it: The whole inner *Man* is changed, yea, the *Tongue* and *Hand*, the *Discourses* and *Actions*, even all the *Ways* and *Courses* of the outward *Man* are renewed by it.

But more particularly, we shall discern the Nature of this *Spiritual Life*, by considering the Properties of it; among which there are very remarkable.

First, The Soul that is joyned to Christ, is quickned with a *Divine Life*, so we read in 2 Pet. 1. 4. Where Believers are said to be Partakers or Consorts of the *Divine Nature*: A very high Expression, and warily to be understood. Partakes of the *Divine Nature*, not essentially, so its wholly incommunicable to the Creature, nor yet Hypo-statically and Personally, so Christ only was a Partaker of it, but our Participation of the Divine Nature must be understood in a way proper to Believers; that is to say, we partake of it by the Inhabitation of the Spirit of God in us, according to 1 Cor. 3. 16, 17. *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* The Spirit, who is God by Nature, dwells and actuates the Soul whom he

regenerates, and by sanctifying causes it to live a *Divine Life*: From this Life of God the un-sanctified are said to be alienated, Eph. 4. 18. but Believers are Partakers of it.

Secondly, And being Divine, it must needs be the most excellent and translated Life that any Creature doth or can live in this World: It surmounts the natural, rational, and moral Life of the un-sanctified, as much as the Angelical Life excels the Life that Flies, and Worms of the Earth do live.

Some think it a rare Life to live in Sensual Pleasures, but the Scripture will not allow so much as the Name of Life to them; but tells us, *they are dead whilst they live*, 1 Tim. 5. 6. certainly it is a wonderful Elevation of the Nature of Man, to be quickened with such a Life as this. There are two Ways wherein the blessed God hath honoured poor Man above the very Angels of Heaven. One was by the Hypothetical Union of our Nature in Christ, with the Divine Nature; the other is by uniting our Persons Mystically to Christ, and thereby communicating Spiritual Life to us: This latter is a most glorious Privilege, and in one respect a more singular Mercy than the former; for that Honour which is done to our Nature by the Hypothetical Union, is common to all good and bad, even they that perish have yet that Honour; but to be implanted into Christ by Regeneration, and live upon him as the Branch doth upon the Vine, this is a peculiar Privilege, a Mercy hedg'd in from the World that is to perish, and only communicated to God's Elect, who are to live Eternally with him in Heaven.

Thirdly, This Life infused by the regenerating Spirit, is a most pleasant Life. All Delights, all Pleasures, all Joys, which are not Phantastick and Delusive, have their spring and origin here, Rom. 8. 6. *To be spiritually minded is Life and Peace*, (i. e.) a most serene placid Life, such a Soul becomes, so far as it is influenced and sanctified by the Spirit, the very Region of Life and Peace: When one thing is thus predicated of another, *in casu reslo*, (saith a Learned Man) it speaks their intimate Connexion: Peace is so connatural to this Life, that you may either call it a Life that hath Peace in it, or a Peace that hath Life in it: Yea, it hath its enclosed Pleasures in it, *Such as a stranger intermeddles not with*, Prov. 14. 10. Regeneration is the Term from which all true Pleasure commences, you never live a merry Day, till you begin to live to God: Therefore it's said, Luke 15. 24. When the Prodigal Son was returned to his Father and reconciled, then they began to be Merry.

None can make another by any Words, to understand what that Pleasure is which the renewed Soul feels diffused through all its Faculties and Affections in its Communion with the Lord, and in the sealings and witnessings of his Spirit. That is a very apt and well known similitude which Peter Martyr used, and the Lord blessed to the Conversion of the Noble Marquis Galeacius: If, said he, a Man should see a Company of People dancing upon the Top of a remote Hill, he would be apt to conclude they were a Company of wild distracted People; but if he draw nearer and behold the excellent Order, and hear the ravishing sweet Musick that is among them, he will quickly alter his Opinion of them, and fall dancing himself with them. All

All the *Delights* in the sensual *Life*, all the *Pleasure* that ever your *Lusts* gave you, are but as the putrid stinking *Waters* of a corrupt *Pond*, where *Toads* lie croaking and spawning, to the *Crystal Streams* of the most pure and pleasant *Fountain*.

Fourthly, This *Life* of God with which the regenerate are quickened in their Union with Christ, as it is a *pleasant* so it is also a *growing* increasing *Life*, John 4. 14. It shall be in him a *Well of Water springing up into Everlasting Life*.

It is not in our Sanctification, as it is in our Justification, our Justification is compleat and perfect, no defect is found there, but the new Creature labours under many Defects: All Believers are equally Justified, but not equally Sanctified: Therefore you read, 2 Cor. 4. 16. that the inward Man is renewed Day by Day: And 2 Pet. 3. 18. Christians are exhorted to grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour: If this Work were perfect and finished at once, as Justification is, there could be no renewing Day by Day, nor growth in Grace, *Perfectum est cui nihil deest, & cui nihil addi potest*: The Apostle indeed Prays for the *Thessalonians*, That God would sanctifie them, ἀγιωσις — wholly, perfectly, 1 Thes. 5. 23. And this is Matter of Prayer and Hope, for at last it will grow up to Perfection; but this perfect Holiness is reserved for the perfect State in the

World to come, and none but * deluded proud Spirits boast of it here: But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away, 1 Cor. 13. 9, 10. And upon the Imperfection of the new Creature in every Faculty, that warfare and daily conflict spoken of, Gal. 5. 17. And experienced by every Christian, is grounded: Grace rises gradually in the Soul, as the Sun doth in the Heavens, *which shineth more and more unto a perfect Day*, Prov. 4. 18.

Fifthly, To conclude, this *Life* with which the regenerate are quickened, is an *Everlasting Life*. This is the *Record*, that God hath given us *Eternal Life*, and this *Life* is in his Son, 1 John 5. 11. This Principle of *Life*, is the Seed of God, and that remains in the Soul for ever, 1 John 3. 9. It is no transient vanishing thing, but a fixed, permanent Principle, which abides in the Soul for ever; a Man may lose his *Gifts*, but Grace abides: The Soul may, and must be separated from the Body, but Grace cannot be separated from the Soul: When all forsake us, this sticks by us.

This infused Principle is therefore vastly different, both from the extraordinary Gifts of Prophecy, wherein the Spirit sometimes was said to come upon Men, under the *Old Testament*, 1 Sam. 10. 6, 10. And from the common vanishing Effects he sometimes produceth in the unregenerate, of which we have frequent Accounts in the *New Testament*, Heb 6. 4. and John 5. 33. It's one thing for the Spirit to come upon a Man in the way of present Influence and Assistance, and another thing to dwell in a Man as his Temple.

And thus of the Nature and Quality of this blessed Work of the Spirit in quickening us.

Secondly, Having seen the Nature and Properties of the Spiritual Life, we are concerned in the next Place to enquire into the Way and Manner in which it is wrought, and infused by the Spirit: And here we must say,

First of all, That the Work is wrought in the Soul very mysteriously; so Christ tells Nicodemus,

John 3. 8. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit*: There be many Opinions among Philosophers about the Original of Wind, but we have no certain Knowledge of it: We describe it by its Effects and Properties, but know little of its Original: And if the Works of God in Nature be so abstruse and unsearchable, how much more are these sublime and supernatural Works of the Spirit so?

We are not able to solve the *Phænomena* of Nature, we can give no Account of our Formation in the Womb, Eccles. 11. 5. Who can exactly describe how the Parts of the Body are formed, and the Soul infused? *It's curiously wrought in the lowest Parts of the Earth*, as the Psalmist speaks, Psalm 139. 16. but how we know not. Basil saith divers Questions may be moved about a Fly, which may Pose the greatest Philosopher: We know little of the Forms and Essences of Natural Things, much less of these profound, and abstruse Spiritual Things.

Secondly, But tho' we cannot pry into these Secrets by the Eye of Reason, yet God hath revealed this to us in his Word, that it is wrought by his own Almighty Power, Eph. 1. 19. The Apostle ascribes this Work to the exceeding greatness of the Power of God: And this must needs be, if we consider, how the Spirit of God expresses it in Scripture by a new Creation: (i. e.) a giving Being to something out of nothing, Eph. 2. 10. In this it differs from all the Effects of Humane Power, for Man always Works upon some pre-existent Matter, but here is no such Matter: All that is in Man, the Subject of this Work, is only a Passive Capacity or Receptivity, but nothing is found in him to contribute towards this Work: This supernatural Life is not, nor can it be educed out of natural Principles: This wholly transcends the Sphere of all natural Power: But of this more anon.

Thirdly, This also we may affirm of it, That this Divine Life is infused into all the natural Faculties and Powers of the Soul, not one exempted, 1 Thes. 5. 23. The whole Soul and Spirit is the recipient Subject of it: And with respect to this general Infusion into all the Faculties and Powers of the Soul, it's call'd a new Creature, a new Man, having an integral Perfection and fullness of all its Parts and Members: It becomes Light in the Mind, John 1. 7. 3. Obedience in the Will, 1 Pet. 1. 2. In the Affections an heavenly Temper and Tenderness, Col. 3. 1, 2. And so is variously denominated, even as the Sea is from the several Shores it washes, tho' it be one and the same Sea. And here we must observe, lies one main Difference betwixt a Regenerate Soul, and an Hypocrite; * the one is all of a Piece, as I may say, the Principle of Spiritual Life runs into all and every Faculty and Affection, and sanctifies or renews the whole Man; whereas the change upon Hypocrites is but Partial and Particular, he may have new Light, but no new Love, a new Tongue, but not a new Heart: This or that Vice may be reformed, but the whole Course of his Life is not altered.

Fourthly and Lastly, This Infusion of Spiritual Life is done *instantaneously*, as all Creation Work is: Hence it is resembled to that *plaflick Power*, Clem. A. which in a moment made the Light to shine out of lib. 7.

* *Perfectio*
Sanctifica-
tionis in
isthac vita
non referri-
tur nisi in
seculum
quorundam
Fanaticorum
Amo-
bus.

* *Ab uno*
de super
principio
quod conve-
niunt vo-
luntatis ope-
ratur de-
pendens
prima, se-
cunda &
tertia.
Quemadmo-
dum mini-
ma pars
ferri lapi-
dio magne-
tis spiritum
movetur,
per multos
annulos
ferreos ex-
celsitate ce-
lestium qui
sunt virtu-
te præditi,
sanctifies
divino spi-
ritu attra-
hi, cum
prima man-
sione con-
jurgatur,
deinceps
autem alii
usque ad
postremam
sione con-
jurgatur.

of darkness, just so God shines into our Hearts, 2 Cor. 4. 6.

'Tis true, a Soul may be a long time under the preparatory works of the Spirit, he may be under convictions and humiliations, purposes and resolutions a long time; he may be waiting at the Pool of *Bethesda*, attending the Means and Ordinances, but when the Spirit comes once to quicken the Soul, 'tis done in a Moment: Even as it is in the infusion of the rational Soul, the Body is long ere it be prepared and moulded, but when once the *Embryo* or Matter is ready, it's quickened with the Spirit of Life in an Instant: So it is here: But O what a blessed Moment is this! Upon which the whole weight of our eternal happiness depends; for it is Christ in us (*i. e.*) Christ formed in us, who is the hope of Glory, Col. 1. 27. And our Lord expressly tells us, John 3. 3. That except we be regenerate and born again, we cannot see the Kingdom of God. And thus of the way and manner of its infusion.

Thirdly, Let the design and end of God in his quickening Work be next considered: For that end, and with that design and aim this Work is wrought. And if we consult the Scriptures in this matter, we shall find this Principle of Life is infused in order to our glorifying God in this World by a *life of Obedience*, and our enjoying God in the World to come.

First, Spiritual life is infused in order to a course of Obedience in this World, whereby God is glorified: So we read in Eph. 2. 10. Created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them: Habits are to Actions, as the Root is to the Fruit, it is for Fruit sake that we plant the Roots, and ingraft the Branches. So in Ezek. 36. 27. *A new Spirit will I also put within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments and do them.* This is the next, or immediate design and end, not only of the first infusion of the Principle of Life into the Soul, but of all the exciting, actuating and assisting Works of the Spirit afterwards. Now this principle of Spiritual life infused, hath a twofold influence into Obedience.

First, This makes it sincere and true Obedience, when it flows from an inward vital Principle of Grace. The Hypocrite is moved by something *ab extra*, from without, as the applause of Men, the accommodation of fleshly Interests, the force of Education; or if there be any thing from within that moves him, it is but Self-interest, to quiet a grumbling Conscience, and support his vain hopes of Heaven: But he never acts from a new Principle, a new Nature inclining him to Holy Actions. Sincerity mainly lies in the harmony and correspondency of Actions to their Principles: From this infused Principle it is, that Men hunger and thirst for God, and go to their Duties, as Men do to their Meals, when they find an empty craving Stomach.

O Reader, pause a little upon this ere thou pass on, ask thy Heart whether it be so with thee: Are holy Duties connatural to thee? Doth thy Soul move and Work after God by a kind of supernatural instinct? This then will be to thee a good evidence of thy Integrity.

Secondly, From this infused Principle of Life, results the excellency of our Obedience, as well as

the sincerity of it: For by virtue and reason thereof, it becomes free and voluntary, not forced and constrained, it drops like Honey of its own accord out of the Comb, Cant. 4. 11. without squeezing: Or as Waters from the Fountain without forcing, Job. 4. 14. an unprincipled Professor must be squeezed by some weight of Affliction, ere he will yield one Tear, or pour out a Prayer, Psal. 78. 34. *When he slew them, then they sought him.*

Now the freedom of Obedience is the Excellency of it, God's Eye is much upon that, 1 Cor. 9. 17. Yea, and the uniformity of our Obedience, which is also a special part of the beauty of it, results from hence: He that acts from a Principle, acts fluently and uniformly, there is a proportion betwixt the Parts of his Conversation: This is it which makes us Holy, *ἐν μέν ὁμοίως*, in all manner of Conversation, or in every creek and turning of our Conversations, as the Word imports, 1 Pet. 1. 15: whereas, he that is moved by this or that external accidental motive, must needs be up and down, off and on, very uneven, like the Legs of a lame Man, as the Expression is, Prov. 26. 7. *which are not equal*: Now a Word of God, and then the Discourse runs muddy and prophane, or carnal again: All that evenness and uniformity that is in the several parts of a Christians Life, is the effect of this infused Principle of spiritual Life.

Thirdly, Another aim and design of God in the infusion of his principle of Life, is thereby to prepare and qualify the Soul for the enjoyment of himself in Heaven: Except a Man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God, Joh. 3. 3. All that shall possess that Inheritance must be begotten again to it, as the Apostle speaks, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4. This Principle of Grace is the very Seed of that Glory, it's Eternal Life in the Root and Principle, Job. 17. 3. By this the Soul is attempered and qualified for that State and Employment. What is the Life of Glory, but the Vision of God, and the Souls assimilation to God by that Vision? From both which, results that unspeakable joy and delight which passeth Understanding: But what Vision of God, assimilation to God, or delight in God, can that Soul have, which was never quickened with the supernatural Principle of Grace? The Temper of such Souls is expressed in that sad Character, Ezek. 11. 8. *My Soul loathed them, and their Soul also abhorred me.* For want of this vital Principle it is, that the very same Duties and Ordinances, which are the delights and highest pleasures of the Saints, are no better than a meer drudgery and bondage to others, Mal. 1. 13. Heaven would be no Heaven to a dead Soul; this principle of Life, in its daily growth and improvement, is our Meekness as well as our Evidence for Heaven: These are the main ends of its infusion.

Fourthly, In the next place, according to the Method proposed, I am obliged to shew you, that this quickening Work is wholly supernatural, it is the sole and proper Work of the Spirit of God. So Christ himself expressly asserts it, in Job. 3. 6, 8. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit: The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

Believers are the birth or off-spring of the Spirit, who produceth the new Creature in them in

an unintelligible manner even to themselves. So far it is above their own Ability to produce, that it is above their Capacity to understand the way of its Production: As if you should ask, do you know from whence the Wind comes? No: Do you know whither it goes? No: But you hear and feel it when it blows? Yes: Why so is every one that is born of the Spirit: He feels the efficacy, and discerns the effects of the Spirit on his own Soul, but cannot understand or describe the manner of its Production: This is not only above the carnal, but above the renewed mind to comprehend; we can contribute nothing, I mean *actively*, to the production of this Principle of Life: We may indeed be said to concur *passively*, with the Spirit in it: That is, there is found in us a Capacity, aptness, or receptiveness of this Principle of Life: Our Nature is endowed with such Faculties and Powers as are mere Subjects to receive, and Instruments to act this Spiritual Life: God only quickens the rational Nature with Spiritual Life.

It is true also, that in the *progress* of Sanctification, a Man doth actively concur with the Spirit, but in the first Production of this Spiritual Principle he can do nothing: He can indeed perform those external Duties that have a remote tendency to it, but he cannot by the power of Nature perform any saving act, or contribute any thing more than a passive Capacity to the implantation of a new Principle: As will appear by the following Arguments.

Arg. 1. He that actively concurs to his own Regeneration, makes him to differ; but this is denied to all regenerate Men, 1 Cor. 4. 7. Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive?

Arg. 2. That to which the Scripture ascribes both *impotency* and *enmity*, with respect to Grace, cannot actively, and of it self, concur to the Production of it: But the Scripture ascribes both impotency and enmity to Nature with respect to Grace. It denies to it a power to do any thing of it self, John 15. 5. And which is less, it denies to it a power to speak a Word, Mat. 12. 34. And which is least of all, it denies it power to think a good Thought, 2 Cor. 3. 5. This impotency, if there were no more, cuts off all pretence of our active concurrence, but then if we consider that it ascribes *enmity* to our Natures as well as *impotency*, how clear is the case! See Rom. 8. 7. The carnal Mind is enmity against God. And Col. 1. 21. And you that were Enemies in your Minds by wicked Works. So then Nature is so far productive of this Principle, as impotency and enmity can enable it to be so.

Arg. 3. That which is of natural Production, must needs be subject to natural Dissolution; that which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, a perishing thing, for every thing is as its Principle is, and there can be no more in the effect, than there is in the cause: But this Principle of Spiritual Life is not subject to dissolution, it is the Water that springs up into everlasting Life, Job. 4. 14. The Seed of God which remaineth in the regenerate Soul, 1 Job. 3. 9. And all this because it's born not of corruptible, but of incorruptible Seed, 1 Pet. 1. 23.

Arg. 4. If our new Birth be our *Resurrection*, a new Creation, yea, a *victory* over Nature, then we

cannot actively contribute to its Production; but under all these Notions it is represented to us in the Scriptures. It's our Resurrection from the dead, Eph. 5. 14. And you know the Body is wholly passive in its *Resurrection*: But tho' it concurs not, yet it gives pre-existent Matter: Therefore the Metaphor is designedly varied, Eph. 4. 24. Where it's call'd a *Creation*: In which there is neither active Concurrence, nor pre-existent Matter: But tho' Creation excludes pre-existent Matter, yet in producing something out of nothing, there is no reluctance nor opposition; therefore to shew how purely supernatural this Principle of Life is, it is clothed and presented to us in the Notion of a victory, 2 Cor. 10. 4. And so leaves all to Grace.

Arg. 5. If Nature could produce, or but actively concur to the Production of this Spiritual Life, then the best Natures would be soonest quickened with it; and the worst Natures not at all, or at last and least of all: But contrarily, we find the worst Natures often regenerated, and the best left in the State of Spiritual death: With how many sweet *homilical* Vertues was the young Man adorned? Mark. 10. 21. yet graceless: And what a sink of Sin was *Mary Magdalen*, Luk. 7. 37. yet sanctified: Thus beautiful *Rachel* is barren, whilst blear-eyed *Leah* bears Children. And there is scarce any thing that effects and melts the Hearts of Christians, more than this comparative consideration doth, when they consider Vessels of Gold cast away, and Leaden ones chosen for such noble uses. So that it's plain enough to all wise and humble Souls, that this new Life is wholly of supernatural Production.

Fifthly and lastly, I shall briefly represent the necessary antecedent of this quickening Work of the Spirit to our first closing with Christ by Faith: And this will easily let it self into our understandings, if you but consider the Nature of the vital act of Faith; which is the Souls receiving of Christ, and resting upon him for Pardon and Salvation: In which two things are necessarily included, *viz.*

1. The renouncing of all other hopes and dependencies.
2. The opening of the Heart fully to Jesus Christ.

First, The renouncing of all other hopes and dependencies whatsoever. Self in all its acceptations, natural, sinful, and moral, is now to be denied and renounced for ever, else Christ can never be received, Rom. 10. 3. not only Self in its vilest pollutions, but Self in its richest Ornaments, and endowments: But this is as impossible to the unrenewed and natural Man, as it is for Rocks or Mountains to start from their Centre, and fly like wandering *Astres* in the Air: Nature will rather chuse to run the hazard of everlasting Damnation, than escape it by a total renunciation of its beloved Lusts, or Self-righteousness: This supernatural Work necessarily requires a supernatural Principle. Rom. 8. 2.

Secondly, The opening the Heart fully to Jesus Christ, without which Christ can never be received, Rev. 3. 20. but this also is the effect of the quickening Spirit, the Spirit of Life which is in Christ Jesus: Sooner may we expect to see the Flowers and Blossoms open without the influence of the Sun, than the Heart and will of a Sinner open

to receive Christ without a Principle of Spiritual Life first derived from him: And this will be past doubt to all that consider, not only the impotence of Nature, but the ignorance, prejudice, and averfations of Nature, by which the Door of the Heart is barr'd and chain'd againſt Chriſt, *Joh. 5. 40*. So that Nature hath neither ability nor will, power or deſire to come to Chriſt: If any have an Heart opened to receive him, 'tis the Lord that opens it by his Almighty Power, and that in the way of an infuſed Principle of Life ſupernatural.

Queſt.

But here it may be doubted and objected, againſt this poſition, If we cannot believe till we are quickened with Spiritual Life, as you ſay, and cannot be juſtified till we believe as all ſay, then it will follow that a regenerate Soul may be in the State of Condemnation for a time, and confequently periſh if Death ſhould befall him in that juncture.

To this I return, That when we ſpeak of the priority of this quickening Work of the Spirit to our actual believing, we rather underſtand it of the priority of Nature, than of Time, the Nature and Order of the Work requiring it to be ſo: A vital Principle muſt, in order of Nature, be infuſed before a vital act can be exerted. Firſt make the Tree good, and then the Fruit good: And admit we ſhould grant ſome priority in time alſo to this quickening Principle, before actual Faith, yet the abſurdity mentioned would be no way conſequent upon that conceſſion: For as the vital act of Faith quickly follows the regenerating Principle, ſo the Soul is abundantly ſecured againſt the danger objected; God never beginning any ſpecial Work of Grace upon the Soul, and then leaving it, and the Soul with it, in hazard, but preſerves both to the finiſhing and completing of his gracious deſign, *Phil. 1. 6*.

Fiſt Uſe of Information.

Infer. 1. If ſuch be the nature and neceſſity of this Principle of Divine Life, as you heard it opened in the foregoing Diſcourſe, then hence it follows, *That unregenerate Men are no better than dead Men.* So the Text represents them, You heſt he quickened who were dead in trepaſſes and ſins: (*i. e.*) Spiritually dead, tho' Naturally alive; yea, and lively too as any other Perſons in the World. There is a threefold conſideration of Objects, *Viz.*

1. Naturally.
2. Politically.
3. Theologically.

Fiſt, Naturally, To all thoſe things that are natural, they are alive: They can underſtand, reaſon, diſcourſe, project and contrive as well as others; they can eat, drink, build, plant, and ſuck out the natural Comfort of theſe things, as much as others. So their Life is deſcribed, *Joh. 21. 12.* They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoice at the ſound of the Organ: They ſpend their Days in wealth, &c. And *James 5. 5.* Ye have lived in pleaſure upon Earth, as the Fiſh lives in the Water its natural Element, and yet this natural ſenſual Life is not allowed the name of Life, *1 Tim. 5. 6.* ſuch Perſons are dead whiſt they live; 'Tis a baſe and ignoble Life, to have a Soul only to ſalt the Body, or to enable a Man for a few Years to eat, and drink, and talk, and laugh, and then die.

Secondly, Objects may be conſidered *Politi-*

cally, and with reſpect to ſuch things they are alive alſo: They can buy and ſell, and manage all their Worldly Affairs with as much dexterity, ſkill, and policy, as other Men; yea, the Children of this World are wiſer in their generation than the Children of light, *Luke 16. 8.* The intire ſtream of their Thoughts, Projects and Studies, running into that one Channel: Having but one deſign to manage, they muſt needs excel in worldly Wiſdom: But then,

Liberes me deus, ab homine minus tantum negotii. Bern.

Thirdly, Theologically conſidered, they are dead; without Life, Senſe or Motion, towards God, and the things that are above: Their underſtandings are dead, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* and cannot receive the things that are of God: Their wills are dead, and cannot move towards Jeſus Chriſt, *Joh. 6. 65.* Their Affections are dead, even to the moſt excellent and ſpiritual Objects: And all their Duties are dead Duties, without Life or Spirit. This is the ſad caſe of the unregenerate World.

Infer. 2. This ſpeaks encouragements to Miniſters and Parents, to wait in hopes of ſucceſs at laſt, even upon thoſe that yet give them little hope of Converſion at the preſent.

The Work you ſee is the Lords, when the Spirit of Life comes upon their dead Souls, they ſhall believe, and be made willing; till then, we do but Plough upon the Rocks: Yet let not our Hand ſlack in Duty, pray for them, and plead with them; you know not in which Pryer, or Exhortation, the Spirit of Life may breathe upon them: *Can theſe dry Bones live?* Yes, if the Spirit of Life from God breathe upon them, they can, and ſhall live: What tho' their diſpoſitions be averſe to all things that are ſpiritual and ſerious, yet even ſuch have been regenerated, when more ſweet and promiſing natures have been paſſed by, and left under ſpiritual death.

It was the obſervation of Mr. Ward, upon his Brother Mr. Daniel Rogers, (who was a Man of great gifts and eminent Graces, yet of a very bad Temper and Conſtitution) Tho' my Brother Rogers (ſaith he) have Grace enough for two Men, yet half enough for himſelf.

It may be you have pray'd, and ſtriven long with your Relations and to little purpoſe, yet be not diſcouraged. How often was Mr. John Rogers, that famous ſucceſſful Divine, a grief of Heart to his Relations in his younger Years, proving a wild and lewd Young Man, to the great diſcouragement of his Pious Friends; yet, at laſt, the Lord graciously changed him, ſo that Mr. Richard Rogers would ſay, when he would exerciſe the utmoſt degree of charity or hope, for any that at preſent were vile and naughty, *I will never deſpair of any Man for John Rogers ſake.*

Infer. 3. How honourable are Chriſtians by their new birth! They are born not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of Man, but of God, *Joh. 1. 13.* (*i. e.*) not in an impure, or meer-natural way, but in a moſt ſpiritual and ſupernatural manner: They are the Off-ſpring of God, the Children of the moſt High, as well by Regeneration as by Adoption; which is the greateſt advancement of the Humane nature next to its Hypoſtatical Union with the Second Perſon. Oh what honour is this for a poor ſinful Creature, to have the very life of God breathed into his Soul! All other Dignities of Nature are trifies compar'd with this: This makes a Chriſtian

a sacred hallowed Thing, the living Temple of God, 1 Cor. 6. 19. The special Object of his Delight.

Infer. 4. *How deplorable is the Condition of the unregenerate World, in no better Case than dead Men!* Now to affect our Hearts with the Misery of such a Condition, let us consider and compare it in the following Particulars.

First, There is no *Beauty* in the Dead, all their loveliness goes away at Death; there is no spiritual Beauty or loveliness in any that are unregenerate: 'Tis true, many of them have excellent Moral Homolitical Virtues, which adorn their Conversations in the Eyes of Men; but what are all these, but so many sweet Flowers strewed over a Dead Corps?

Secondly, The Dead have no *Pleasure* nor Delight: Even so the Unregenerate are incapable of the Delights of the Christian Life: *To be spiritually minded is Life and Peace*, Rom. 8. 6. (i. e.) this is the only serene, placid, and pleasant Life: When the *Prodigal*, who was once Dead, was alive, then he began to be Merry, *Luke* 15. 24. They live in sensual Pleasures, but this is to be dead while alive, in Scripture reckoning.

Thirdly, The dead have no *Heat*, they are as cold as Clay: so are all the Unregenerate towards God and Things above: Their *Lusts* are *hot*, but their *Affections* to God cold and frozen: That which makes a gracious Heart melt, will not make an unregenerate Heart move.

Fourthly, The Dead must be buried, Gen. 23. 4. *Bury my Dead out of my sight*: So must the unregenerate be Buried out of God's sight for ever: Buried in the lowest Hell, in the Place of Darkness for ever, *John* 3. 3. Woe to the unregenerate, good had it been for them they had never been Born.

Infer. 5. *How greatly are all Men concerned to examine their Condition, with respect to spiritual Life and Death!* It's very common for Men to presume upon their Union with, and Interest in Christ: This Privilege is by common Mistake, extended generally to all that profess Christian Religion, and practise the external Duties of it, when in Truth no more are, or can be united to Christ, than are quickened by the Spirit of Life which is in Christ Jesus, *Rom.* 8. 1, 2. O try your Interest in Christ by this Rule, if I am quickened by Christ, I have Union with Christ.

And, First, If there be spiritual Sense in your Souls, there is spiritual Life in them: There are *seven*

things, Senses belonging to the spiritual, as well as to the animal Life, *Heb.* 5. 14. They can feel, and sensibly groan, under Soul pressures, and burdens of Sin, *Rom.* 7. 24. The Dead feel not, moan not under the burdens of Sin, but the Living do: They may be sensible indeed of the evil of Sin with respect to themselves, but not as against God; Damnation may scare them, but Pollution doth not; Hell may fright them, but not the offence of God.

Secondly, If there be spiritual *hunger and thirst*, it's a sweet sign of spiritual Life; this sign agrees to Christians of a Day old, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. Even *new born Babes desire the sincere Milk of the Word*: If spiritual Life be in you, you know how to expound that Scripture, *Psal.* 42. 1. without any other Interpreter than your own experience: You will feel somewhat like the gnawing of an empty Stomach, making you restless during the Interruption of your daily Communion with the Lord.

Thirdly, If there be *spiritual Conflicts* with Sin, there is spiritual Life in your Soul, *Gal.* 5. 17. Not only a Combat betwixt *Light* in the higher, and *Lust* in the lower Faculties: Nor only Opposition to more gross external Corruptions that carry more infamy and horror with them than other Sins do: But the same Faculty will be the Seat of War; and the more inward, secret and spiritual, any Lust is, by so much the more will it be opposed and mourned over.

In a Word, the weakest Christian may, upon impartial Observation, find such Signs of spiritual Life in himself (if he will allow himself time to reflect upon the bent and frame of his own Heart) as Desires after God, Conscience of Duties, Fears, Cares, and Sorrows about Sin: Delight in the Society of heavenly and spiritual Men, a loathing and burden in the company of vain and carnal Persons.

Obj. O but I have a very dead Heart to spiritual Things.

Sol. 'Tis a sign of Life that you feel, and are sensible of that deadness: And beside, there's a great deal of *Difference* betwixt *Spiritual Deadness* and *Death*: The one is the *State* of the unregenerate, the other is the *Disease* of regenerate Men.

Obj. Some signs of spiritual Life are clear to me, but I cannot close with others.

Sol. If you can really close with any, it may satisfy you, tho' you be dark in others: If a Child can't go, yet if it can suck; if it can't suck, if it can't cry, yet if it breathe it is alive.

Serm. 6.

The Sixth SERMON.

JOHN I. xii.

Desiring that
A& on our
Part, by
which we
do actually
and effectively
apply Christ
to our own
Souls.

But as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God; even to them that believe on his Name.

NO sooner is the Soul quickened by the Spirit of God, but it Answers in some measure the End of God in that Work, by its *active Reception of Jesus Christ*, in the way of believing: What this Vital A& of Faith is, upon which so great a weight depends, as our Interest in Christ, and Everlasting Blessedness, this Scripture before us will give you

the best Account of it: Wherein (omitting the Coherence and Contexture of the Words) we have three Things to ponder.

First, The high and glorious Privilege conferr'd, *viz.* Power to become the Sons of God.

Secondly, The subject of this Privilege described, *As many as received him.*

Thirdly, The Description explain'd by way of Apposition, even as many as believed on his Name.

Bera, hoc
jus: Pisca-
tor, hanc
dignita-
tem. Light-
foot, pro-
rogativam.
Heinius,
privilegi-
um: nec
multo ali-
ter voce
ἐξουία
Hellenistæ
usq. viden-
tur cum
Chaldeo-
rum מַשְׁכָּל
expres-
sunt. Hein.

'First, The Privilege conferr'd is a very high and glorious one, than which no created Being is capable of greater: *Power to become the Sons of God*: This Word *is* of large Extent and Signification, and is by some readr'd *this Right*, by others *this Dignity*, by others *this Prerogative*, *this Privilege* or *Honour*: It implies a Title or Right to *Adoption*, not only with Respect to the present Benefits of it in this Life, but also to that blessed Inheritance which is laid up in Heaven for the Sons of God. And so *Grotius* rightly Expounds it of our *conformate Sonship*, consisting in the actual Enjoyment of beneficence, as well as that which is *inchoate*: Not only a right to Pardon, Favour, and Acceptance now, but to Heaven, and the full Enjoyment of God hereafter. O what an Honour, Dignity, and Privilege is this!

Secondly, The Subjects of this Privilege are described: *As many as received him.* This Text describes them by that very Grace, *Faith*, which gives them their Title and Right to Christ and his Benefits; and by that very *Act* of Faith, which primarily confers their Right to his Person, and secondarily to his Benefits, *viz. receiving him*, there be many Graces besides Faith, but Faith only is the Grace that gives us right to Christ: And there be many Acts of Faith besides receiving, but this receiving or embracing of Christ, is the justifying and saving Act: *As many as received him, [ἐν αὐτῷ ὁ πιστεύων αὐτῷ] as many*, be they of any Nation, Sex, Age, or Condition. For there is *neither Greek, nor Jew, Circumcision, nor Uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond or Free: But Christ is all, and in all*, Col. 3. 11.

λαμβάνει
 ὁ παρὰ
 λαμβάνει
 idem est.
 Grot.

Nothing but unbelief bars Men from Christ and his Benefits: As many as *received him*] the Word signifies to accept, take, or (as we fitly render) to receive, assume or take to us, a Word most aptly expressing the Nature and Office of Faith, yea, the very justifying and saving Act: And we are also heedfully to note its special Object, *accepit eum*: The Text faith not *accepit, his*, but *accepit, him*, (i. e.) his Person, as he is clothed with his Offices, and not only his Benefits and Privileges. There are secondary and consequential Things to our *receiving him*. -- * So that it is a *receiving, assuming or accepting* the Lord Jesus Christ, which must have Respect to the Tenders and Proposals of the Gospel, for *therein is the Righteousness of God revealed from Faith to Faith*, Rom. 1. 17. therein is Jesus Christ revealed, proposed, and offered unto Sinners, as the only way of Justification and Salvation, which Gospel offer (as before was opened) is therefore ordinarily necessary to believing, Rom. 10. 11, 12, 13, &c.

Thirdly; This Description is yet further explained, by this Additional Exegetical Clause, *even to them that believe in his Name*] here the

Terms are varied, tho' the Thing exprest in both be the same: What he call'd *receiving* there, is call'd *believing* on his Name here, to shew us that the very Essence of saving Faith consists in our receiving of Christ. By *his Name*, we are to understand Christ himself: It is usual to take these two, believing in him, and believing in his Name, as Terms convertible, and of the same Importance. וְשֵׁם יֵשׁוּעַ יִפְעַל יְהוָה *ipse est nomen suum, & nomen ejus ipse est*. His Name his himself, and himself is his Name. So that here we have the true Nature, and precious Benefits of saving Faith, excellently exprest in this Scripture: The Sum of which take in this Proposition.

Doct. That the receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ, is that saving and vital *Act* of Faith, which gives the Soul right both to his Person and Benefits.

We cannot Act spiritually, till we begin to live spiritually: Therefore the Spirit of Lie must first joyn himself to us in his quickening Work, (as was shewn you in the last Sermon) which being done, we begin to Act spiritually, by taking hold upon, or receiving Jesus Christ, which is the Thing designed to be opened in this Sermon.

The Soul is the Life of the Body, Faith is the Life of the Soul, and Christ is the Life of Faith. There are several sorts of Faith besides saving Faith, and in saving Faith there are several Acts besides the justifying or saving Act; but *this receiving All*, which is to be our Subject this Day, is that upon which both our Righteousness, and Eternal Happiness, do depend. This as a *Form*, Differences saving Faith from all other kinds or sorts of Faith: By this it is that we are justified and saved. *To as many received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God*. Yet it doth not justify and save us by Reason of any proper *Dignity* that is found in this Act, but by Reason of the *Object* it receives and apprehends: The same Thing is often express'd in Scripture by other Terms, as *coming to Christ*, John 6. 35. *rolling or staying upon Christ*, Isa. 50. 10. But whatever is found in those Expressions, it is all comprehended in this, as will appear hereafter. Now, the Method into which I shall cast the Discourse of this Subject, that I may handle it with as much perspicuity and profit as I can, shall be,

First, To explain and open the Nature of this *receiving* of Christ, and shew you what it includes.

Secondly, To prove that this is the justifying and saving Act of Faith.

Thirdly, To shew you the Excellency of this
Act of Faith.

Fourthly, To remove some Mistakes, and give you the true Account of the Dignity and Excellency of this Art.

Fifthly, And then bring home all in a proper and close Application.

First, In the first Place then, I will endeavour to explain and open the Nature of this *receiving of Christ*, and shew you what is implied in it.

And indeed it involves many deep Mysteries and Things of greatest weight: People are generally very ignorant and unacquainted with the Importance of this Expression, they have very slight Thoughts of Faith, who never pass under the illuminating, convincing and humbling Work

Work of the Spirit: But we shall find that saving Faith is quite another thing, and differs in its whole kind and nature from that traditional Faith, and common Assent, which is so fatally mistaken for it in the World.

There are divers other Expressions by which the Nature of saving Faith is express in Scripture, viz. eating Christ's flesh, and drinking his Blood, John 6. 40. coming to Christ, Mat. 11. 28. Having the Son, 1 John 5. 12. Trusting or depending upon him, for which the Hebrew use three Emphatical Words, מוֹחַלְלִים וְמוֹחַלְלִים וְמוֹחַלְלִים The first signifies a firm and stable Trust. The second to lean or depend with Security. The third to betake ones self to a Sanctuary for a Protection: All which is supposed or included in our receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ: In eating and drinking we must receive him, and Drink, coming to Christ is necessarily supposed in receiving him, for there is no receiving at a Distance: Having the Son, and receiving him, are Notions of the same Importance; and for trusting, relying with Security, and betaking our selves to Christ for Refuge, they are all involved in the receiving Act: For as God offers him to us as the only prop of our Hearts and Hopes, so we receive him to rely upon him: And as he is held forth in the Gospel as the only Asylum, or City of Refuge, so we take or receive him, and accordingly betake our Souls to him for Refuge.

For First, It is evident, that no Man can receive Jesus Christ in the Darkeness of natural Ignorance: We must understand and discern who and what he is, whom we receive to be the Lord our Righteousness. If we know not his Person and his Offices, we do not take, but mistake Christ. It's a good Rule in the Civil Law, *non consentit qui non sentit*: A mistake of the Person invalidates the Match. He that takes Christ for a meer Man, or denies the Satisfaction of his Blood, or divests him of his Humane Nature, or denies any of his most glorious and necessary Offices, let them cry up as high as they will his Spirituality, Glory, and Exemplary Life and Death, they can never receive Jesus Christ aright: This is such a crack, such a flaw in the very Foundation of Faith, as undoes and destroys all: *Ignorantis non est consensus*: All saving Faith is founded in Light and Knowledge, and therefore it's called Knowledge, *Ista* 53. 11. and seeing is inseparably connected with believing, John 6. 40. Men must hear and learn of the Father before they can come to Christ, John 6. 45. the receiving Act of Faith is directed and guided by Knowledge. I will not presume to State the Degree of Knowledge, which is absolutely necessary to the Reception of Christ; I know the first actings of Faith are, in most Christians, accompanied with much darkness and Confusion of Understanding: But yet we must say in the general, that where-ever Faith is, there is so much Light as is sufficient to discover to the Soul, its own Sins, Dangers, and Wants; and the All-sufficiency, Suitableness, and Necessity of Christ, for the supply and remedy of all; and without this Christ cannot be received. *Come unto me ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, Mat. 11. 28.

Secondly, The receiving Christ necessarily implies the Assent of the Understanding to the Truths of Christ revealed in the Gospel, viz. his Person, Natures, Offices, his Incarnation, Death and Satisfaction; which Assent, tho' it be not in it self saving Faith, yet is it the Foundation and ground-work of it, it being impossible the Soul should receive and fiducially embrace, what the Mind doth not Assent unto as true and

sent to the Thing propounded, by Reason of the weighty Objections that lie against it. Opinion is a more iteady and fixed Assent, when a Man is almost certain, tho' yet some fear of the contrary remains with him. Belief is a more full and assured Assent to the Truth, to which the Mind may be brought four Ways.

First, By the perfect Intelligence of Sense, not hindered or deceived. So I believe the Truth of these Propositions, Fire is hot, Water moist, Honey is sweet, Gall is bitter.

Secondly, By the native clearness of Self-evidencing Principles. So I believe the Truth of these Propositions, The whole is more than a Part: The Cause is before the Effect.

Thirdly, By Discourse, and rational Deduction. So I believe the Truth of this Proposition, Where all the Parts of a Thing are, there is the whole.

Fourthly, By infallible Testimony, when any thing is witnessed or asserted, by one whose Truth is unquestionable: And of this sort is the Assent of Faith: Which is therefore call'd our receiving the witness of God, 1 John 5. 9. our testifying to our Seal that God is true, John 3. 33. *argumentis* This *prima veritas*, Divine Veracity, is the *veritate* *as votes*, *tantum a* *litter fides* *et non ha-* *bitur* *ut oportet* *est locutus*, *quasi rerum omnium maximus* *iudex, cuius est non argumentari.* *sed pronunciare verum, &c.* *Lactantius* *talia religione, p. (mibi)* *179. Tim-* *bas fides ubi vacillat* *divinarum* *Scripturarum auctoritas.* *Aug.* It is therefore the Policy of Satan, by injecting or fomenting Atheistical Thoughts, (with which Young Converts use to find themselves greatly infected) to undermine and destroy the whole Work of Faith: But God makes his People victorious over them: Yea, and even at that Time they do Assent to the Truths of the Words, when they think they do not: As appears by their tenderness and fear of Sin, their Diligence and Care of Duty. If I discern these Things in a Christians Life, he must excuse me if I believe him not, when he saith he doth not Assent to the Truths of the Gospel.

Thirdly, Our receiving Christ necessarily, implies our hearty Approbation, liking, and Estimation, yea, the Acquiescence of our very Souls in Jesus Christ, as the most excellent, suitable, and compleat remedy for all our Wants, Sins and Dangers that ever could be prepared by the Wisdom and Love of God for them: We must receive him with such a Frame of Heart as rests upon him, trusts to and relies upon him, if ever we receive him aright: *To them that believe he is precious*, 1 Pet. 2. 7. This is the only Sovereign Plaster in all the World that is large enough, and efficacious enough, to cure our Wounds: And therefore as Christ is most highly esteem-

Vide Dr. infallibly certain. Now there are three Degrees *salutar in* *Assent, Conjecture, Opinion and Relief. Conje-* *Rem. 4. 3. Sure is but a slight and weak Inclination to Af-*

ed, and heartily approved, as the only Remedy for our Souls, so the sovereign Grace and Wisdom of God are admired, and the Way and Method he hath taken to save poor Souls by Jesus Christ most heartily approved, as the most apt and excellent Method, both for his Glory and our Good, that ever could be taken : For 'tis a plain Case, that none will espouse themselves with conjugal Affections, to that Person whom they esteem not as the best for them that can be chosen : None will forsake and quit all for his sake, except they account him as the Spouse did, *The Chiefest of Ten Thousand*, Cant. 5. 10.

There are two things in Christ, which must gain the greatest Approbation in the Soul of a poor, convinced Sinner, and bring it to rest upon Jesus Christ.

First, That it can find nothing in Christ that is distasteful or unsuitable to it, as it doth experimentally find in the best Creatures. In him is no *weakness*, but a fullness of all saving Abilities ; *Able to save to the uttermost* : No *Pride* causing him to scorn and condemn the most wretched Soul that comes to him : No *Inconstancy* or *Levity*, to cause him to cast off the Soul, whom he hath once received : No *Passion*, but a *Lamb* for Meekness and Patience : There is not a Spot to be found in him, but *He is altogether Lovely*, Cant. 5. 16.

Secondly, As the Believer can find nothing in Christ that is distastful, so it finds nothing wanting in Christ that is necessary or desirable : Such is the fullness of Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, that is in Christ, that nothing is left to desire, but the full Enjoyment of him. O faith the Soul, how completely happy shall I be, if I can but win Christ ! I would not envy the *Nobles* of the Earth, were I but in Christ. I am an hungry and athirst, and Christ is Meat indeed, and drink indeed ; this is the best thing in all the World for me, because so necessary, and so suitable, to the needs of a Soul ready to perish. I am a Law-condemned, and a Self-condemned Sinner, trembling for fear of the Execution of the Curse upon me every moment ; in Christ is complete Righteousness to justify my Soul ; O there is nothing better for me than Christ. I see my self plunged both in Nature and Practice, into the odious Pollutions of Sin, and in Christ is a Fountain opened for Sin and for Uncleanness : His Blood is a Fountain of *Mercy*, his Spirit is a Fountain of Holiness and Purity : None but Christ, none but Christ. O the manifold Wisdom and unsearchable Love of God, to prepare, and furnish such a Christ, so fully answering all the Needs, all the Distresses, all the Fears and Burdens of a poor Sinner ! Thus the believing Soul approves of Christ as best for it. And thus in believing, it gives Glory to God, *Rom. 4. 21*.

Fourthly, Receiving Christ consists in the *Consent and Choice of the Will* ; and this is the opening and stretching forth of the Soul to receive him : *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*, *Plal. 110. 3*.

'Tis the great Design, and main Scope of the Gospel, to work over the Wills of poor Sinners to this : And this was the great Complaint of Christ against the incredulous

Jews, *John 5. 40. Ye will not come unto me that ye might have Life.*

It is disputed by some, whether Faith can be seated in two distinct Faculties, as we seem to place it, when we say it involves both the *Approbation of the Judgment*, and the *Consent of the Will*. I will not here intangle my Discourse with that fruitless Dispute. I am of the same judgment with those Divines, that think Faith cannot be expressed fully by any one single Habit, or Act of the Mind or Will distinctly, for that (as one well notes) there are such Descriptions given of it in Scripture, such things are proposed as the Object of it, and such is the Experience of all that sincerely believe ; as no one single Act, either of the Mind or Will, can answer unto : Nor do I see any thing repugnant to *Scripture or Philosophy*, if we place it in both Faculties. Consent (saith *Vasquez*) seems to denote the Concourse of the Will with the Understanding ; but to leave that, it is most certain, the saving, justifying Act of Faith lies principally in the Consent of the Will, which Consent is the Effect of the Almighty Power of God, *Eph. 1. 19*. He allures and draws the Will to Christ, and he *Draws with the Cords of a Man*, (*i. e.*) He prevails with it by Rational Arguments : For the Soul being prepared by Convictions of its lost and miserable Estate by Sin, and that there is but one Door of Hope open to it for an Escape from the Wrath to come, and that is Christ ; being also satisfied of the Fullness and Compleateness of his saving Ability, and of his Willingness to make it over for our Salvation, upon such just and equal Terms ; this cannot but prevail with the Will of a poor distressed Sinner, to consent and choose him.

Fifthly and Lastly, The last and principal thing included in our receiving of Christ, is the *respell* that this Act of Acceptance hath, unto the Terms upon which Christ is tendered to us in the Gospel, to which it is most agreeable, *1 Cor. 15. 11. So we preach, and so ye believed* : Faith answers the Gospel Offer, as the Impression upon the *Wax* doth the Engravings in the *Seal* ; and this is of principal Consideration, for there is no receiving Christ upon any other Terms but his own, proposed in the Gospel to us : He will never come lower, nor make them easier than they are, for any Mans sake in the World ; we must either receive him upon these, or part with him for ever as thousands do, who could be content to agree to some Articles, but rather choose to be damned for ever, than submit to all : This is the great Controversie betwixt Christ and Sinners ; upon this many thousands break off the Treaty, and part with Christ, because he will not come to their Terms ; but every true Believer receives him upon his own, (*i. e.*) Their Acceptance of him by Faith, is in all things consentaneous to the Overtures made of him in the Written Word. So he tenders himself, and so they receive him ; as will be evident in the following Particulars.

First, The Gospel offers Christ to us *sincerely* and really, and so the true Believer receives and accepts him ; even with a *Faith unfeigned* : *1 Tim. 1. 5*. If ever the Soul be serious and in earnest in any thing, it is so in this : Can we suppose the Heart of him that flies for his Life to the *Refuge City*, to be serious and in earnest,

Dr. Owen in his Doctrine of Justification, p. 135
Consensus denotat voluntatis cum intellectu, ad sententiam idem quod intellectus sentit.
Q. 15. a. 1.
Fides non est virtus simplex, sed diversis partibus, notitia, assensus, et fiducia, que ad eandem potentiam non pertinent.
Wendelini Theol. p. 450.

Rom. 6. 17
In eadem
Fides est
quasi dicitur
de deo.
The Will like melted Metal, is delivered into the Gospel mould, where it receives the same form and figure that the mould gives.

to escape by flight the *Avenger of Blood* who pursues him, then is the Heart of a convinced Sinner serious in this Matter; for under that Notion is the Work of Faith presented to us, *Heb.* 6. 18.

Secondly, Christ is offered to us in the Gospel *intirely* and *undividedly*, as clothed with all his Offices, Priestly, Prophetical, and Regal; as Christ Jesus the Lord, *Acts* 16. 31. and so the true Believer receives him: The Hypocrite like the *Harlot*, is for dividing, but the sincere Believer finds the need he hath of every Office of Christ, and knows not how to want any thing that is in him.

His Ignorance makes him necessary and desirable to him, as a *Prophet*: His Guilt makes him necessary as a *Priest*: His strong and powerful Lusts and Corruptions make him necessary as a *King*; and in Truth he sees not any thing in Christ that he can spare; he needs all that is in Christ, and admires the infinite Wisdom in nothing more, than the investing Christ with all these Offices, which are so suited to the poor Sinners Wants and Miseries. Look, as the three Offices are undivided in Christ, so they are in the Believers Acceptance; and before this Trial no Hypocrite can stand, for all Hypocrits reject and quarrel with something in Christ; they like his Pardon better than his Government. They call him Lord and Master, but it is but an empty Title they bestow upon him; for let them ask their own Hearts, if Christ be Lord over their *Thoughts*, as well as *Words*; over their *secret* as well as *open* Actions; over their *darling* Lusts, as well as others; let them ask, who will appear to be Lord and Master over them, when Christ and the World come in Competition? When the Pleasures of sin shall stand upon one side, and Sufferings to Death, and deepest Points of Self-denial upon the other side? Surely 'tis the greatest Affront, that can be offered to the Divine Wisdom and Goodness, to separate in our Acceptance; what is so united in Christ for our Salvation and Happiness. As without any one of these Offices, the Work of our Salvation could not be completed, so without Acceptance of Christ in them all, our Union with them by Faith cannot be completed.

The Gospel Offer of Christ includes all his Offices, and Gospel Faith just so receives him, to submit to him, as well as to be redeemed by him; to imitate him in the Holiness of his Life, as well as to reap the Purchases and Fruits of his Death. It must be an entire receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Christ is offered to us in the Gospel *Exclusively*, as the alone and only Saviour of Graces. It Sinners; with whose Blood and Intercession nothing is to be mixed; but the Soul of a Sinner is singly to rely and depend on him, and no other, *Acts* 4. 12. *1 Cor.* 3. 11. and so Faith receives him, *1 Pet.* 1. 18. *I will make mention of thy Righteousness, even of thine only.* *Phil.* 3. 9. *And be found in him, not having my own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ:* To depend partly upon Christ's Righteousness, and partly upon our own, is to set one foot upon a Rock, and the other in a Quick-sand; either Christ will be to us all in all, or nothing at all, in Point of

Righteousness and Salvation; he affects not Social Honour; as he did the whole *Work*, so he expects the sole *Praise*; if he be not able to save to the uttermost, why do we depend upon him at all? and if he be, why do we lean upon any beside him?

Fourthly, The Gospel offers Christ *freely* to Sinners as the *Gift*, not the *Sale* of God, *Joh.* 4. 10. *1st Jn.* 5. 1. *Rev.* 22. 17. and even so Faith receives him. The Believer comes to Christ with an empty Hand, not only as an undeserving, but as an Hell deserving Sinner; he comes to Christ as to one that justifies the ungodly, *Rom.* 4. 5. *Unto him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness:* Where by him that worketh not, he means a convinced, humbled Sinner, who finds himself utterly unable to do the Task the Law sets him, (*i. e.*) perfectly to obey it; and therefore in a Law sense is said not to work; for it's all one as to the Intent and purpose of the Law, not to work, and not to work perfectly: This he is convinced of, and therefore comes to Christ as one that is in himself ungodly, acknowledging the Righteousness by which he alone can stand before God; is in Christ, and not in himself, in whole, or in part; and by the way, let this encourage poor Souls, that are scattered and daunted for want of due qualifications, from closing with and embracing Christ: There is nothing qualifies any Man for Christ more, than a sense of his unworthiness of him, and the want of all Excellencies or Ornaments, that may commend him to Divine Acceptance.

Fifthly, The Gospel offers Christ *orderly* to Sinners, first his *Person*, then his *Privileges*. God first gives his Son, and then with him, or as a consequent of that Gift, he gives us all things, *Rom.* 8. 32. In the same order must our Faith receive him. The Believer doth not marry the *Portion* first, and then the *Person*, but to be found in him is the first and great Care of a Believer.

I deny not but it's lawful for any to have an Eye to the Benefits of Christ. Salvation from Wrath is, and lawfully may be intended and aimed at: *Look unto me, and be ye saved all ye ends of the Earth,* *Isa.* 45. 22. Nor do I deny but there are many poor Souls, who being in deep Distress and Fear, may and often do, look mostly to their own Safety at first; and that there is much Confusion, as well in the Actions of their Faith, as in their Condition; but sure I am, it is the proper Order in believing, first to accept the Person of the Lord Jesus: Heaven is no doubt very desirable, but Christ is more: *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* *Psal.* 73. 25. Union with Christ, is in order of Nature antecedent to the Communication of his Privileges, therefore so it ought to be in the Order and Method of believing.

Sixthly, Christ is *advisedly* offered in the Gospel to Sinners, as the Result of God's Eternal Counsel, a Project of Grace upon which his Heart and Thoughts have been much set, *Zech.* 6. 13. The Counsel of Peace was betwixt the Father and Son. And so the Believer receives him, most deliberately weighing the matter in his most deep and serious Thoughts; for this is a time of much Solitude and Thoughtfulness. The Souls

A Man may as lawfully join Saints or Angels in his Meditation with Christ, as Exclusively, as the alone and only Saviour of Graces. It Sinners; with whose Blood and Intercession nothing is to be mixed; but the Soul of a Sinner is singly to rely and depend on him, and no other, *Acts* 4. 12. *1 Cor.* 3. 11. and so Faith receives him, *1 Pet.* 1. 18. *I will make mention of thy Righteousness, even of thine only.* *Phil.* 3. 9. *And be found in him, not having my own Righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Christ:* To depend partly upon Christ's Righteousness, and partly upon our own, is to set one foot upon a Rock, and the other in a Quick-sand; either Christ will be to us all in all, or nothing at all, in Point of

Souls espoused are acts of judgment, *Hof. 2. 19.* on our part, as well as on Gods: We are therefore bid to sit down and count the cost, *Luke 14. 28.* Faith, or the actual receiving of Christ, is the result of many previous debates in the Soul: the matter hath been ponder'd over and over: the objections and discouragements, both from the Self-denying terms of the Gospel, and our own vileness and deep guilt, have been ruminated, and lain upon our hearts day and night, and after all things have been balanced in the most deep consideration, the Soul is determined to this conclusion, I must have Christ be the terms never so hard, be my sins never so great and many I will yet go to him, and venture my Soul upon him; if I perish, I perish. I have thought out all my thoughts, and this is the result, Union with Christ here, or Separation from God for ever must be my lot.

And thus doth the Lord open the hearts of his Elect, and win the consent of their Wills to receive Jesus Christ upon the deepest consideration, and debate of the matter in their own most solemn thoughts: they understand and know, that they must deeply deny themselves, take up his cross and follow him, *Mat 16. 24.* renounce not only *sinful* but *religious* Self; these are hard and difficult things, but yet the necessity and excellency of Christ makes them appear eligible, and rational, by all which you see Faith is another thing than what the sound of that word (as it is generally understood) signifies to the understandings of most Men. This is that fiducial receiving of Christ here to be opened.

Secondly, Our next Work will be to evince this receiving of Christ as hath been opened, to be that special saving Faith of God's Elect: This is that Faith of which such Great and Glorious Things are spoken in the Gospel, which whosoever hath shall be saved, and he that hath it not shall be damned; and this I shall Evidently prove by the following Arguments or Reasons.

Arg. 1.

First, That Faith which gives the Soul Right and Title to Spiritual Adoption, with all the Priviledges and Benefits thereof, is true, saving Faith.

But such a receiving of Christ as hath been describ'd, gives the Soul Right and Title to spiritual Adoption, with all the Priviledges and Benefits thereof.

Therefore such a receiving of Christ as hath been describ'd, is true and saving Faith.

The Major Proposition is undeniable, for our Right and Title to Spiritual Adoption, and the Priviledges thereof, rises from our Union with Jesus Christ; we being united to the Son of God, are by Virtue of that Union reckon'd or accounted Sons, *Gal. 3. 26.* You are all the Children of God by Faith in Jesus Christ: The Effect of saving Faith is Union with Christ's Person, the Consequent of that Union is Adoption, or Right to the Inheritance.

The Minor is most plain in the Text: *To as many as received him, to them gave he power or right to become the Sons of God:* A false Faith hath no such Priviledge annexed to it; no Unbeliever is thus dignified: No Stranger entitled to this Inheritance.

Arg. 2.

Secondly, That only is saving and justifying

Faith, which is in all true Believers, in none but true Believers; and in all true Believers at all times.

But such a receiving of Christ as hath been describ'd, is in all true Believers, in none but true Believers; and in all true Believers at all times.

Therefore such a receiving of Christ as hath been describ'd, is the only saving and justifying Faith.

The Major is undeniable, that must needs contain the Essence of saving Faith, which is proper to every true Believer, at all times, and to no other.

The minor will be as clear, for there is no other Act of Faith, but this of *fiducial receiving* Christ as he is offer'd, that doth agree to all true Believers, to none but true Believers, and to all true Believers at all times.

There be three Acts of Faith, *Assent*, *Acceptance* and *Assurance*: The *Papists* generally give the Essence of saving Faith to the first, *viz. Assent*. The *Lutherans*, and some of our own give it to the last, *viz. Assurance*: But it can neither be so, nor so. *Assent* doth not agree only to true Believers, or justified Persons. *Assurance* agrees to justified Persons, and them only, but not to all justified Persons, and that at all times.

Assent is too low to contain the Essence of saving Faith, it is found in the unregenerate as well as the regenerate: Yea, in Devils as well as Men, *James 2. 19.* 'tis supposed and included in justifying Faith, but it is not the justifying or saving Act. *Assurance* is as much too high, being found only in some Eminent Believers; and in them too but at some times: There's many a true Believer, to whom the Joy and Comfort of Assurance is denied: They may say of their Union with Christ, as *Paul* said of his Vision; whether in the Body or out of the Body, I cannot tell; so they whether in Christ or out of Christ, they cannot tell.

A true Believer may walk in darkness, and see no light, *1sa. 60. 10.* Nay, a Man must be a Believer, before he know himself to be so; the direct Act of Faith is before the reflex Act; so that the justifying Act of Faith lies neither in *Assent*, nor in *Assurance*. *Assent* faith, I believe that Christ is, and that he is the Saviour of the Elect. *Assurance* faith, I believe, and am sure that Christ died for me, and that I shall be saved through him. So that *Assent* widens the Nature of Faith too much, and *Assurance* upon the other hand straitens it too much; but *Acceptance*, which faith, I take Christ in all his Offices to be mine, this fits it exactly, and belongs to all true Believers, and to none but true Believers; and to all true Believers at all times: This therefore must be the justifying and saving Act of Faith.

Arg. 3.

Thirdly, That, and no other, is the justifying and saving Act of Faith, to which the Properties and Effects of saving Faith do belong, or in which they are only found.

This therefore must be the justifying and saving Act of Faith.

First, By saving Faith Christ is said to dwell in our Hearts, *Eph. 3. 17.* but it is neither by *Assent*, nor *Assurance*, but by *Acceptance*; and receiving him that he dwells in our Hearts; not by *Assent*, for then he would dwell in the unregenerate; nor by *Assurance*, for he must dwell in

Albus fidei consistit in assensu, quo quis assentitur alicui propositioni a deo revelata, propter auctoritatem revelationis.
Becan.
Theol.
Schol.
Tom. 3.
cap. 8.
Q. 4.

Many new-born Christians live like the new-born Babe Vivis & offiis ipse fuit.
Whole flock of many a Believer consists in the bare direct act of Faith.

in the unregenerate; nor by Assurance, for he must dwell in our Hearts before we can be assured of it: Therefore it is by Acceptance.

Secondly, By Faith we are justified, *Rom. 5. 1.* But neither Assent nor Assurance, for the Reasons above, do justify; therefore it must be by the receiving Act, and no other.

Thirdly, The Scripture ascribes great Difficulties to that Faith by which we are saved, as being most cross and opposit to the corrupt Nature of Man; but of all the Acts of Faith, none is clogg'd with like Difficulties, or conflicts with greater Oppositions than the receiving Act doth: About this Act hang the greatest Difficulties, Fears, and deepest Self-denial. In Assent a Mans Reason is convinced, and yields to the Evidence of Truth, so that he can do no other but Assent to the Truth. In Assurance there is nothing against a Mans Will or Comfort, but much for it; every one desires it: But it is not so in Acceptance of Christ, upon the Self-denying Terms of the Gospel, as will hereafter be evinced. We conclude therefore, that in this consists the Nature and Essence of saving Faith.

Thirdly, Having seen what the receiving of Jesus Christ is, and that it is the Faith by which we are justified and saved: I next come to open the Dignity and Excellency of this Faith, whose Praises and Encomiums are in all the Scriptures: There you find it renowned by the Title of precious Faith, 2 Pet. 1. 7. enriching Faith, James 2. 5. The Work of God, John 6. 29. The great Mystery of Godliness, 1 Tim. 3. 16. With many more rich Epithets throughout the Scriptures bestowed upon it.

Now Faith may be considered two Ways, viz. either Qualitatively, or Relatively.

Considered Qualitatively, as a saving Grace, it hath the same Excellency that all other precious saving Graces have: As it is the Fruit of the Spirit, it is more precious than Gold, *Prov. 8. 11, 19.* And so are all other Graces as well as Faith: In this Sense they all shine with equal Glory, and that a Glory transcending all the Glory of this World: But then consider Faith Relatively, as the Instrument by which the Righteousness of Christ is apprehended and made ours, and in that Consideration it excels all other Graces,

This is the Grace that is singled out from among all other Graces, to receive Christ, by which Office it is dignified above all its Fellows: As Moses was honoured above the many Thousands of Israel, when God took him up into the Mount, admitted him nearer to himself than any other of all the Tribes might come; for they stood without the Rail, while Moses was received into the special Presence of God, and was admitted to such views as others must not have: So Faith is honoured above all its fellow Graces in being singled out, and solemnly anointed to this high Office in our Justification: This is that precious Eye that looks unto Christ as the stung Israelites did to the brazen Serpent, and derives healing Virtue from him to the Soul. It is the Grace which instrumentally saves us, *Eph. 2. 8.* As it's Christs Glory to be the Door of Salvation, so it's Faiths Glory to be the golden Key that opens that Door.

What shall I say of Faith? 'Tis the Bond of

Union, the Instrument of Justification, the Spring of Spiritual Peace and Joy, the Means of Spiritual Livelihood and Subsistence: And therefore the great scope and drift of the Gospel, which aims at, and preleth nothing more, than to bring Men and Women to believe.

First, This is the bond of our Union with Christ: That Union is begun in our Vivification, and completed in our actual receiving of Christ: The first is a bond of Union on the Spirits part, the second a bond of Union on our Part. Christ dwelleth in our Hearts by Faith, *Eph. 3. 17.* And herein it is a door opened to let in many rich Blessings to the Soul: For by uniting us to Christ, it brings us into special Favour and Acceptation with God, *Eph. 1. 6.* Makes us the special Objects of Christs conjugal Love and Delight, *Eph. 5. 29.* Draws from his Heart Sympathy and tender Sense of all our Miseries and Burdens, *Heb. 14. 15.*

Secondly, 'Tis the Instrument of our Justification, *Rom. 5. 1.* Till Christ be received, (thus received by us) we are in our Sins, under Guilt and Condemnation; but when Faith comes, then comes Freedom: By him all that believe are justified from all Things, *Acts 13. 38, Rom. 8. 1.* For it apprehends or receives the pure and perfect Righteousness of the Lord Jesus, wherein the Soul, how guilty and sinful soever it be in it self, stands faultless and spotless before the Presence of God: All Obligations to Punishment, are upon believing immediately dissolved: A full and final Pardon sealed. O precious Faith, who can sufficiently value it!

What Respect, Reader, wouldst thou have to that hand that should bring thee a Pardon when on the Ladder or Block! Why, that Pardon, which thou canst not read without Tears of Joy, is brought Thee by the Hand of Faith. O inestimable Grace! That Cloaths the pure Righteousness of Jesus upon our defiled Souls, and so causes us to become the Righteousness of God in him; or as it is, 1 John 3. 7. Righteous as he is Righteous: Non formalis & intrinsecus Justitia, sed juxta per se relativam: Not with a formal inherent Righteousness of our own, but with a relative imputed Righteousness from another.

I know this most excellent and most comfortable Doctrine of imputed Righteousness, is not only denied, but derided by Papists. Stapleton calls it *spedrum Cerebri Lutherani*: The monstrous Birth of Luther's Brain: But blessed be God, this comfortable Truth is well secured against all Attempts of its Adversaries. Let their blasphemous Mouths call it in Derision as they do, putative Righteousness, (i. e.) a meer fancied or conceited Righteousness: Yet we know assuredly Christs Righteousness is imputed to us, and that in the Way of Faith. If Adams Sin became ours by Imputation, then so do Christs Righteousness also become ours by Imputation, *Rom. 5. 17.* If Christ were made a Sinner by the Imputation of our Sins to him, who had no Sin of his own, then we are made Righteous by the Imputation of Christs Righteousness to us, who have no Righteousness of our own, according to 1 Cor. 5. 21. This was the way in which Abraham, the Father of them that believe, was justified, and therefore this is the way in which all Believers, the Children of Abraham, must in like Manner be justified, *Rom.*

4. 22, 23, 24. Who can express the worth of Faith in this one Respect, if this were all it did for our Souls?

But Thirdly, It is the *Spring* of our Spiritual Peace and Joy; and that as it is the Instrument of our *Justification*. If it be an Instrument of our *Justification*, it cannot but be the Spring of our *Consolation*. Rom. 5. 1. *Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God*: In uniting us with Christ, and apprehending and applying his Righteousness to us, it becomes the Seed or Root of all the Peace and Joy of a Christians Life. Joy, the Child of Faith, therefore bears its Name, *Phil. 1. 25. The Joy of Faith*. So 1 Pet. 1. 8, 9. *Believing we rejoice with Joy unspeakable*: We cannot forbear laughing when we are tickled, nor can we forbear rejoicing while by Faith we are brought to the Sight and Knowledge of such a privileged State: When Faith hath first given, and then cleared our Title to Christ, Joy is no more under the Souls command: We cannot but rejoice, and that with Joy unspeakable.

Fourthly, It is the *means* of our Spiritual Livelihood and Subsistence: All other Graces, like Birds in the Nest, depend upon what Faith brings in to them: Take away Faith, and all the Graces languish and die: Joy, Peace, Hope, Patience, and all the rest, depend upon Faith, as the Members of the natural Body do upon the Vessels by which Blood and Spirit are conveyed to them. *The Life which I now live* (saith the Apostle) *is by the Faith of the Son of God*, Gal. 2. 20. It provides our ordinary Food, and extraordinary Cordials, Psalm 27. 13. *I had fainted unless I had believed*. And seeing it is all this to our Souls.

Fifthly, In the last Place, it is no wonder that it is the main Scope and Drift of the Gospel, to press and bring Souls to believing: 'Tis the Gospel's grand Design to bring up the Hearts of Men and Women to Faith. The urgent *Commands* of the Gospel aim at this, 1 John 3. 23. *Mark 1. 14, 15. John 12. 36.* hither also look the great *Promises* and Encouragements of the Gospel, John 6. 34. and 37. So *Mark 16. 16.* And the opposite Sin of Unbelief is every where fearfully aggravated, and threatened, John 16. 8, 9. John 3. 18, 35. And this was the Third Thing promised, namely, A discovery of the Transcendent Worth and Excellency of saving Faith.

Fourthly, But lest we commit a Mistake here, to the Prejudice of Christs Honour and Glory, which must not be given to another, no not to Faith it self; I promised you in the Fourth Place, to shew you upon what Account Faith is thus dignified and honoured: That so we may give unto Faith, the Things that are Faiths; and to Christ, the Things that are Christs.

And I find Four Opinions about the Interest of Faith in our Justification: Some will have it to justify us *formally*, not relatively: (i. e.) upon the Account of its own intrinsic Value and Worth; and this is the *Papish* Sense of Justification by Faith. Some affirm, that though Faith be not our perfect legal Righteousness, considered as a Work of ours, yet the *Act* of believing is imputed to us for Righteousness, (i. e.) God graciously accepts it instead of per-

fect legal Righteousness, and so in his esteem it's our Evangelical Righteousness. And this is the *Arminian* Sense of Justification by Faith.

Some there are also, even among our Reformed Divines, that contend that Faith justifies and saves us, as it is the Condition of the New Covenant. And lastly, Others will have it to justify us as an *Instrument* apprehending or receiving the Righteousness of Christ; with which Opinion I must close: When I consider my Text calls it a *receiving of Christ*: Most certain it is,

That First, It doth not justify in the *Papish* Sense, upon the Account of its own proper Worth and Dignity: For then,

First, Justification should be of Debt, not of Grace; contrary to Rom. 3. 23, 24.

Secondly, This would frustrate the very Scope and End of the Death of Christ; for if Righteousness come by the Law, (i. e.) by the way of Works and Desert, then is Christ Dead in vain, Gal. 2. 21.

Thirdly, Then the way of our Justification by Faith would be so far from excluding, that it would establish boasting, expressly contrary to the Apostle, Rom. 3. 26, 27.

Fourthly, Then there should be no Defects or Imperfections in Faith, for a defective and imperfect Thing can never be the Matter of our Justification before God: If it justify upon the Account of its own Worth and proper Dignity, it can have no Flaw nor Imperfection in it, contrary to the common Sense of all Believers. Nay,

Fifthly, Then it's the same Thing to be justified by Faith, and to be justified by Works, which the Apostle so carefully distinguisheth and opposeth, *Phil. 3. 9.* and *Rom. 4. 6.* So that we conclude it doth not justify in the *Papish* Sense, for any worth or proper Excellency that is in it self.

Secondly, And it is as evident, it doth not justify us in the *Arminian* Sense, viz. as the *credere*, the Act of believing is imputed, or accepted by God, as our Evangelical Righteousness, instead of perfect legal Righteousness. In the former Opinion you have the dreggs of Popery, and here you have refined Popery. Let all *Arminians* know, we have as high Esteem for Faith as any Men in the World, but yet we will not rob Christ to cloath Faith: We cannot embrace their Opinion, because,

First, We must then dethrone Christ to exalt Faith: We are willing to give it all that is due to it, but we dare not despoil Christ of his Glory for Faiths sake: He is the *Lord our Righteousness*, Jer. 23. We dare not set the Servant above the Master: We acknowledge no Righteousness but what the Obedience and Satisfaction of Christ yields us: His Blood, not our Faith; his Satisfaction, not our Believing it, is the Matter of our Justification before God.

Secondly, We dare not yield this Point, lest we undermine all the Comfort of Christians, by bottoming their Pardon and Peace upon a weak, imperfect Work of their own. Oh how tottering and unstable must their Station be, that stand upon such a Bottom as this! What ups and downs are there in our Faith, what mixtures of unbelief at all Times, and prevalency of unbelief at some times; and is this a Foundation to build our

our Justification and Hope upon? *Debile fundamentum fallit opus*: If we lay the stress here, we build upon very loose ground, and must be at a continual loss, both as to Safety and Comfort.

Thirdly, We dare not wrong the Justice and Truth of God at that rate, as to affirm that he esteems and imputes our poor weak Faith for perfect legal Righteousness: We know that the Judgment of God is always according to Truth: If the Justice of God requires full Payment, sure it will not say it's fully satisfied by any Acts of ours, when all that we can do amounts not to one Mite of the vast sum we owe to God. So that we deservedly reject this Opinion also.

Thirdly, And for the Third Opinion, That it justifies as the Condition of the new Covenant, tho' some of great Name and Worth among our Protestant Divines seem to go that way, yet I cannot see, according to this Opinion, any Reason why Repentance may not as properly be said to justify us as Faith, for it is a Condition of the New Covenant as much as Faith,

and if Faith justify as a Condition, then every other Grace that is a Condition, must justify as well as Faith. I acknowledge Faith to be a Condition of the Covenant, but cannot allow that it justifies as a Condition. And therefore must profess my self best satisfied in the last Opinion, which speaks it an *Instrument* in our Justification: It is the Hand which receives the Righteousness of Christ that justifies us, and that gives it its value above all other Graces: As when we say a *Diamond Ring* is worth one Hundred Pounds, we mean not the Gold that receives, but the Stone that is set in it is worth so much: Faith consider'd as an Habit, is no more precious than other gracious Habits are, but consider'd as an *Instrument* to receive Christ, and his Righteousness; so it excels them all: And this instrumentality of Faith is noted in those Phrases, *in te fidei*, Rom. 3. 28. and *in te fidei*, By Faith and through Faith. And thus much of the Nature and Excellency of saving Faith.

Ergo quia fides Christum nostrum recipit & gratia dei in Christo omnino tribuitur, ideo fidei tribuitur justificatio, maxime propter Christum, & non ideo quia nostrum opus est. Confessio Helv.

Serm. 7.

The Seventh SERMON.

JOHN I. xii.

Text. *But as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God; even to them that believe on his Name.*

THE Nature and Excellency of saving Faith, together with its Relation to Justification as an Instrument in receiving Christ and his Righteousness, having been discoursed Doctrinally already, I now come to make Application of it according to the Nature of this weighty and fruitful Point.

And the Uses I shall make of it will be for our,

1. Information,
2. Examination,
3. Exhortation. And
4. Direction.

First Use of Information.

Use 1. And in the first, this Point yields us many and great, and useful Truths, for our Information: As,

Infer. 1. Is the receiving of Christ the Vital and saving Act of Faith, which gives the Soul right to the Person and Privileges of Christ. Then it follows, *That the rejecting of Christ by unbelief, must needs be the damning and Soul-destroying Sin, which cuts a Man off from Christ, and all the Benefits purchased by his Blood.* If there be Life in receiving, there must needs be Death in rejecting Christ.

There is no Grace more excellent than Faith, no Sin more execrable and abominable than Unbelief: Faith is the saving Grace, and Unbelief is the damning Sin, *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believeth not shall be damned.* See *John* 3. 18, 36. and *John* 8. 24.

And the Reason why this Sin of unbelief is the damning Sin is this, Because in the Justification of a Sinner, there must be a Co-operation all the *Concauses* that have a joint Influence into

that blessed Effect: As there must be free Grace for an *impulsive Cause*, the Blood of Christ as the *meritorious Cause*, so of Necessity there must be Faith, the *instrumental Cause*, to receive and apply what the free Grace of God designed, and the Blood of Christ purchased for us. For where there are many *social Causes* or *Concauses* to produce one Effect, there the Effect is not produced till the last Cause be in Act.

To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his Name whosoever believeth in him shall receive Remission of Sins, Acts 10. 43. Faith in its Place, is as necessary as the Blood of Christ in its Place: *'Tis Christ in you the hope of Glory, Col.* 1. 27. Nor Christ in the Womb, nor Christ in the Grave, nor Christ in Heaven, except he be also Christ in you.

Tho' Christ be come in the Flesh, tho' he died and rose again from the Dead, yet if you believe not, you must for all that *Die in your Sins, John* 8. 24. And what a dreadful Thing is this! better die the death of a Dog, better die in a Ditch, than die in your Sins. If you die in your Sins, you will also rise in your Sins, and stand at the Bar of Christ in your Sins: You can never receive Remission, till first you have received Christ. O cursed unbelief, which damns the Soul; *discommends* God, *1 John* 5. 10 *sights* Jesus Christ the Wisdom of God, as if that glorious Design of Redemption by his Blood, the Triumph and Master-piece of Divine Wisdom, were meer foolishness, *1 Cor.* 1. 23, 24. *frustrates* the great Design of the Gospel, *Gal.* 2. 21. and consequently it must be the Sin of Sins: The worst and most dangerous of all Sins: Leaving a Man under the Guilt of all his other Sins.

Q. 2

Infer.

Infer. 2. If such a receiving of Christ, as hath been described, be saving and justifying Faith, then Faith is a work of greater difficulty than most Men understand it to be, and there are but few sound Believers in the World.

Before Christ can be received, the Heart must be emptied and opened: But most Mens Hearts are full of Self-righteousness, and Vain-Confidence: This was the Case of the Jews, Rom. 10. 3. *Being ignorant of Gods Righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the Righteousness of God.*

Mans Righteousness was once in himself, and what Liquor is first put into the Vessel, it ever afterwards favours of it: 'Tis with Adams Posterity as with Bees, which have been accustomed to go to their own Hive, and carry all thither; if the Hive be removed to another Place, they will still fly to the old Place, hover up and down about it, and rather die there, than go to a new Place. So it is with most Men. God hath removed their Righteousness from doing, to believing; from themselves, to Christ; but who shall prevail with them to forsake Self? Nature will venture to be damned rather than do it: There is much Submission in believing, and great Self-denial: A proud self-conceited Heart will never stoop to live upon the Stock of anothers Righteousness.

Besides, it is no easie Thing to persuade Men to receive Christ as their Lord in all things, and submit their Necks to his strict and holy Precepts, tho' it be a great Truth that Christs Yoke doth not gail, but grace and adorn the Neck that bears it; that the truest and sweetest Liberty is in our Freedom from our Lusts, not in our fulfilling them: Yet who can persuade the carnal Heart to believe this? And much less will Men ever be prevailed withal, to forsake Father, Mother, Wife, Children, Inheritance, and Life it self, to follow Christ: And all this upon the Account of spiritual and invisible Things: And yet this must be done by all that receive the Lord Jesus Christ upon Gospel Terms; yes, and before the Soul hath any encouraging Experience of its own, to balance the manifold discouragements of Sense and carnal Reason, improved by the utmost Craft of Satan to dismay it: For Experience is the fruit and consequent of believing. So that it may well be placed among the great Mysteries of Godliness, that Christ is believed on in the World, 1 Tim. 3. 16.

Infer. 3. And then Thirdly, Hence it will follow, that there may be more true and sound Believers in the World, than know or conclude themselves to be such. For as many ruine their own Souls by placing the Essence of saving Faith in naked Assent, so some rob themselves of their own Comfort, by placing it in full Assurance. Faith, and Sense of Faith, are two distinct and separable Mercies: You may have truly received Christ, and not receive the Knowledge or Assurance of it, Isa. 50. 10. Some there be that say, *thou art our God*, of whom God never said *you are my People*: These have no Authority to be call'd the Sons of God: Others there are of whom God saith, *These are my People*, yet dare not call God their God: These have Authority to be call'd the Sons of God, but know it not.

They have received Christ, that's their safety, but they have not yet received the Knowledge and Assurance of it, that's their Trouble: The Father owns his Child in the Cradle, who yet knows him not to be his Father.

Now there are two Reasons why many Believers, who might argue themselves into Peace, do yet live without the Comforts of their Faith: And this may come to pass, either from,

First, The Evidence of the Premises.

Secondly, Or the weighty Importance of the Conclusion.

First, It may come to pass from the invidence of the Premises. Assurance is a Practical Syllogism, and it proceeds thus:

All that truly have received Christ Jesus, they are the Children of God.

I have truly received Jesus Christ,
Therefore I am the Child of God.

The Major Proposition is found in the Scripture, and there can be no doubt of that: The Assumption depends upon Experience, or internal Sense. *I have truly received Jesus Christ*: Here usually is the stumble, many great Objections lie against it, which they cannot clearly Answer: As,

Obj. 1. Light and Knowledge are necessarily required to the right receiving of Christ, but I am dark and ignorant, many carnal unregenerate Persons know more than I do, and are more able to Discourse of the Mysteries of Religion than I am.

Sol. But you ought to distinguish of the Kinds and Degrees of Knowledge, and then you would see that your bewailed Ignorance is no Bar to your Interest in Christ. There are Two Kinds of Knowledge:

1. Natural.

2. Spiritual.

There is a natural Knowledge even of Spiritual Objects, a spark of Nature blown up by an advantageous Education, and though the Objects of this Knowledge be Spiritual Things, yet the Light in which they are discerned is but a meer natural Light.

And there is a Spiritual Knowledge of Spiritual Things, the Teaching of the anointing, as it's call'd, 1 John 2. 27, (i. e.) the Effect and Fruit of the Spirits sanctifying Work upon our Souls, when the Experience of a Mans own Heart informs and teacheth his Understanding, when by feeling the workings of Grace in our own Souls, we come to understand it's Nature: This is Spiritual Knowledge. Now a little of this Knowledge is a better Evidence of a Mans Interest in Christ, than the most raised and excellent degree of natural Knowledge: As the Philosopher truly observes: *Præstat paucula de meliori scientia deestasse, quam de ignobiliori multa*: One drachm of Knowledge of the best and most excellent Things, is better than much Knowledge of common Things. So it is here, a little spiritual Knowledge of Jesus Christ, that hath Life and Savour in it, is more than all the natural sapless Knowledge of the unregenerate, which leaves the Heart dead, carnal and barren: 'Tis not the Quantity but the Kind, not the Measure but the Savour: If you know so much of the Evil of Sin, as renders it the most bitter and burdensome Thing in the World to you, and so much of the necessity and excellency of Christ, as renders him the most sweet and desirable Thing in the World to you,

*Ingenium
Christi non
describit sed
honestat
collat. Bern.*

you, tho' you may be defective in many Degrees of Knowledge, yet this is enough to prove yours to be the Fruit of the Spirit: You may have a sanctified Heart, tho' you have an irregular or weak Head: Many that knew more than you are in *Hell*, and some that once knew as little as you are now in *Heaven*: *In absoluto & facili stat aeternitas*: God hath not prepar'd Heaven only for clear and subtil Heads: A little sanctified and effectual Knowledge of Christs Person, Offices, Suitableness, and Necessity, may bring thee thither, when others, with all their curious Speculations and Notions, may perish for ever.

Obj. 2. But you tell me, that *Assent* to the Truths of the Gospel is necessarily included in saving Faith, which tho' it be not the justifying and saving Act, yet it is pre supposed and required to it: Now I have many staggering and Doubtings about the certainty and reality of these Things: Many horrid Atheistical Thoughts, which shake the assenting Act of Faith in the very Foundation, and hence I doubt I do not believe.

Sol. There may be, and often is, a true and sincere *Assent* found in the Soul, that is assaulted with violent atheistical Suggestions from Satan; and thereupon Questions the Truth of it. And this is a very clear Evidence of the reality of our *Assent*, that whatever Doubts, or contrary Suggestions there be, yet we dare not in our Practice contradict or slight those Truths or Duties which we are tempted to disbelieve. *Ex. gr.* we are assaulted with Atheistical Thoughts, and tempted to slight and cast off all fears of Sin, and practice of religious Duties, yet when it comes to the Point of Practice, we dare not commit a known Sin, the awe of God is upon us: We dare not omit a known Duty, the tie of Conscience is found strong enough to hold us close to it: In this Case, 'tis plain we do really *Assent*, when we think we do not. A Man thinks he doth not love his Child, yet carefully provides for him in Health, and is full of grief and fears about him in Sicknefs: Why now, so long as I see all Fatherly Duties performed, and Affections to his Childs welfare manifested, let him say what he will as to the want of Love to him, whilst I see this, he must excuse me if I do not believe him, when he saith he hath no Love for him. Just so is it in this Case, A Man saith I do not *Assent* to the Being, Necessity, or Excellency of Jesus Christ: Yet, in the mean Time, his Soul is fill'd with Cares and Fears about securing his Interest in him, he is found panting and thirsting for him with vehement Desires, there's nothing in all the World would give him such Joy, as to be well assured of an Interest in him; while it is thus with any Man, let him say or think what he will of his *Assent*, it's manifest by this he doth truly and heartily *Assent*, and there can be no better Proof of it than these real Effects produc'd by it.

Secondly, But if these, and other Objections, were never so fully answer'd for the clearing of the *Assumption*, yet it often falls out, that Believers are afraid to draw the Conclusion, and that fear partly arises from.

First, The weighty Importance of this Matter.

Secondly, The sense of the Deceitfulness of their own Hearts.

First, The Conclusion is of Infinite Importance to them, it is the Everlasting Happiness of their Souls, than which nothing is, or can be, of greater weight upon their Spirits: Things in which we are most deeply concerned, are not lightly and hastily received by us: It seems so great and so good, that we are still apt (if there be any room for it) to suspect the Truth and Certainty thereof, as never being sure enough.

Thus when the Women that were the first Messengers and Witnesses of Christs Resurrection, *Luke 20, 10, 11.* came and told the Disciples those wonderful and comfortable Tidings, it's said, *That their Words seemed to them as idle Tales, and they believed them not*: They thought it was too good to be true: Too great to be hastily received; so is it in this Case.

Secondly, The Sense they have of the Deceitfulness of their own Hearts, and the daily workings of Hypocrisy there, makes them afraid to conclude in so great a Point as this is.

They know that very many daily cozen and cheat themselves in this Matter, they know also that their own Hearts are full of falseness and deceit, they find them so in their daily Observations of them, and what if they should prove so in this? Why then they are lost for ever! They also know there is not the like danger in their Fears and Jealousies, that would be in their vain Confidences and Presumptions: By the one they are only deprived of their present Comfort, but by the other they would be ruined for ever: And therefore chuse rather to dwell with their own Fears (though they be uncomfortable Companions) than run the Danger of so great a Mistake, which would be infinitely more fatal. And this being the common Case of most Christians, it follows that there must be many more Believers in the World than do think, or dare conclude themselves to be such.

Infer. 4. If the right receiving of Jesus Christ be true saving and justifying Faith, then those that have the least and lowest Degree and Measure of saving Faith, have Cause for ever to admire the Bounty and Riches of the Grace of God to them therein.

If you have received never so little of his Bounty by the Hand of Providence, in the good Things of this Life, yet if he have given you any measure of true saving Faith, he hath dealt bountifully indeed with you: This Mercy alone is enough to balance all other Wants and Inconveniences of this Life. *Poor in the World, rich in Faith, James 2. 5.* O let your Hearts take in the full Sense of this Bounty of God to you; say with the Apostle, *Eph. 1. 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in Christ Jesus*: And you will in this one Mercy, find Matter enough of Praise and Thanksgiving, Wonder and Admiration to your dying Day, yea, to all Eternity: For do but consider,

First, The smallest Measure of saving Faith which is found in any of the People of God, receives Jesus Christ; and in receiving him, what Mercy is there which the believing Soul doth not receive in him, and with him? *Rom. 8. 32.*

O Be:

O Believer, tho' the Arms of thy Faith be small and weak, yet they embrace a great Christ, and receive the richest Gift that ever God bestowed upon the World: No sooner art thou become a Believer, but Christ is in thee the Hope of Glory: And thou hast Authority to become a Son or Daughter of God? Thou hast the Broad Seal of Heaven to confirm thy Title and Claim to the Privileges of Adoption, for *To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God. To as many*] be they strong, or be they weak, provided they really receive Christ by Faith; there is Authority or Power given, so that it's no Act of Presumption in them to say God is our Father, Heaven is our Inheritance. Oh precious Faith! the Treasures of ten Thousand Worlds cannot purchase such Privileges as these: All the Crowns and Scepters of the Earth, sold at their full Value, are no Price for such Mercies.

Secondly, The least degree of saving Faith, brings the Soul into a state of perfect and full Justification. For if it receive Jesus Christ, it must therefore needs in him, and with him, receive a free, full, and final Pardon of Sin: The measure of Faith receives Remission for the greatest Sins. *By him all that believe are justified from all things*, Acts 13. 39. it unites thy Soul with Christ, and then as the necessary Consequent of that Union, there is no Condemnation, *Rom. 8. 1. in his grace*, not one Condemnation, how many soever our Sins have been.

Thirdly, The least measure or degree of saving Faith, is a greater Mercy than God hath bestowed, or ever will bestow upon many that are far above you in outward respects: *All Men have not Faith*: Nay, 'tis but a Remnant among Men that believe. Few of the Nobles and Potentates of the World, have such a Gift as this: They have Houses and Lands, yea, Crowns and Scepters, but no Faith, no Christ, no Pardon: They have Authority to rule over Men, but no Authority to become the Sons of God, *1 Cor. 1. 26, 27*.

Say therefore in thy most debased, straitened, afflicted Condition, *Return to thy Rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee*.

Fourthly, The least degree of saving Faith is more than all the Power of Nature can produce: There must be a special Revelation of the Arm of the Lord in that Work, *Isa. 53. 1*. Believers are not born of Flesh, nor of Blood, nor of the Will of Man, but of God, *John 1. 12, 13*. all believing Motions towards Christ, are the Effects of the Fathers drawing, *Joh. 6. 44*. a glorious and irresistible Power goes forth from God to produce it, whence it's called the Faith of the operation of God, *Col. 2. 12*.

So then, Let not Believers despise the day of small things, or overlook that great and infinite Mercy which is wrapt up in the least degree of saving Faith.

Infer. 5. Learn hence the Impossibility of their Salvation, who neither know the nature, nor enjoy the means of saving Faith.

My Soul pities and mourns over the Infidel World. Ah! what will become of the Millions of poor Unbelievers! there is but one Door of Salvation; viz. Christ; and but one Key of Faith to open that Door: And as that Key was never given to the Heathen World, so it's laid

aside, or taken away from the People by their cruel Guides, all over the Popish World: Were you among them, you should hear nothing else prest as necessary to your Salvation but a blind implicit Faith, to believe as the Church believes; that is, to believe they know not what,

To believe as the Pope believes; that is, as an Infidel believes, for so they contend he may be, *and tho' there be such a thing, as an explicit Faith sometimes spoken of among them, yet it is very sparingly discoursed, very faintly described, and exceedingly slighted by them, as the veriest trifle in the World.

First, It is but sparingly discoursed of: They love not to accustom the Peoples Ears to such Doctrine: One of themselves confesses that there is so deep a silence of explicit particular Faith in the *Romish Church*, that you may find many every where, that believe no more of these things than Heathen Philosophers

Secondly, When it is preach'd or written of, it is faintly described: For they place the whole Nature and Essence of justifying and saving Faith in a naked Assent: Which the Devils have as well as Men, *James 2. 19*. no more than this is prest upon the People at any time, as necessary to their Salvation.

Thirdly, And even this particular explicit Faith, when it is spoken or written of, is exceedingly slighted. I think if the Devil himself were in the Pulpit, he could hardly tell how to bring Men to a more low and slight esteem of Faith; to represent it as a verier Trifle, and needles Thing than these his Agents have done. Some (a) say, if a Man believe with a particular explicit Faith, (i. e.) if he actually assent to Scripture Truths once in a Year, it is enough. Yea, and others (b) think it too much to oblige People to believe once in twelve Months; and for their ease tell them, if they believe once in twelve Years it is sufficient: And lest this should be too great a Task, (c) others affirm, that if it be done but once in their whole Life, and that at the Point of Death too, it is enough, especially for the rude and common People. Good God! what Doctrine is here! it was a Saying long ago of Gregory (as I remember) *Malus Ministri est nifus Diaboli*: A wicked Minister is the Devil's Goshawk, that goes a Birding for Hell, And O what Game have these Hawks of Hell among such numerous flocks of People! O blest God while you live, for your Deliverance from Popery; and see that you prize the Gospel, and Means of Grace you enjoy at an higher rate, lest God bring you once more under that yoke, which neither you nor your Fathers could bear.

Second Use for Examination.

Doth saving Faith consist in a due and right receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ? then let me persuade you to examine your Selves in this great Point of Faith. Reflect solemnly upon the Transactions that have been betwixt Christ and your Souls: Think close on this Subject of Meditation.

If all you were worth in the World lay in one precious Stone, and that Stone were to be tried by the Skillful Lapidary, whether it were true or false, whether it would fly or endure under the smart Stroke of his Hammer, sure your Thoughts could not be unconcerned about the

*Non enim
fides pro-
pria Rom-
ni Pontifi-
cis ecclesia
est n. refra-
g. Causa
Loc. The-
ol. p. 344

Navarr.
cap. 11.
p. 142

(a) Petr. à
S. Joseph
sum Art. 1
p. 6.
(b) Bon-
cina Tom.
2. in 1
p. 2.
(c) Jo. San-
dis Disp. 41.
n. 32.

the Issue: Why all that you are worth in both Worlds, depends upon the Truth of your Faith, which is now to be tried.

O therefore read not these Lines with a running careless Eye, but seriously ponder the Matter before you: You would be loth to put to Sea, tho' it were but to cross the *Channel*, in a rotten leaky Bottom: And will you dare to venture into the Ocean of Eternity in a false, rotten Faith? God forbid: You know the Lord is coming to try every Man's Faith as by Fire, and that we must stand or fall for ever with the Sincerity or Hypocrisy of our Faith. Surely you can never be too exact and careful about that, on which your whole Estate depends, and that for ever.

Now there are three things upon which we should have a very tender and watchful Eye for the discovery of the sincerity of our Faith, and they are.

The { Antecedents
Concomitants } of Faith.
Consequents }

As these are, so we must judge and reckon our Faith to be. And accordingly they furnish us with three general Marks or Trials of Faith.

First, If you would discern the Sincerity of your Faith, examine whether those *Antecedents* and preparative Works of the Spirit, were ever found in your Souls, which use to introduce and usher it into the Souls of God's Elect: Such are Illumination, Conviction, Self-despair, and Earnest Cries to God.

First, *Illumination* is a necessary Antecedent to Faith: You cannot believe till God hath opened your Eyes to see your sin, your misery by sin, and your remedy in Jesus Christ alone: You find this Act of the Spirit to be the first, in order both of Nature and Time, and introductory to all the rest, *Acts* 26. 18. *To turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God.* As Faith without Works (which must be a *Consequent* to it) is dead, so Faith without *Light*, which must be an *Antecedent* to it, is blind: Faith is the *Hand* by which Christ is received, but Knowledge is the *Eye* by which that Hand is directed.

Well then, hath God opened your Eyes to see sin and misery in another manner than ever you saw it before? For certainly, if God have opened your Eyes by saving Illumination, present Apprehensions of Sin and Danger, as betwixt the painted *Lion* upon the Wall or Sign-Post, and the real living *Lion* that meets you roaring in the Way.

Secondly, *Conviction* is an *Antecedent* to Believing: Where this goes not before, no Faith can follow after: The Spirit first convinces of sin, then of Righteousness, *Job* 16. 8. So *Mark* 1. 15. *Repent ye, and believe the Gospel:* Believe it, O Man, that Breast of thine must be wounded, that vain and frothy Heart of thine must be pierced and stung with Conviction, Sense and Sorrow for Sin: Thou must have some sick days and restless nights for Sin, if ever thou rightly close with Christ by Faith. 'Tis true, there is much difference found in the Strength, Depth, and Continuance of Conviction, and spiritual Troubles in Converts, as there is in the Labours and Travailing Pains of Women; but

sure it is, the Child of Faith is not ordinarily born without some Pangs. Conviction is the Application of that Light which God makes to shine in our Minds, to our particular Case and Condition, by the Conscience; and sure, when Men come to see their miserable and sad Estate by a true Light, it cannot but wound them, and that to the very Heart.

Thirdly, *Self-despair*, or a total and absolute Loss in our selves about Deliverance, and the way of Escape, either by our selves, or any other meer Creature, doth, and must go before Faith.

So it was with those Believers, *Acts* 2. 37. *Men and Brethren what shall we do?* They are the Words of Men at a total Loss: It is the Voice of poor distressed Souls that saw themselves in Misery, but knew not, saw not, nor could devise any way of escape from it, by any thing they could do for themselves, or any other Creature for them: And hence the Apostle uses that Emphatical Word, *Gal* 3. 23. *συνυμνομένοι, (i. e.) shut up to the faith, (i. e.)* as Men besieged in a Garrison in time of a Storm, when the Enemy pours in upon them through the Breaches, and over-powers them: There is but one *Sally-Port* or Gate, at which they can escape, and to that they all throng, as despairing of Life if they take any other Course. Just so do Mens Convictions besiege them, distress them, beat them off from all their Holds and Intrenchments, and bring them to a pinching distress in themselves, shutting them up to Christ as the only way of Escape. Duties cannot save me, Reformation cannot save me, nor Angels nor Men can save me; there is no way but one, *Christ* or *Condemnation* for evermore.

I thought once, that a little Repentance, Reformation, Restitution, and a stricter Life, might be a way to escape Wrath to come, but I find the Bed is too short, and the Covering too narrow: All is but Loss, Dung, Dross, in comparison with Jesus Christ: If I trust to those *Egyptian Reeds*, they will not only fail me, but pierce and wound me too, I see no Hope within the whole *Horizon* of Sense.

Fourthly, Hence come *vehement and earnest Cries to God* for Faith, for Christ, for Help from Heaven, to transport the Soul out of this dangerous Condition, to that strong Rock of Salvation; to bring it out of this furious stormy Sea of Trouble, where it's ready to wreck every moment, into that safe and quiet Harbour, Christ.

O when a Man shall see his Misery and Danger, and no way of escape but Christ, and that he hath no ability in himself to come to Christ, to open his Heart thus to receive him, but that this Work of Faith is wholly supernatural, the Operation of God; how will the Soul return again and again upon God, with such Cries as that, *Mark* 9. 24. *Lord help my Unbelief?* "Lord enable me to come to Christ: Give me Christ" or I perish for ever: What Profit is there in my Blood? Why should I die in the sight and presence of a Saviour? O Lord it is thine own Work, and a most Glorious Work: Reveal thine Arm in this Work upon my Soul, "I pray thee: Give me Christ, if thou deny me Bread: Give me Faith, if thou deny me
Breath:

"Breath : It's more necessary, that I believe than that I live.

O Reader, Reflect upon days and nights that are past, the places where thou hast been conversant : Where are the Bed-sides, or the secret Corners where thou hast besieged Heaven with such Cries ? If God have thus enlightened, convinced, distressed thy Soul, and thus set thee a mourning after Christ, it will be one good sign that Faith is come into thy Soul ; for here are certainly the *Harbingers* and Fore-runners of it, that ordinarily make way for Faith into the Souls of Men.

Secondly, If you would be satisfied of the sincerity and truth of your Faith, then examine what *Concomitants* it is attended with in your Souls. I mean, what Frames and Tempers your Souls were in, at that time when you think you received Christ. For certainly, in those that receive Christ, (excepting those into whose Hearts, God hath in a more still and insensible way infused Faith betime, by his Blessing upon pious Education) such concomitant Frames of Spirit may be remark'd, as these following.

First, The Heart is deeply *serious*, and as much in earnest in this matter, as ever it was, or can be about any thing in the World. This you see in that example of the *Taylor*, Acts 16. 29. *He came in trembling and astonished* : It is the most solemn and important Matter, that ever the Soul had before it in this World, or ever shall, or can have : How much are the Hearts of Men affected in their outward Straits and Distresses, about the Concernments of the Body ? Their Hearts are not a little concern'd in such Questions as these, *What shall I eat ? what shall I drink ?* wherewithal shall I and mine be fed and clothed ? but certainly the Straits that Souls are in about Salvation, must be allowed to be greater than these ; and such Questions as that of the *Taylor*, *Sirs ! What must I do to be saved ?* make deeper Impressions upon the Heart, than what shall I eat, or drink ? Some indeed, have their Thoughts sinking deeper into these things than others : These Thoughts lie with different Degrees of Weight of Men ; but all are most solemnly and awfully concerned about their Condition : All Frothiness and Frolicks are gone, and the Heart settles it self in deepest earnest about its Eternal State.

Secondly, The Heart that receives Jesus Christ, is in a frame of deep *Humiliation* and Self-abasement. O when a Man begins to apprehend the first Approaches of Grace, Pardon and Mercy by Jesus Christ to his Soul : A Soul convinced of its utter Unworthiness and Desert of Hell ; and can scarce expect any thing else from the just and holy God but Damnation, how do the first Drawings of Mercy melt and humble it ! " O Lord, what am I that thou shouldest feed me and preserve me ! that thou shouldest but for a few years spare me, and forbear me ! but that ever Jesus Christ should love me, and give himself for me, that such a wretched Sinner as I, should obtain Union with his Person, Pardon, Peace and Salvation by his Blood ! Lord, whence is this to such a Worm as I ? and will Christ indeed bestow himself upon me ? shall so great a blessing as Christ ever come within the Arms of such a Soul as

"mine ? will God in very deed be reconciled to me in his Son ? what to me ! to such an Enemy as I have been ! shall my Sins which are so many, so horrid, so much aggravated beyond the sins of most Men, be forgiven me ? O what am I vile Dull ! base Wretch, that ever God should do this for me ! And how is that Scripture fulfill'd and made good, *Ezek. 16. 63. That thou must remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.* Thus that poor broken hearted Believer stood behind Christ weeping, and washing his Feet with Tears, as one quite melted down, and overcome with the Sense of Mercy to such a Vile Sinner, *Luke 7. 38.*

Thirdly, The Soul that receives Jesus Christ is in a *weary Condition*, restless and full of Disquietness, neither able to bear the Burden of Sin, nor knowing how to be discharged from it, except Christ will give it ease, *Mat. 11. 28. Come unto me, that is, believe in me, you that are weary and heavy laden* : If they do not look into their own Souls, they know there's no *Safety*, and if they do, there's no *Comfort*. O the burdensome sense of sin overweights them ; they are ready to fall, to sink under it.

Fourthly, The Soul that rightly receive Christ is not only in a weary, but in a *longing Condition* : Never did the *Hart* pant more earnestly for the Water-brooks : Never did the *Hireling* desire the shadow, never did a *condemned Person* long for a Pardon, more than the Soul longs after Jesus Christ. O said *David*, that one would give me of the Waters of *Bethlehem* to drink. O faith the poor humbled Sinner, that one would give me of the open'd Fountain of the Blood of Christ to drink ! O for one Drop of that precious Blood ! O for one encouraging Smile from Christ ! O now were ten thousand Worlds at my Command, and Christ to be bought, how freely would I lay them all down to purchase him ! but he is the *Gift* of God. O that God would give me Christ, if I should go in Raggs, and hunger and thirst all my days in this World !

Fifthly, The Soul in the time of its closing with, or receiving Christ, is in a *state of Conflict* : It hangs between Hopes and Fears, Encouragements and Discouragements, which occasions many a sad stand and pause in the way to Christ ; sometimes the number and nature of its sins discourage it, then the Riches and Freeness of the Grace of Christ, erects his Hopes again : There's little hope, faith Unbelief, nay, it's utterly impossible faith *Satan*, as ever such a Wretch as thou should find Mercy ; now the Hands hang down. O but then there's a Necessity, an absolute Necessity ; I have not the choice of two, but am shut up to one way of Deliverance : Others have found Mercy, and the Invitation is to all that are weary, and to all that are athirst : He saith, he that cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out ; now new Hopes inspire the Soul, and the Hands that did hang down are again strengthened.

These are the *Concomitant Frames* that accompany Faith.

I lastly,

3. *Mark.* Lastly, Examine the *Consequences and Effects of Faith*, if you would be satisfied of the truth and sincerity of it: And such are,

First, *Evangelical meltings*, and ingenious thawings of the heart under the apprehensions of Grace and Mercy: *Zech.* 12. 10. *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn.*

Secondly, *Love to Christ, his ways and people.* *Gal.* 5. 6. *Faith worketh by love*, (i. e.) it represents the love of God, and then makes use of the sweetness of it by way of Argument, to constrain the Soul to all acts of Obedience, wherein it may testify the reality of its love to God and Christ.

Thirdly, *Heart purity*, *Acts* 15. 9. *Purifying their hearts by faith*: it doth not only cleanse the hands but the heart: no Principle in Man besides Faith can do this: Morality may hide corruption, but Faith only *purifies* the heart from it.

Fourthly, *Obedience to the commands of Christ*, *Rom.* 16. 26. the very Name of Faith is call'd upon obedience: for it accepts *Christ* as Lord, and urges upon the Soul the most powerful Arguments in the World, to draw it to Obedience.

In a word, let the poor doubting Believer, that questions his Faith, reflect upon those things that are unquestionable in his own experience, which being well considered, will greatly tend to his satisfaction in this point.

Its very doubtful to you whether you believe, but yet in the mean while, it may be past doubt, (being a matter of clear experience) that you have been deeply convinced of sin, struck off from all carnal Props and Refuges, made willing to accept *Jesus Christ* upon what terms soever you might enjoy him: you doubt whether *Christ* be yours, but its past doubt that you have a most high and precious esteem of *Christ*, that you heartily long for him, that you prize and love all whether persons or things, that bears his Image: that nothing in the World would please your hearts like a transformation into his likeness, that you had rather your Souls should be fill'd with his Spirit, than your Houses with Gold and Silver. 'Tis doubtful whether *Christ*, be yours, but its past doubt that one smile from *Christ*, one token of his love, would do you more good than all the honours and smiles of the World; and nothing so grieves you, as your grieving him by sin doth: you dare not say that you have received him, nor can you deny but that you have had many sick days and nights for him: that you have gone into many secret places with yearning bowels after him: whether he be yours or not, you cannot tell; but that you are resolved to be his, that you can tell: whether he will save you is a doubt, but that you resolve to lie at his feet, and wait only on him, and never look to another for Salvation, is no doubt.

Well, well; poor pensive Soul, if it be so, arise, lift up thy dejected head, take thine own *Christ* into thy arms. These are undoubted signs of a real closure with *Christ*: thou makest thy self poor, and yet hast great riches: such things as these are not found in them that despise and reject *Christ* by unbelief.

3. *Use of Exhortation.*

3. *Use.* This Point is likewise very improvable by way of Exhortation, and that both to

Unbelievers and Believers.

First, to Unbelievers, who from hence must be press'd, as ever they expect to see the face of God in peace, to receive *Jesus Christ* as he is now offered to them in the Gospel: this is the very scope of the Gospel, I shall therefore press it by three great Considerations, viz.

First, What is in *Christ* whom you are to receive.

Secondly, What is in the offer of *Christ* by the Gospel.

Thirdly, What is in the rejecting of that offer.

First Motive.

First, Consider well what is in *Christ* whom I persuade you this day to receive: did you know what is in *Christ*, you would never neglect or reject him as you do: For.

First, God is in *Christ*, *2 Cor.* 5. 19. the Deity hath chosen to dwell in his flesh, he is God manifest in flesh, *1 Tim.* 3. 16. a Godhead dwelling in flesh is the Worlds wonder: so that in receiving *Christ*, you receive God himself.

Secondly, The *Authority of God* is in *Christ*, *Exod.* 23. 21. *My name is in him: him hath God the father sealed*, *Joh.* 6. 27. he hath the Commission, the Great Seal of Heaven to redeem and save you: all Power in Heaven and Earth is given to him, *Mat.* 28. 18. he comes in his Fathers name to you, as well as in his own name.

Thirdly, The *Wisdom of God* is in *Christ*, *1 Cor.* 1. 24. *Christ the wisdom of God*: yea, in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, *Col.* 2. 3. Never did the *Wisdom of God* display it self before the Eyes of Angels and Men as it hath done in *Christ*. The *Angels desire to look into it*, *1 Pet.* 1. 12. yet they are not so much concerned in the project and design of this *Wisdom* in Redemption as you are.

Fourthly, The *fullness of the Spirit* is in *Christ*: yea, it fills him so as it never did or will fill any Creature, *Joh.* 3. 34. *God giveth not the Spirit by measure to him*: all others have their limits, stint, and measures; some more, some less; but the *Spirit* is in *Christ* without measure. O how lovely and desirable are those men that have a large measure of the *Spirit* in them! but he is anointed with the *Spirit of Holiness above all his fellows*, *Psal.* 45. 2, 7. Whatever Grace is found in all the Saints which makes them desirable and lovely, *Wisdom* in one, *Faith* in another, *Patience* in a third; they all centre in *Christ* as the Rivers do in the Sea: *que faciunt divisa beatum, in hoc mixta fluunt.*

Fifthly, The *Righteousness of God* is in *Christ*, by which only a poor guilty Sinner can be justified before God. *2 Cor.* 5. 21. we are made the Righteousness of God in him: he is צדקתנו the Lord our Righteousness, *Jer.* 23. 6. (i. e.) the Author of our Righteousness, or the Lord who justifies us: by that Name he shall be known and call'd by his People, than which none can be sweeter.

Sixthly, The *love of God* is in *Christ*: yea, the very yearning bowels of Divine Love are in him: what is *Christ* but the love God wrapt up in flesh and blood? *1 Joh.* 4. 9, 10. *In this was manifested the love of God towards us*, and herein is Love that God sent his Son: this is the highest flight that ever Divine Love made; and higher

R r than

(i. e.) Autorem justitiae nostrae in Loc.

than this it cannot mount. O Love, unparallel'd and admirable!

Seventhly, *The mercies and compassions* of God are all in Christ, *Jude v. 21.* Mercy is the thing that poor Sinners want, its that they cry for at the last gasp, its the only thing that can do them good. O what would they give to find Mercy in that great Day? Why, if you receive Christ, you shall with him receive Mercy: but out of him there is no Mercy to be expected from the hands of God: for God will never exercise Mercy to the prejudice of his Justice, and it is in Christ that Justice and Mercy meet and embrace each other.

Eighthly, To conclude, *The Salvations* of God are in Christ. *Acts 4. 12.* Neither is there salvation in any other. Christ is the door of Salvation, and Faith is the key that opens that door to Men: if you therefore believe not, (i. e.) if you do receive not Jesus Christ as God hath offer'd him, you exclude your selves from all hopes of Salvation. The Devils have as much ground to expect Salvation as you: you see what is in Christ to induce you to receive him.

Motive 2.

Next, I beseech you consider what there is in the offer of Christ to Sinners, to induce you to receive him. Consider well *tombom*, and *how* Christ is offered in the Gospel.

First, To *whom* he is offered: not to the fallen Angels, but to you: they lie in chains of darkness, *Jude 6.* as he took not their nature, so he designs not their recovery; and therefore will have no treaty at all with them: but he is offered to you, creatures of an inferior rank and order by Nature: nor is he offered to the damned, the Treaty of Peace is ended with them. Christ will never make them another tender of Salvation: nor is he offered to millions of millions as good as you now living in the Word: the sound of Christ and Salvation is not come to their ears; but he is offered to you by the special favour and bounty of Heaven: and will you not receive him? O then how will the Devils, the Damned, and the Heathens upbraid you folly! and say, had we had one such tender of mercy, of which you have had thousands, we would never have been now in this place of torments.

Secondly, Consider *how* Christ is offered to you, and you shall find that he is offered.

First, Freely as the gift of God to your Souls: you are not to purchase him, but only to receive him, *1 Jsa. 55. 1.* Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters, and be that hath no money let him come, &c.

Secondly, Christ is offered importunately by repeated intreaties, *2 Cor. 5. 20.* As though God did beseech you, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. O what amazing condescension is here in the God of Mercy! God now beseeches you, will you not yield to the intreaties of your God? O then what wilt thou say for thy self, when God will not hear thee, when thou shalt intreat and cry for Mercy? Which brings us to the

Motive 3.

Consider the sin and danger that there is in refusing or neglecting the present offers of Christ in the Gospel, and surely there is much sin in it: the very malignity of sin, and the sum of all misery, lies here: for in refusing Christ,

First, You put the greatest contempt and slight upon all the Attributes of God that it is possible for a Creature to do: God hath made his Justice, his Mercy, his Wisdom, and all his Attributes, to shine in their brightest glory in Christ: never was there such a display of the glory of God made to the World in any other way.

O then, what is it to reject and despise Jesus Christ, but to offer the greatest affront to the glory of God that it is possible for Men to put upon him?

Secondly, You hereby frustrate and evacuate the very design and importance of the Gospel to your selves, you receive the grace of God in vain, *2 Cor. 6. 1.* as good, yea, better had it been for you, that Christ had never come into the World, or if he had, that your lot had fallen in the dark places of the Earth, where you had never heard his name: yea, good had it been for that Man if he had never been born.

Thirdly, Hereby a Man murders his own Soul. *I said therefore unto you, that you shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins, Joh. 8. 24.* unbelief is Self-murder: you are guilty of the blood of your own Souls: Life and Salvation was offered you, and you rejected it: yea,

Fourthly, The refusing of Christ by unbelief will aggravate your damnation, above all others that perish in ignorance of Christ. O 'twill be more tolerable for Heathens than for you: the greatest measures of wrath are reserved to punish the worst of Sinners, and among Sinners none will be found worse than Unbelievers.

Secondly, To Believers, this point is very useful to persuade them to divers excellent Duties: among which I shall single out two principal ones. viz.

1. To bring up their Faith of Acceptance to the Faith of Assurance.

2. To bring up their Conversations to the Principles and Rules of Faith.

First, You that have received Jesus Christ truly, give your selves no rest till you are fully satisfied that you have done so, Acceptance brings you to Heaven hereafter, but Assurance will bring Heaven into your Souls now. O what a life of delight and pleasure doth the assured Believer live! What pleasure is it to him to look back and consider where once he was, and where now he is: to look forward and consider where he now is! and where shortly he shall be! I was in my sins, I am now in Christ, I am in Christ now, I shall be with Christ, and that for ever, after a few days. I was upon the very brink of Hell, I am now upon the very borders of Heaven; I shall be in a little while among the innumerable company of Angels and glorified Saints, bearing part with them in the Song of Moses, and of the Lamb, for evermore.

And why may not you, that have received Christ, receive the comfort of your Union with him? There be all the grounds and helps of Assurance furnish'd to your hand: there is a real Union betwixt Christ and your Souls, which is the very ground-work of Assurance: You have the Scriptures before you which contain the signs *virtus* of Faith, and the very things within you that *firmitas* answer those signs in the Word. So you read, *Cypr. Sermon de patientia* and so, just so you might feel it in your own hearts,

*Viges apud
nos spei
immobilitas
virtus est
firmitas*
Cypr. Sermon de patientia

hearts, would you attend to your own experience. The Spirit of God is ready to seal you, 'tis his office and his delight so to do. O therefore give diligence to this Work, attend the study of the Scriptures, and of your own hearts more, and grieve not the holy Spirit of God, and you may arrive to the very desire of your hearts.

Secondly, Bring up your Conversations to the excellent Principles and Rules of Faith. *As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, Col. 2. 6.* live as you believe: you received Christ sincerely in your first close with him, O maintain the like seriousness and sincerity in all your ways to the end of your lives: you received him intirely and undividedly at first, let there be no exceptions against any of his commands afterwards: you received him *exclusively* to all others; see that you watch against all Self-righteousness and Self-conceitedness now, and mingle nothing of your own with his Blood, whatever gifts or enlargements in Duty God shall give you afterwards.

You received him *advisedly* at first, weighing and considering the self-denying terms upon which he was offered to you, O shew that it was real, and that you see no cause to repent the bargain, whatever you shall meet with in the ways of Christ and Duty afterwards. Convince the World of your constancy and cheerfulness in all your sufferings for Christ, that you are still of the same mind you were, and that Christ with his Cross, Christ with a Prison, Christ with the greatest afflictions, is worthy of all acceptance: *As you have received him, so walk ye in him*; let him be as sweet, as lovely, as precious to you now, as he was the first moment you received him: yea, let your love to him, delights in him, and self-denial for him, increase with your acquaintance with him day by day.

Use of Division.

Use. Lastly, I will close all with a few words of *directions* to all that are made willing to receive the Lord Jesus Christ: and sure it is but need that help were given to poor Christians in this matter, it is a time of trouble, fear, and great temptation: mistakes are easily made, and of dangerous consequence: attend heedfully therefore to a few directions.

Direct. 1. First, In your receiving Christ, *be-ware you do not mistake the means, for the end*: many do so, but see you do not: Prayer, Sermons, Reformation, are means to bring you to Christ, but they are not Christ: to close with those Duties is one thing, and to close with Christ is another thing: If I go into a Boat, my design is not to dwell there, but to be carried to the place whereon I desire to be landed. So it must be in this case, all your Duties must land you upon Christ; they are but means to bring you to Christ.

Direct. 2. Secondly, *See that you receive not Christ for a present shift, but for your everlasting portion*: many do so, they will enquire after Christ, pray for Christ, cast themselves (in their way) upon Christ, and the satisfaction of his Blood; when the efficacy and terror of Conscience is upon them; and they feel the sting of guilt within them: but as soon as the Storm is over, and the Rod that Conscience shak'd over them laid by, there's no more talk of Christ then: Alas, it was not Christ, but quietness that they sought: be-ware of mistaking peace for Christ.

Direct. 3. Thirdly, *In receiving Christ come empty handed unto him*: believing in him that *justifies the ungodly*, Rom. 4. 5. and know that the deepest sense of your own vileness, emptiness, and unworthiness, is the best frame of heart that can accompany you to Christ: Many Persons stand off from Christ for want of fit qualifications, they are not prepared for Christ as they should be, (i. e.) they would not come naked, and empty, but have something to commend them to the Lord Jesus for acceptance. O this is the pride of Mens Hearts, and the Snare of the Devil: let him that hath no Money come: you are not to come to Christ because you are qualified, but that you may be qualified with whatever you want, and the best qualification you can bring with you, is a deep sense that you have no worth nor excellency at all in you.

Direct. 4. Fourthly, *In receiving Christ, be-ware of dangerous delays*. O follow on that Work till it be finished: You read of some that are almost perswaded, and others not far from the Kingdom of God. O take heed of sickness in the birth, *Hosea 13. 13.* Delays here are full of danger, life is uncertain, so are means of Grace too. The Man-slayer needed no Motives to quicken his flight to the Refuge City.

Direct. 5. Fifthly, *See that you receive all Christ with all your heart*: to receive all Christ, is to receive his Person clothed with all his Offices; and to receive him with all your heart, is to receive him into your Understanding, Will, and all Affections, *Acts 8. 37.* As there is nothing in Christ that may be refused, so there is nothing in you from which he must be excluded.

Direct. 6. Lastly, Understand that the opening of your hearts to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, is not a Work done by any power of your own, but the Arm of the Lord is revealed therein, *Isa. 53. 1.* It is therefore your Duty and Interest to be daily at the feet of God, pouring out your Souls to him in secret, for abilities to believe. And so much as to our actual reception of Christ.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

Serm. 8.

The Eighth S E R M O N.

PSALM XLV. vii.

---Therefore God thy God, hath anointed thee with the Oyl of gladness above thy fellows.

Text
Setting
forth the
Believers
Fellow-
ship with
Christ,
the next
end of his
Applicati-
on to
them,

THE Method of Grace in uniting Souls with Jesus Christ, hath been opened in the former Discourses; thus doth the Spirit (whose Office it is) make Application of Christ to God's Elect: The result and next Fruit whereof is Communion with Christ in his Graces and Benefits. Our Mystical Union is the very ground-work and foundation of our sweet Soul enriching Communion, and participation of Spiritual Privileges; we are first ingrafted into Christ, and then suck the sap and fatness of the Root: First married to the Person of Christ, then endowed and enstated in the Privileges and Benefits of Christ. This is my proper Work to open at this time, and from this Scripture.

The Words read, are a part of that excellent Song of Love, that heavenly Epithalamium, wherein the spiritual Espousals of Christ and the Church are figuratively, and very elegantly celebrated and shadowed. The subject matter of this Psalm is the very same with the whole Book of the Canticles: And in this Psalm, under the figure of King Solomon, and the Daughter of Egypt whom he espoused, the spiritual espousals of Christ and the Church are set forth and represented to us. Among many rapturous and elegant expressions in praise of this glorious Bridegroom Christ, this is one which you have before you: *God thy God hath anointed thee with the Oyl of gladness above thy fellows*: (i. e.) enriched and fill'd thee in a singular and peculiar manner with the fulness of the Spirit, whereby thou art consecrated to thy Office; and by reason whereof, thou out-shinest and excellest all the Saints, who are thy fellows or copartners in these Graces. So that in these Words you have two parts.

Viz.

First, the Saints dignity, and

Secondly, Christ's pre-eminency.

First, The Saints dignity, which consists in this, that they are Christs fellows, the Hebrew Word—מִתְּלָמִידֵי is very full and copious, and is translated Comforts, Companions, Copartners, Partakers; or, as ours read it, *Fellows*: (i. e.) such as are partakers with him in the anointing of the Spirit: Who do in their measure receive the same Spirit, every Christian being anointed, *modo sibi proportionato*, with the same Grace, and dignified with the same Titles. 1 Job. 2. 27. Rev. 1. 6. Christ and the Saints are in common one with another: Doth the Spirit of Holiness dwell in him? So it doth in them too: Is Christ King and Priest? Why, so are they too by the Grace of Union with him. He hath made us Kings and Priests to God, and his Father. This is the Saints dignity to be Christs fellows, comforts, or copartners: So that look whatever Grace or Excellency

is in Christ, it is not appropriated to himself, but they do share with him; for indeed he was fill'd with the fulness of the Spirit for their sakes and use: As the Sun is fill'd with light not to shine to it self, but to others, so is Christ with Grace: And therefore some translate the Text not *pro confortibus*, above thy fellows, but *propter confortes*, for thy fellows: Making Christ the first receptacle of all Grace, who first and immediately is fill'd from the Fountain the Godhead, but it is for his People who receive and derive from him according to their proportion.

This is a great truth, and the dignity of the Saints lies chiefly in their Partnership with Christ, tho' our Translation *above thy fellows* suits best both with the importance of the Word, and scope of the place.

Secondly, But then, whatever dignity is ascribed herein to the Saints, there is, and still must be, a pre-eminency acknowledged and ascribed to Christ: If they are anointed with the Spirit of Grace, much more abundantly is Christ: *God thy God, hath anointed thee with the Oyl of gladness above thy Fellows*.

By the Oyl of gladness, understand the Spirit of Holiness: Compared here with Oil, of which there was a double use under the Law, viz. a Civil, and a Sacred use: It had a sacred and a solemn use in the Inauguration, and Consecration of the Jewish Kings, and High Priests: It had also a Civil and Common use, for the anointing their Bodies, to make their Limbs more agile, expedite and nimble: To make the Face shine, for it gave a lustre, freshness, and liveliness to the Countenance: It was also used in Lamps, to feed and maintain the Fire, and give them Light: These were the principal uses of Oil. Now, upon all these accounts, it excellently expresseth, and figuratively represents to us the Spirit of Grace poured forth upon Christ and his People: For,

First, By the Spirit poured out upon him, he was prepared for, and consecrated to his Offices: He was anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with Power, Acts 10. 38.

Secondly, As this precious Oil runs down from Christ the Head to the Borders of his Garments: I mean, as it is shed upon Believers, so it exceedingly beautifies their Faces, and makes them shine with Glory.

Thirdly, It renders them apt, expedite and ready to every good Work: *Non tardat uncta rota*.

Fourthly, It kindles and maintains the Flames of Divine Love in their Souls; and like a Lamp, enlightens their Minds in the knowledge of Spiritual things the anointing teaches them.

And

Hic Psalmus propheticus est, continens Epithalamium quo Christi cum ecclesia nuptia celebrantur idemque habet argumentum quod cantuum ecclesiasticorum videtur esse Epitome. Coc. in Loc.

Confortes, participes, sociales, socii. Vox Hebraea quod societas five communio- nis genus significat. Muis.

Rivet.

Oleum ipsum est limpidum & pellucidum & flammis fomentum & alimorum suppellectilium inde sumpta metaphoram ungere in scriptura saepe significat spiritus sanctus in unctum illum flammam, & accendere in eo veram agitationem dei & motus congruentem cum deo. Molters in Loc.

And this Oil is here call'd the Oil of gladness because it is the cause of all joy and gladness to them that are anointed with it: Oil was us'd (as you heard before) at the Infalliment of Sovereign Princes, which was the Day of the gladness of their Hearts: And among the common People it was liberally us'd at all their festivals, but never upon their Days of mourning: Whence it becomes excellently expressive of the Nature and use of the Spirit of Grace, who is the cause and Author of all joy in Believers, Job. 17. 13.

And with this Oil of gladness is Christ said to be anointed above his Fellows (i.e.) to have a far greater share of the Spirit of Grace than they: For to every one of the Saints is given Grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, Eph. 4. 7. But to him the Spirit is not given by measure, Job. 3. 34. It hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, Col. 1. 19. and of his fulness we all receive Grace for Grace, John 1. 16. The Saints partake with him, and through him, in the same Spirit of Grace, for which reason they are his Fellows; but all the Grace poured out upon Believers, comes exceeding forth of that which God hath poured out upon Jesus Christ: The Words being thus opened, give us this note.

Doct. That all true Believers have a real communion or fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

From the Saints Union with Christ, there doth naturally and immediately result a most sweet and blessed Communion or Fellowship with him in Graces and spiritual Privileges, Eph. 1. 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly Places (or things) in Christ: In giving us his Son, he freely gives us all things, Rom. 8. 32. So in 1 Cor. 1. 30. Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption: And once more, 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. all are yours, and ye are Christs: What Christ is and hath is theirs by communication to them, or improvement for them: And this is very evidently carried in all those excellent Scripture metaphors by which our Union with Christ is figured and shadowed out to us: As the Marriage Union betwixt a Man and his Wife, Eph. 5. 31, 32. You know that this conjugal Union gives the Wife Interest in the Estate and Honour of the Husband, be she never so meanly descended in her self: The natural Union betwixt the Head and Members of the Body, by which also the Mystical Union of Christ and Believers is set forth, 1 Cor. 12. 12. excellently illustrates Fellowship or Communion betwixt them: For from Christ the whole Body fitly joined together, and compacted, by that which every Joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body, as the Apostle speaks, Eph. 4. 6. The Union betwixt the Graft and the Stock, which is another emblem of our Union with Christ, Job. 15. 1. imports in like manner this Communion or Partnership betwixt Christ and the Saints. For no sooner doth the Graft take hold of the Stock, but the vital Sap of the Stock is communicated to the Graft, and both live by one and the same Juice.

Now that the scope of this Discourse be not mistaken, let the Reader know that I am not here treating of the Saints Communion or Fellowship with God in Duties, as in Prayer, Hear-

ing, Sacraments, &c. but of that Interest which Believers have in the good things of Christ, by Virtue of the Mystical Union betwixt them through Faith: There is a twofold Communion of the Saints with Christ.

The first is an *Ad.*

The second is a *State.*

There is an actual Fellowship or Communion the Saints have with Christ in holy Duties: Wherein Christians set forth their Hearts to God by desires, and God lets forth his Comforts and Refreshments again into their Hearts: They open their Mouths wide, and he fills them: This Communion with God is the Joy and Comfort of a Believers Life: But I am now to speak of that here. It is not any *Ad.* of Communion, but the *State* of Communion, from which all Acts of Communion flow, and upon which they all depend: that I am now to treat of: Which is nothing else but the joyful Interest that Christ and the Saints have in the same things: As when a Ship, an House, or Estate, is among many Partners, or Joint-Heirs, every one of them have a Right to it, and Interest in it, tho' some of them have a greater, and others a lesser part. So is it betwixt Christ and his People: There is a *communio* (i.e.) a Fellowship or Joint-interest betwixt them, upon which ground they are call'd co-heirs with Christ, Rom. 8. 17. This Communion or Participation in Christs Benefits depends upon the Hypothetical Union of our Nature, and the Mystical Union of our Persons with the Son of God: In the first he partakes with us, in the second we partake with him: the former is the remote, the latter the next cause thereof.

In the Explication of this Point, I shall speak to these four things.

1. What are those things in which Christ and Believers have Fellowship.
2. By what means they come to have such Fellowship with Christ.
3. How great a Dignity this is to have Fellowship with Jesus Christ.
4. And then apply the whole in divers practical Inferences.

First, What are those things in which Christ and Believers have Fellowship, to which I must speak both *negatively* and *positively*.

First, The Saints have no Fellowship with Jesus Christ in those things that belong to him as God: Such as his consubstantiality, coequality, and coeternity with the Father: 'Tis the Blasphemy of the wicked *Fanatics* to talk of being Goded into God, and Christed into Christ: Neither Men or Angels partake in these things, they are the proper and incommunicable Glory of the Lord Jesus.

Secondly, The Saints have no Communion or Fellowship in the Honour and Glory of his *one* non quod universalem valorem sed participationem, his Righteousness also is imputed to us for our Personal Justification, but we share not in the least with Christ in the Glory of his Work: Nor have we an inherent Righteousness in us as non in causa Christi hath, to justify us after as Christ hath, nor his salvation we justify and save others as Christ doth: we non in subjectis salvandis, have nothing to do with his peculiar Honour and Praise in these things: Tho' we have the benefit of being saved, we may not pretend to the Honour of justificatione.

Ubi ego
Caput su
Causa.
Uxor cla-
rescit in
radiis ma-
ritis.

Nega-
tively.

Justitia
Christi
is nostra,

non quod
universalem
valorem sed
participationem,
his Righteousness
also is imputed
to us for our
Personal Justification,
but we share not
in the least with
Christ in the
Glory of his Work:

Nor have we
an inherent
Righteousness
in us as non
in causa
Christi hath,
to justify us
after as Christ
hath, nor his
salvation we
justify and
save others
as Christ doth:

of being Saviours, as Christ is to our selves or others: Christs Righteousness is not made ours as to its universal value, but as to our particular necessity: nor is it imputed to us as to so many causes of Salvation to others, but as to so many subjects to be saved by it our selves.

Secondly, But then, there are many glorious and excellent things which are in common betwixt Christ and Believers, tho' in them all he hath the pre-eminence, he shines in the fulness of them as the *Sun*, and we with a borrowed and lesser light, but of the same kind and nature as the Stars. Some of these I shall particularly and briefly unfold in the following particulars.

First, Believers have communion with Christ in his *names* and titles: they are call'd Christians from Christ, *Eph. 3. 15.* from him the whole family in Heaven and Earth is named: this is that worthy name the Apostle speaks of, *James 2. 7.* He is the Son of God, and they also, by their union with him, have power or authority to become the Sons of God, *Job. 1. 12.* He is the heir of all things, and they are joynt heirs with him, *Rom. 8. 17.* He is both King and Priest, and he hath made them Kings and Priests, *Rev. 1. 6.* but they do not only partake in the names and titles, but this communion consists in things as well as titles; and therefore,

Secondly, They have communion with him in his *righteousness*, (i. e.) the righteousness of Christ is made theirs; *2 Cor. 5. 21.* and he is *the Lord our righteousness*, *Ier. 23. 6.* 'Tis true, the righteousness of Christ is not inherent in us, as it is in him; but it is ours by imputation, *Rom. 4. 5, 11.* and our union with him is the ground of the imputation of his righteousness to us, *2 Cor. 5. 21.* *We are made the righteousness of God in him*, *Phil. 3. 9.* for Christ and Believers are considered as one Person, in contriuction of Law; as a Man and his Wifes a *Debtor and Surety* are one: and so his payment or satisfaction is in our name, or upon our account.

Now this is a most inestimable privilege, the very ground of all our other blessings and mercies. O what a benefit is this to a poor Sinner, that owes to God infinitely more than he is ever able to pay him, by doing or suffering; to have such a rich treasure of *merit* as lies in the obedience of Christ, to discharge in one intire payment all his debts to the last farthing? *Surely shall one say, In the Lord I have righteousness*, *Isa. 45. 24.* even as a poor Woman that owes more than she is worth, in one moment is discharged of all her obligations, by her Marriage to a wealthy Man.

Thirdly, Believers have communion with Christ in his *holiness* or Sanctification, for of God he is made unto them not only Righteousness, but Sanctification also: and as in the former privilege, they have a stock of merit in the blood of Christ to justify them, so here they have the Spirit of Christ to sanctify them, *1 Cor. 1. 30.* and therefore we are said of his fulness to receive *grace*, for *grace*, *Joh. 1. 16.* (i. e.) say some, grace upon grace, manifold graces, or abundance of grace: or *grace for grace*; that is, grace answerable to grace: as in the Seal and Wax, there is line for line, and cut for cut exactly answerable each other: or grace for grace, that is, say others, the free grace of God in Christ, for the sanctification or filling of our Souls with grace: be it in which

sense it will, it shews the communion Believers have with Jesus Christ in grace and holiness. Now holiness is the most precious thing in the world, its the Image of God, and chief Excellency of Man: it is our evidence for glory, yea, and the first-fruits for glory: in Christ dwells the fulness of grace, and from him our Head it is derived and communicated to us: thus he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, *Heb. 2. 11.* You would think it no small privilege to have Bags of Gold to go to, and enrich your selves with, and yet that were but a very trifle in comparison to have Christs Righteousness and Holiness to go to for your Justification and Sanctification. More particularly,

Fourthly, Believers have communion with Christ in his *death*: they die with him, *Gal. 2. 20.* *I am crucified with Christ*, (i. e.) the death of Christ hath a real killing and mortifying influence upon the lusts and corruptions of my heart and nature: true it is he died for sin one way, and we die to sin another way: he died to *expiate* it, we die to it when we *mortify* it: the death of Christ is the death of sin in Believers: and this is a very glorious privilege: for the death of sin is the life of your Souls: if sin do not die in you by mortification, you must die for sin by eternal damnation: if Christ had not died, the Spirit of God, by which you now mortify the deeds of the body, could not have been given unto you: then you must have lived Vassals to your sins, and died at last in your sins: but the fruit, efficacy and benefit of Christs death is yours, for the killing those sins in you which else had been your ruine.

Fifthly, Believers have Communion with Christ in his *life and resurrection* from the dead: as he rose from the dead, so do they; and that by the power and influence of his *vivification* and resurrection: 'tis the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus that makes us free from the Law of sin and death, *Rom. 8. 2.* our spiritual life is from Christ, *Eph. 2. 1.* *And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins*: and hence Christ is said to live in the Believer, *Gal. 2. 20.* *Now I live, yet not I; but Christ liveth in me*: and it is no small privilege to partake of the very life of Christ, which is the most excellent life that ever any Creature can live: yet such is the happiness of all the Saints, the life of Christ is manifest in them, and such a life as shall never see death.

Sixthly, To conclude, Believers have fellowship with Jesus Christ in his *glory*, which they shall enjoy in Heaven with him: they shall be *ever with the Lord*, *1 Thef. 4. 17.* and that's not all, (tho as one saith, it were a kind of Heaven but to look through the Key-hole, and have but a glimpse of Christs blessed face) but they shall partake of the glory which the Father hath given him, for so he speaks, *Job. 17. 22, 24.* and more particularly, they shall sit with him in his Throne, *Rev. 3. 21.* and when he comes to Judge the World, he will come to be glorified in the Saints, *2 Thef. 1. 10.* So that you see what glorious and inestimable things are and will be in common betwixt Christ and the Saints. His Titles, his Righteousness, his Holiness, his Death, his life, his Glory. I do not say that Christ will

will make any Saint equal with him in Glory : That's impossible, he will be known from all the Saints in Heaven, as the Sun is distinguished from the Stars; but they shall partake of his Glory, and be fill'd with Joy there; and thus you see what those things are that the Saints have Fellowship with Christ in.

Secondly, Next I would open the Way and Means, by which we come to have fellowship with Jesus Christ in these Excellent Privileges; and this I shall do briefly in the following Positions.

Position 1.

*Soli vere
fideles sunt
membra
Christi, id est
non quatenus
sunt homines,
sed quatenus
Christiani :
nec secundum
primum
generacionem,
sed secundum
regenerationem.
Potest
Synagoga,
lib.
6. cap. 35.*

First, *No Man hath fellowship with Christ in any special saving Privilege by Nature, howsoever it be cultivated or improved; but only by Faith uniting him to the Lord Jesus Christ: 'Tis not the Privilege of our first, but second Birth.* This is plain from Job. 1. 12, 13. But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to as many as believed on his Name, who are born not of flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God. We are by Nature Children of Wrath, Eph. 2. 3. we have fellowship with Satan in sin and misery: the wild Branch hath no Communication of the sweetness and fatness of a more Noble and Excellent Root, until it be ingrafted upon it, and have immediate Union and Coalition with it, Job. 15. 1, 2.

Position 2.

Believers themselves have not an equal share one with another, in all the Benefits and Privileges of their Union with Christ, but in some there is an Equality, and in others an Inequality; according to the Measure and Gift of Christ, to every one.

In Justification they are all equal: The weak and the strong Believer are alike justified, because it is one and the same perfect Righteousness of Christ, which is applied to the one and to the other, so that there are no different degrees of Justification, but all that believe are justified from all things, *All's* 13. 39. and there is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8. 1. be they never so weak in Faith, or defective in Degrees of Grace. But there is apparent difference in the measures of their Sanctification, some are strong Men, and others are Babes in Christ, 1 Cor. 3. 1. The Faith of some flourishes and grows exceedingly, 2 Thes. 1. 3. the things that are in others are ready to dye, Rev. 3. 2. It's a plain case, that there is great Variety found in the degrees of Grace and Comfort among them that are jointly interested in Christ, and equally justified by him.

Position 3.

The Saints have not Fellowship and Communion with Christ, in the fore-mentioned Benefits and Privileges by one and the same Medium, but by various Mediums and Ways according to the Nature of the Benefits in which they participate.

For instance, they have Partnership and Communion with Christ (as hath been said) in his Righteousness, Holiness and Glory; but they receive these distinct Blessings by divers Mediums of Communion: We have Communion with Christ in his Righteousness by the way of Imputation, we partake of his Holiness by the way of Infusion; and of his Glory in Heaven by the Beatifical Vision. Our Justification is a relative change, our Sanctification a real change, our Glorification a perfect change by Redemption, from all the remains both of sin and misery.

Thus hath the Lord appointed several Blessings for Believers in Christ, and several Channels of conveying them from him to us; by imputed Righteousness we are freed from the Guilt of sin, by imparted Holiness we are freed from the Dominion of sin, and by our Glorification with Christ we are freed from all the Reliques and Remains both of sin and misery let in by sin upon our Natures.

Position 4.

That Jesus Christ imparts to all Believers all the spiritual Blessings that he is filled with, and withholds none from any that have Union with him; be these Blessings never so great, or they that receive them never so weak, mean, and contemptible in outward respects. Gal. 3. 27. Ye are all the Children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. The Salvation that comes by Christ is styled the common Salvation, Jude 3, and Heaven the Inheritance of the Saints in light, Col. 1. 12. There is neither Greek nor Jew (saith the Apostle) Circumcision nor Uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, but Christ is all and in all, Col. 3. 11. He means, there is no Privilege in the one to commend them to God, and no want of any thing in the other to debar them from God; let Men have or want outward Excellencies, as Beauty, Honour, Riches, Nobility, Gifts of the Mind, Sweetness of Nature, and all such like Ornaments, what is that to God? He looks not at these things, but respects them, and communicates his Favour to them as they are in Christ: *He is all, and in all.* The Gifts and Blessings of the Spirit are given to Men as they are in Christ, and without respect to any external differences made in this World among Men: Hence we find excellent Treasures of Grace in mean and contemptible Persons in the World: Poor in the World, rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom; and as all Believers, without difference, receive from Christ, so they are not debar'd from any Blessing that is in Christ: *All is yours, for ye are Christ's,* 1 Cor. 3. ult. with Christ God freely gives us all things, Rom. 8. 32.

Position 5.

The Communion Believers have with Christ in spiritual Benefits is a very great Mystery, far above the understanding of natural Men. There are no Footsteps of this thing in all the Works of Creation, therefore the Apostle calls it the unsearchable Riches of Christ, Eph. 3. 8. *ἐντεχνιασμοῦ τοῦ ἀνεκρευνήτου*: The Word signifies that which hath no footsteps to trace it by: Yea, 'tis so deep a Mystery, that the Angels themselves stoop down to look into it, 1 Pet. 1. 12. *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit,* 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10.

Thirdly and Lastly, I shall in a few Particulars open the Dignity and Excellency of this Fruit of our Union with Christ, and shew you, that a greater Glory and Honour cannot be put upon Man, than to be thus in Fellowship with Jesus Christ, Job. 17. 22. *The Glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one as we are one:* And therefore more particularly let this be considered.

First, *With whom we are associated, even the Son of God; with him that is over all, God blessed for ever.* Our Association with Angels

is

is an high Advancement, for Angels and Saints are fellow Servants in the same Family, *Rev.* 19. 20. and thro' Christ we are come to an innumerable Company of Angels, *Heb.* 12. 22. but what is all this to our Fellowship with Jesus Christ himself, and that in another manner than Angels have? For tho' Christ be to them an Head of Dominion, yet not an Head of vital Influence as he is to his Mystical Body the Church: This therefore is to them a great Mystery, which they greatly affect to study, and pry into.

Secondly, *What we are that are dignified with this Title, the Fellows or Co-partners with Jesus Christ*; not only *Dust* by Nature, *Dust thou art*, but sinful *Dust*; such wretched Sinners as by Nature, and the Sentence of the Law, ought to be afflicted with Devils, and Partakers with them of the Wrath of the Almighty God to all Eternity.

Thirdly, *The Benefits we are partakers of, in and with the Lord Jesus Christ*; and indeed they are wonderful and astonishing things, so far as they do already appear, but yet we see but little of them, comparatively to what we shall see, *1 Job.* 3. 1, 2. *Now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* O what will that be! to see him as he is, and to be transformed into his Likeness.

Fourthly, *The Way and Manner in which we are brought into this Fellowship with Christ*, which is yet more admirable. The Apostle gives us a strange Account of it in *2 Cor.* 8. 9. *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich:* He empties himself of his Glory, that we might be fill'd; he is made a Curse, that we might enjoy the Blessing; he submits to be crown'd with Thorns, that we might be crown'd with Glory and Honour; he puts himself into the number of Worms, *Psal.* 22. 6. that we might be made equal to the Angels: O the unconceivable Grace of Christ!

Fifthly, *The reciprocal Nature of that Communion which is betwixt Christ and Believers*: We do not only partake of what is his, but he partakes of what is ours: He hath fellowship with us in all our Wants, Sorrows, Miseries, and Afflictions; and we have Communion with him in his Righteousness, Grace, Sonship, and Glory: He takes part of our Misery, and we take part of his Blessedness: Our Sufferings are his Sufferings, *Col.* 1. 24. O what an Honour is it to thee, poor Wretch, whom a great many would not turn aside to ask how thou doest; to have a King, yea, the Prince of all the Kings of the Earth, to pity, relieve, sympathize, groan and bleed with thee, to sit by thee in all thy troubles, and give thee his Cordials, to say thy troubles are my Troubles, and thy Afflictions are my Afflictions: Whatever toucheth thee toucheth me also: O what Name shall we give unto such Graces as this is?

Sixthly and Lastly, *Consider the perpetuity of the Privilege*; your Fellowship with Christ is *interminable*, and abides for ever. Christ and the Saints shall be glorified together, *Rom.* 8. 17. while he hath any Glory, they shall partake with him. 'Tis said indeed, *1 Cor.* 15. 24. that there shall be a time when Christ will deliver up the Kingdom to his Father: But the Meaning is not

that ever he will cease to be an Head to his Saints, or they from being his Members: No, no, the Relation never ceases: Justification, Sanctification and Adoption, are everlasting Things, and we can never be dejected of them.

Infer. 1. *Are the Saints Christ's Fellows? What Honourable Persons then are they! and how should they be esteemed and valued in the World!* If a King, who is the Fountain of Honour, do but raise a Man by his Favour, and dignifie him by bestowing some Honourable Title upon him, what Respect and Obedience is presently paid him by all Persons? But what are all the vain and empty Titles of Honour, to the glorious and substantial Privileges with which Believers are dignified, and raised above all other Men by Jesus Christ? He is the Son of God, and they are the Sons of God also: He is the Heir of all things, and they are Joint-heirs with Christ. He reigns in Glory, and they shall reign with him: He sits upon the Throne, and they shall sit with him in his Throne. O that this vile World did but know the Dignity of Believers, they would never slight, hate, abuse, and persecute them as they do! And O that Believers did but understand their own Happiness and Privileges by Christ, they would never droop and sink under every small trouble at that rate they do.

Infer. 2. *How abundantly hath God provided for all the Necessities and Wants of Believers!* Christ is a Store-house fill'd with Blessings and Mercies, and it's all for them: From him they receive abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteousness, *Rom.* 5. 17. of his Fulness they all receive Grace for Grace, *Job.* 1. 16. all the Fulness of Christ is made over to them for the Supply of their Wants: *My God shall supply all your need* (saith the Apostle) according to his Riches in Glory by Jesus Christ, *Phil.* 4. 19. If all the Riches of God can supply your needs, then they shall be supplied. Say not, Christ is in the Possession of consummate Glory, and I am a poor Creature struggling with many Difficulties, and toying in the midst of many Cares and Fears in the World; for Care is taken for all thy Needs, and Orders given from Heaven for their Supply: My God shall supply all your Need. O say, with a melting Heart, I have a full Christ, and he is fill'd for me. His pure and perfect Righteousness is to justify me, his Holiness is to sanctify me, his Wisdom is to guide me, his Comforts are to refresh me, his Power is to protect me, his All-sufficiency is to supply me. O be cheerful, be thankful, you have all your Hearts can wish; and yet be humble, it is all from free Grace to empty and unworthy Creatures.

Infer. 3. *How absurd, disingenuous and unworthy of a Christian, is it to deny or with-hold from Christ any thing he bath, or by which he may be served or honoured?* Doth Christ communicate all he hath to you, and can you with-hold any thing from Christ? On Christ's part it is not mine, and thine, but ours, or mine and yours, *Joh.* 20. 17. *I ascend to my Father, and your Father, to my God and your God.* But O this cursed Idol Self! which appropriates all to its own Designs and Uses. How liberal is Christ! and how penurious are we to him! Some will not part with their Credit for Christ, when yet Christ abased himself unspeakably for them. Some will not part with a drop of Blood for Christ, when Christ spent the

the whole Treasure of his Blood freely for us: Yea, how loth are we to part with a Shilling for Christ, to relieve him in his distressed Members, when as yet we know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his Poverty might be Rich! O ungrateful return! O base and disingenuous Spirits! The Things Christ gives us are *great*, the Things we deny to him are *small*: He parts with the *greatest*, and yet is denied the *least*. The Things he communicates to us are *none of ours*, we have no Right nor Title by Nature, or any Desert of ours to them, the Things we deny or grudge to Christ are by all Titles *his own*, and he hath the fullest and most unquestionable Title to them all: What he gives to us, he gives to them that *never deserved it*; what we withhold from him, we withhold from one that hath *deserved that, and infinitely more from us*, than we have, or are.

He interested you freely in all his Riches when you were *Enemies*; you stand upon Trifles with him, and yet call him your best and dearest Friend: He gave himself and all he hath to you, when you could *claim nothing* from him; you deny to part with these Things to Christ, *who may not only claim them upon the highest Title, his own Sovereignty, and absolute Property, but by your own Act*, who profess to have given all in Covenant to him: What he gives you returns *no Profit to him*, but what you give, or part with for him, is your *greatest Advantage*. O that the Consideration of these Things might shame and humble our Souls.

Infer. 4. *Then certainly no Man is, or can be supposed to be a loser by Conversion, seeing from that Day, whatever Christ is, or hath, becomes his.*

O what an Inheritance are Men possessed of by their new Birth! Some Men cry out, Religion will undo you, but with what Eyes do these Men see? Surely you could never so reckon, except your Souls were so Incarnated as to reckon Pardon, Peace, Adoption, Holiness and Heaven, for nothing: That Invisibles are *non-entities*, and Temporals the only Realities. 'Tis true, the converted Soul may lose his Estate, his Liberty, yea, his Life for Christ: But what then? Are they losers that exchange Brags for Gold? Or part with their present Comforts for an hundred-fold Advantage? *Mark 10. 29.* So that none need scare at Religion for the losses that attend it, whilst Christ and Heaven is gain'd by it: They that count Religion their loss, have their Portion in this Life.

Infer. 5. *How securely is the Saints Inheritance settled upon them, seeing they are in commons with Jesus Christ? Christ and his Saints are joint-heirs, and the Inheritance cannot be alienated but by his Consent, he must lose his Interest, if you lose yours: Indeed Adams Inheritance was by a single Title; and moreover, it was in his own Hand, and so he might (as indeed he soon did) develt himself and his Posterity of it: But it is not so betwixt Christ and Believers, we are secured in our Inheritance by Christ our Co-heir, who will never alienate it: And therefore it was truly observed by the Father, Felicitas Job in sterquilinio, quam Adamus in Paradiso: Job was happier upon the Dung-hill, than Adam was in Paradise. The Covenant of Grace is certainly the best Tenure: As it hath the best Mercies, so it gives the fullest Security to enjoy them.*

Infer. 6. *How rich and full is Jesus Christ, who communicates abundantly to all the Saints, and yet hath more still in himself than is communicated to them, although all they receive were brought into one heap.*

Take all the Faith of *Abramam*, all the Meekness of *Moses*, all the Patience of *Job*, all the Wisdom of *Solomon*, all the Zeal of *David*, all the Industry of *Paul*, and all the tender-heartedness of *Josiah*: Add to this all the Grace that is poured (though in lesser measure) into all the Elect Vessels in the World, yet still it is far short of that which remains in Christ, *He is appointed with the Oil of gladness above his Fellows*: And in all Things he hath, and must ever have the pre-eminence: There be many Thousand Stars glittering above your Heads, and one Star differs from another Star in Glory, yet there is more Light and Glory in one Sun, than in the many Thousand Stars: Grace beautifies the Children of Men exceedingly, but still that is true of Christ, *Psalms 45. 2. Thou art fairer than the Children of Men, Grace is poured into thy Lips*: For all Grace is secondarily and derivatively in the Saints, but it is primitively and originally in Christ, *John 5. 26.* Grace is imperfect and defective in them, but in him it is in its most absolute Perfection and Fullness, *Col. 1. 19.* In the Saints it is mixed with abundance of Corruption, but in Christ it is altogether unmix'd and exclusive of its opposite, *Heb. 7. 26.* So that as the *Heathen* said of Moral Vertue, I may much more say of Christ, That were he to be seen with Mortal Eyes, he would compel Love and Admiration from all Men, for he is altogether lovely, *Cant. 5. 17.*

Infer. 7. *What delight and singular Advantage must needs be in the Communion of the Saints, who have Communion with Jesus Christ in all his Graces and Benefits!*

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have Fellowship with us, and truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, *1 John 1. 3.* O 'tis sweet to have fellowship with those that have fellowship with God in Jesus Christ. Christ hath communicated to the Saints varieties of Graces in different Measures and Degrees: And as they all receive from Christ the Fountain, so it's sweet and most delightful to be improving themselves by spiritual Communion one with another: Yea, for that end one is furnish'd with one Grace more eminently than another that the weak may be assisted by the strong: As a *Modern Divine* well observes: *Athanasius* was prudent and active, *Isidore* Mr. Tord Basil of an heavenly sweet Temper, *Chrysostom* laborious without Affectation, *Ambrose* resolv'd and Grave, *Luther* courageous, and *Calvin* acute and judicious. Thus every one hath his proper Gift from Christ, the Fountain of Gifts and Graces, *1 Cor. 7. 7.* One hath quickness of Parts, another solidity of Judgment, but not ready and presential; one is zealous, but ungrounded; another well principled, but timorous; one is wary, and prudent; another open, and plain; one is trembling, and melting; another cheerful, and joyous; one must impart his light, another his heat: The Eye, the knowing Man, cannot say to the Hand, the active Man, I have no need of thee. And O how sweet would it be, if Gifts, Graces, and Experiences were frequently;

and humbly imparted : But idle Notions, earthly-mindedness, self-interests, and want of more Communion with Christ, have almost destroyed the Comfort of Christian fellowship every where in the World.

Inter. 8. *In a Word, those only have ground to claim Interest in Christ, who do really participate of his Graces, and in whom are found the Effects and Fruits of their Union and Communion with him.*

If you have Interest in Christ, you have Communion in his Graces and Benefits; and if you have such Communion, it will appear in your maintaining daily *actual Communion with God* in Duties, whereby will be produced,

First, The increase of your Sanctification, by fresh Participations from the Fountain: As *Cloth* which is often dip't into the *Fat* receives the deeper Dye, and livelier Tincture, so will your Souls by assiduous Communion with God. It will also be discerned,

Secondly, In your deeper Humiliation and

spiritual Sense of your own vileness: The more any Man partakes of God, and is acquainted with him, and assimilated to him, the more base and vile in his own sight he still grows, *Job 42. 5, 6. Isa. 6. 5.*

Thirdly, It will appear in your more vehement longings after the full Enjoyment of God in Heaven, *1 Pet. 1. 8. and Rom. 8. 23.* You that have the first Fruits, will groan within your selves after the full Harvest, and satisfying Fruition: You will not be so taken with Things below, as to be Content with the best Lot on Earth for your Everlasting Portion, O if these communicated drops be so sweet, what is there in Christ the Fountain?

And thus I have opened the Method of Grace, in bringing home Christ and his Benefits to Gods Elect by Union, in order to Communion with him.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

Serm. 9.

The Ninth SERMON.

MATTH. XI. xxviii.

Text.
Containing the first general Use of Exhortation, inviting all Men to apply Jesus Christ.

Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

THE Impetration of our Redemption by Jesus Christ, being finished in the first Part, and the Way and Means by which Christ is applied to Sinners in the foregoing Part of this Treatise, I am now orderly come to the general Use of the whole; which in the first Place shall be by way of Exhortation, to invite and persuade all Men to come unto Christ, who in all the former Sermons hath been represented in his *Garments of Salvation*, red in his Apparel, prepared and offered to Sinners as their All-sufficient and only Remedy: And in the following Sermons will be represented in his *perfumed Garments* coming out of his *Ivory Palaces*, Psalm 45. 8. To allure and draw all Men unto him.

For a general Head to this Use which will be large, I have chosen this Scripture, *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

These Words are the Voice of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, in which there is a vital, ravishing sound: 'Tis your Mercy to have such a joyful sound in your Ears this Day: And in them I will consider their Dependence, Parts, and Scope.

As to their Dependence, it is manifest they have an immediate Relation to the foregoing Verse, wherein Christ opens his Commission, and declares the fulness of his Authority and saving Power, and the impossibility of coming to God any other Way: *All things are delivered to me of my Father, and no Man knoweth the Son but the Father: Neither knoweth any Man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him,* ver. 27.

This 28th Verse is brought in Proleptically, to obviate the Discouragements of any poor con-

vinced and humbled Soul, who might thus Object: Lord, I am fully satisfied of the fulness of thy saving Power, but greatly doubt whether I shall ever have the Benefit thereof. For I see so much Sin and Guilt in my self, so great vileness, and utter unworthiness, that I am overwhelmed, and even sink under the Burden of it: My Soul is discouraged because of Sin. This Objection is prevented in the Words of my Text, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden*, q. d. Let not the Sense of your Sin and Misery, drive you from your only Remedy: Be your Sins never so many, and the sense and burden of them never so heavy, yet for all that, *Come unto me*: You are the Persons whom I invite and call. I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.

In the Words, Three Things are especially remarkable.

1. The Souls spiritual Distress and Burthen: *Weary and heavy laden.*
2. Its Invitation to Christ under that Burthen: *Come unto me.*
3. Its encouragement to that great Duty: *I will give you rest.*

First, The Souls * spiritual Distress and Burthen, then, exprest in two very Emphatical Words, *all ye that labour and are heavy laden*. The Word which we translate *labour*, signifies a labouring even to faintness and tiring, to the Consumption and waste of the Spirits; and the other Word signifies such a pressure by Burden that is too heavy to be born, that we do even sink down under it.

There is some Difference among Expositors about the Quality of this Burthen. *Chrysost.* And some others after him, expound it of Burden of Tisfulcus the

* *Oi nem-
ovne qui
laboratis,
scil. ad de-
fatigatio-
nem usq;
huc anim
Qui jemsu
differt rō
non sū a
verbo m-
ri: quodin
genre fig-
nificat la-
borare. Pif-
cator in
Loc. (i.e.)
laden, q. d. Let not the Sense of your Sin and Misery, drive you from your only Remedy: Be your Sins never so many, and the sense and burden of them never so heavy, yet for all that, Come unto me: You are the Persons whom I invite and call. I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.*

Chryfost. And some others after him, expound it of Burden of Tisfulcus the

the legal *Rites and Ceremonies*, which was a heavy Burden indeed, such as neither they, nor their Fathers could bear. Under the task and burden of these legal Observances, they did sweat and toil to obtain a Righteousness to justify them before God, and all in vain; and this is a pious Sense, but others expound it of the burthen of Sin in general; the Corruption of Nature, and Evils of Practice, which Souls are convinced have brought them under the Curse, and will bring them to Hell, and therefore labour and strive all that in them lies, by Repentance and Reformation, to clear themselves from it, but all in vain, whilst they strive in their own Strength. Such are they that are here called to come to Christ, which is the second Thing; namely,

Secondly, The Invitation of burthened Souls to Christ: *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden: Come unto me, (i. e.)* believe in me, lean and rest your burthened Souls upon me. I am able to ease all your Burthens, in me is that Righteousness and Peace which you seek in vain in all the legal Rites and Ceremonies: Or in your Repentance, Reformations and Duties, but it will give you no ease, 'twill be no Benefit to you except you come unto me. Faith is often expressed under this Notion, see *John* 6. 37. and *John* 7. 37. and it is to be further noted that [all] burthened Souls are invited to come. *All ye that labour:* Whatever your Sin or Guilt have been, whatever your Fears or Discouragements are, yet come, (i. e.) believe on me.

*Quid alibi
queritis,
quod non
licet inve-
nire? ego in
sum qui
possum vos
parare so-
lus. Mistic
in Loc.*

Thirdly, Here is the Encouragement Christ gives to this Duty, *And I will give you rest: et ceterum* — I will refresh you, I will give you rest from your labour, your Consciences shall be pacified, your Heart at rest and quiet in that Pardon, Peace and Favour of God which I will procure for you by my Death. But here it must be heedfully noted, that this Promise of rest in Christ is not made to Men simply as they are Sinners, nor yet as they are burthened, and heavy laden Sinners, but as they come to Christ; (i. e.) as they are Believers. For let a Man break his Heart with Sin, let him weep out his Eyes for Sin, let him mourn as a Dove, and shed as many Tears for Sin (if it were possible) as ever there fell drops of Rain upon the Ground, yet if he come not to Christ by Faith, his Repentance shall not save him, nor all his Sorrows bring him to true Rest. Hence Note,

Doct. 1. That some Souls are heavy laden with the burthenful Sense of Sin.

Doct. 2. That all burthened Souls are solemnly invited to come to Christ.

Doct. 3. That there is rest in Christ for all that come to him under the heavy Burthen of Sin.

Doct. 1.

Some Souls are heavy laden, with the burthenful Sense of Sin.

Doct. 1. I do not say all are so, for Fools make a mock of Sin, *Prov.* 14. 9. 'Tis so far from being burthenful to some, that it is a sport to them, *Prov.* 10. 23. But when a Mans Eyes are opened to see the Evil that is in Sin, and the Eternal Misery that follows it, (Sin and Hell being link'd together with such strong Chains as nothing but the Blood of Christ can loose) then no Burden is like that of Sin: *A wounded Conscience who can bear?* *Prov.* 18. 14. For let us but consider the Efficacy that the Law of God hath upon

the Consciences of Men, when it comes in the spirituality and Power of it to convince and humble the Soul of a Sinner. For then,

First, *The Memory of Sin long since committed is refresh'd and revived, as if it had been but Yesterday:* There are fresh Recognitions of Sin long since acted, and forgotten, as if they had never been: What was done in our Youth is fetch'd back again, and by a new Impression of fear and horror set home upon the trembling Conscience. *Job* 13. 26. *Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the Sins of my Youth.* Conscience can call back the Days that are past, and draw up a new Charge upon the score of old Sins, *Gen.* 42. 21. All that ever we did is recorded and entered into the Book of Conscience, and now is the Time to open that Book, when the Lord will convince and awaken Sinners. We read in *Job* 14. 17. of sealing up Iniquities in a Bag, which is an Allusion to the Clerk of the *Affizes*, that takes all the Indictments that are made against Persons at the *Affizes*, and seals them up in a Bag, in order to a Trial. This is the first Office and Work of Conscience, upon which

The second, namely its *Accusations*, do depend: These Accusations of Conscience are terrible Things, who can stand before them? They are full, they are clear, and all of them referring to the approaching Judgment of the great and terrible God.

Conscience dives into all Sins, secret as well as open, and into all the Circumstances and Aggravations of Sin, as being committed against Light, against Mercy, against the strivings, warnings, and regrets of Conscience. So that we may say of the Efficacy of Conscience, as it is said *Psal.* 19. 6. of the Influence of the Sun, *nothing is hid from the heat and power thereof.* Come (saith the Woman of Samaria) see a Man that hath told me all that ever I did, *John* 4. 29. Christ convinced her but of one Sin by that Discourse, but Conscience by that one fetch'd in and charged all the rest upon her. And as the Accusations of Conscience are full, so they are clear, and undeniable: A Man becomes self-convinced, and there remains no shift, excuse, or Plea, to defend himself: A Thousand Witnesses cannot prove any Point more clearly than one Testimony of Conscience doth, *Mat.* 22. 12. *The Man was speechless, a mute; muzzled (as the Word signifies) by the clear Testimony of his own Conscience:* These Accusations are the second Work or Office of Conscience, and they make way for the Third, namely,

Thirdly, The Sentence and Condemnation of Conscience: And truly this is an insupportable Burthen: The Condemnation of Conscience is nothing else but its Application of the condemning Sentence of the Law to a Mans Person: The Law curseth every one that transgresseth it, *Gal.* 3. 10. Conscience applies this Curse to the guilty Sinner. So that it Sentences the Sinner in Gods Name and Authority, from which there is no Appeal: The Voice of Conscience is the Voice of God, and what it pronounces in Gods Name and Authority, he will confirm and ratify, *1 John* 3. 20. *If our Hearts, (i. e.) our Consciences, condemn us, God is greater than our Hearts, and knoweth all things:* This is that Torment which no Man can endure. See the Effects

What inward troubles for sin are.

*Prima est
hæc utilis,
quod se ju-
dice, nemo
nocens ab-
solvitur.*

*8. N. 10.
quod 8. 11.
the capitula-
tus erat.*

of it in *Cain*, in *Judas*, and in *Spiras*, 'tis a real Foretaste of Hell Torments: This is that *Worm* that never dies, Mark 9. 44. For look, as a Worm in the Body is bred of the Corruption that is there, so the Accusations and Condemnations of Conscience are bred in the Soul by the Corruption and Guilt that is there: As the Worm in the Body preys and bites upon the tender sensible inward Parts, so doth Conscience touch the very quick. This is its third Effect or Work to sentence and condemn, and this also makes way for a fourth, namely,

Fourthly, *To upbraid and reproach the Sinner under his misery*; and this makes a Man a very Terror to himself: To be pitied in Misery is some Relief, but to be upbraided and reproached doubles our Affliction: You know it was one of the Aggravations of *Christ's* Sufferings, to be reproached by the Tongues of his Enemies, whilst he hanged in Torments upon the cursed Tree; but all the Scoffs and Reproaches, the bitter Jeers and *Sarcasms* in the World, are nothing to these of a Man's own Conscience; this will cut to the very Bone.

O when a Man's Conscience shall say to him in a day of trouble, as *Reuben* to his afflicted Brethren, Gen. 42. 22. *Spake I not unto you, saying, do not sin against the Child; and ye would not hear, therefore behold also his Blood is required.* So Conscience, Did I not warn you, threaten you, persuade you in time against these Evils? but you would not hearken to me, therefore behold now you must suffer to all Eternity for it: The Wrath of God is kindled against thy Soul for it: This is the Fruit of thy own wilful Madness and Obstinacy. Now thou shalt know the Price of sinning against God, against Light, and Conscience. O this is terrible! every bite of Conscience makes a poor Soul to startle, and in a terrible fright to cry, Oh the Worm! O the bitter foretaste of Hell! A wounded Spirit who can bear?

This is a fourth Wound of Conscience, and it makes way for a fifth, for here it is as the pouring out of the Vials, and the sounding of those Woe-trumpets in the Revelations; one Woe is past, and another cometh. After all these deadly Blows of Conscience upon the very Heart of a Sinner, comes another as dreadful as any that is yet named; and that is,

Fifthly, The fearful Expectations of Wrath to come, which it begets in the Soul of a guilty Sinner: Of this you read, Heb. 10. 27. *A fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation*: And this makes the stoutest Sinner quail and faint under the Burthen of sin. For the Tongue of Man cannot declare what it is to lie down and rise with those fearful Expectations: The Case of such sinners is somewhat like that which is described in *Deut.* 28. 65, 66, 67. *The Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of Eyes, and Sorrow of Mind, and thy Life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have no Assurance of thy Life: In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were evening, and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart, wherewith thou shalt fear, &c.* Only in this it differs, in this Scripture you have the Terror of those described, whose Temporal Life hangs in doubtful suspense, but in the Persons I am speaking of, it is a trembling under the Apprehen-

sions and Expectations of the vengeance of eternal fire.

Believe it Friends, words cannot express what those poor creatures feel, that lie down and rise under these fears and frights of Conscience. Lord, what will become of me! I am free among the dead, yea, among the damned. I hang by the frail thread of a momentary life, which will, and must break shortly, and may break the next moment, over the everlasting burnings: no pleasant bread is eaten in these days, but what is like the bread of condemned Men.

And thus you see what the burden of sin is, when God makes it to bear upon the Consciences of Men, no burden of affliction is like it: losses of dearest relations: sorrows for an only Son are not so pungent, and penetrating as these: For,

First, No Creature enjoyment is pleasant under these inward troubles: in other troubles they may signify something to a Mans relief, but here they are nothing, the wound is too deep to be healed by any thing but the blood of Jesus Christ: Conscience requires as much to satisfy it, as God requires to satisfy him. When God is at peace with thee, (saith Conscience) then will I be at peace with thee too; but till then, expect no rest nor peace from me: all the pleasures and diversions in the World shall never stop my mouth: go where thou wilt, I will follow thee like thy shadow: be thy portion in the World as sweet as it will, I will drop in Gall and Wormwood into thy Cup, that thou shalt taste no sweetness in any thing till thou hast got thy pardon.

These inward troubles for sin, alienate the mind from all former pleasures and delights; there's no more taste or favour in them, than in the white of an Egg. Musick is out of tune, all Instruments jarr and groan. Ornaments have no beauty, what heart hath a poor creature to deck that body, in which dwells such a miserable Soul! to feed and pamper that carcass that hath been the Souls inducement to, and instrument in sin, and must be its companion in everlasting misery.

Secondly, These inward troubles for sin, put a dread into death beyond whatever the Soul saw in it before. Now it looks like the *King of Terrors* indeed: you read in *Heb.* 2. 15. *Of some that through fear of death are all their life long subject to bondage.* O what a lively comment is a Soul in this case able to make upon such a Text? they would not stare at the pale Horse, nor at him that sits on him, tho' his name be called Death, if it were not for what follows him, *Rev.* 6. 8. but when they consider that Hell follows, they tremble at the very name, or thoughts of Death.

Thirdly, Such is the nature of these inward troubles of Spirit, that they swallow up the sense of all other outward troubles: alas! these are all lost in the deeps of Soul-sorrows, as the little Rivulets are in the vast Sea; he that is wounded at the heart, will not cry *oh* at the bite of a Flea: and surely no greater is the proportion between outward and inward sorrows: A small matter formerly would discompose a Man, and put him into a fret, now ten thousand outward troubles are lighter than a feather: for, saith he, *why doth the living Man complain?* Am I yet on this side eternal burnings? O let me not complain then, whatever my condition be: have I losses in the World, or pains upon my Body? Alas! these are not to

be named with the loss of God, and the feeling of his wrath and indignation for evermore. Thus you see what troubles, inward troubles for sin be.

Secondly, If you ask in the second place, how it comes to pass that any Soul is supported under such strong troubles of Spirit, that all that feel them do not sink under them; that all that go down into these deep waters of sorrow, are not drowned in them: The answer is,

First, Tho this be a very sad time with the Soul (much like that of *Adam*, betwixt the breach of the first Covenant, and the first promise of Christ made to him) yet the Souls that are thus heavy laden do not sink, because God hath a most tender care over them, and regard to them: underneath them are the everlasting arms, and thence it is they sink not: were they left to grapple with these troubles in their own strength, they could never stand: but God takes care of these mourners, that their Spirits do not fail before him, and the Souls that he hath made; I mean those of his Elect, whom he is this way preparing for, and bringing unto Christ.

Secondly. The Lord is pleased to nourish still some hope in the Soul under the greatest fears and troubles of Spirit: tho it have no comfort or joy, yet it hath some hope in the bottom, and that keeps up the heart: the afflicted Soul doth in this case, as the afflicted Church, *Lam. 3. 29. He parteth his mouth in the dust if yet there may be hope: he saith, its good for a man to hope, and quietly to wait for the salvation of God: There are usually some glimmerings or dawnings of mercy through Christ, in the midnight darkness of inward troubles: non dantur pure tenebræ, In Hell indeed, there is no hope to lighten the darkness, but it is not so upon Earth.*

Thirdly, The experiences of others, who have been in the same depths of trouble, are also of great use to keep up the Soul above water. The experience of another is of great use to prop up a disponding mind, whilst as yet it hath none of its own: and indeed for the support of Souls in such cases they were recorded, *1 Tim. 1. 16. For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting: for an encouraging pattern, an eminent precedent to all poor sinners that were to come after him, that none might absolutely despair of finding mercy through Christ. You know if a Man be taken sick, and none can tell what the disease is, none can say that ever they heard of such a disease before, its exceeding frightful; but if one and another, it may be twenty, come to the sick Mans bed-side, and tell him, Sir, be not afraid, I have been in the very same case that you now are, and so have many more, and all did well at last, why this is half a cure to the sick Man, So it is here, a great support to hear the experiences of other Saints.*

Fourthly, As the experiences of others support the Soul under these burdens, so the riches of free grace through Jesus Christ uphold it: 'tis rich and abundant, *Plal. 103. ult. plenteous redemption, and 'tis free, and to the worst of sinners, Isa. 1. 18. and under these troubles it finds it felt in the way, and proper method of mercy, for so my Text (a Text that hath upheld many thousand drooping hearts) states it: All this gives*

hope and encouragement under trouble.

Fifthly and lastly, Tho the state of the Soul be sad and sinking, yet Jesus Christ usually makes haste in the extremity of the trouble to relieve it, by sweet and seasonable discoveries of his grace: *cum duplici intus lateret, venit Moses in the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen. It is with Christ as it was with Joseph, whose bowels yearned towards his brethren, and he was in pain till he had told them I am Joseph your brother. This is sweetly exhibited to us in that excellent Parable of the Prodigal, Luke 15. when his Father saw him, being yet a great way off, he ran and fell upon his neck and killed him: mercy runs nimbly to help, when Souls are ready to fall under the pressure of sin. And thus you see both how they are burthened, and how upheld under the burthen.*

Thirdly, If it be enquired in the last place, why God makes the burden of sin press so heavy upon the hearts of poor sinners, 'tis answered,

First, He doth it to divorce their hearts from sin, by giving them an experimental taste of the bitterness and evil that is in sin: Mens hearts are naturally glewed with delight to their sinful concises: all the persuasions and arguments in the World, are too weak to separate them and their beloved Lusts. The morsels of sin go down smoothly and sweetly: they roll them with much delectation under their tongues: and it is but need that such bitter potions as these should be administered to make their stomachs rise against sin, as that word used by the Apostle in *2 Cor. 7. 11. signifies, in that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what indignation it wrought? it notes the riling of the stomach with rage, a being angry even unto sickness, and this is the way, the best and most effectual way to separate the Soul of a sinner from his Lusts: for in these troubles Conscience saith, as it is in *Jer. 4. 18. Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness, because it is great, because it reacheth unto thy heart.**

Secondly, The Lord doth this, to make Jesus Christ most welcome and desirable to the Soul: Christ is not sweet, till sin be made bitter to us, *Mat. 9. 12. They that be whole need not a Physician, but they that be sick. If once God wound the heart of a sinner, with the stinging sense of sin, then nothing in the World is so precious, so necessary, so vehemently desired, and panted for, as Jesus Christ: O that I had Christ, if I did go in rags, if I did feed upon no other food all my days, but the bread and water of affliction! This is the language of a Soul filled with the sense of the evil of sin.*

Thirdly, The Lord doth this to advance the riches of his free Grace in the eyes of Sinners. Grace never appears Grace, till Sin appear to be Sin. The deeper our sense of the evil of sin is, the deeper our apprehensions of the free Grace of God in Christ will be. The louder our groans have been under the burden of sin, the louder will our acclamations and praises be for our Salvation from it by Jesus Christ. *To me (saith Paul) the chiefest of sinners, was this grace given, 1 Tim. 1. 15. Never doth the grace of a Prince melt the heart of a Traytor, as when Trial, Sentence, and all preparations for his Execution have past, before his unexpected Pardon comes.*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, The Lord doth this to prevent relapses into sin: *In that ye forrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought!* 2 Cor. 2. 7. The burnt Child dreads the Fire; the Bird that is delivered out of the Talions of the Hawk, trembles afterward at the noise of his Bells. *After such a deliverance as this, should we again break thy Commandments?* Ezra 9. 13, 14. Ask a poor penitent Soul, that hath been in the depths of sorrow for sin, Will you return to your former course of sin again? and it sounds in his ears, as if you should ask him, Will you run into the fire, will you go to the Rack again? O no, it hath cost him dear already.

Fifthly, Lastly, This the Lord doth, to make them both skilful and compassionate in relieving others that are under like inward troubles. None can speak so judiciously, so pertinently, so feelingly to anothers case, as he that hath been in the same case himself: this furnishes them with the tongue of the Learned. to speak a word in season to the weary Soul. By this means they are able to comfort others with the same comforts wherewith they themselves have been comforted of God, 2 Cor. 1. 4.

Thus you have had a brief account, what the burden of sin is, how souls are supported under that burden, and why the Lord causes sin to lie so heavy upon the Souls of some Sinners. The improvement of all will be in a double Use, viz.

Of Information, and Direction.

First Use for Information.

Infer. 1. Is there such a load and burden in sin? What then was the burden that our Lord Jesus Christ felt and bare for us, upon whom the dead weight of all the sins of all Gods elect lay! Isa. 53. 6. *He hath made the iniquities of us all to meet on him.* Our burden is heavy, but nothing to Christs. O there's a vast difference betwixt that which Christ bare, and that which we bare. We feel but the single weight of our own sins. Christ felt the whole weight of all our sins. You do not feel the whole weight that is in any one sin: alas, it would sink you, if God should let it bear in all its aggravations and effects upon you, Psal. 130. 2, 3. *If thou Lord shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord who shall stand!* You would quail and sink presently: you can no more stand under it, than under the weight of a mighty Mountain. But Christ bare all the burden upon himself: his understanding was deep and large: he knew the extent of its evil, which we do not: we have many reliefs and helps under our burden, he had none: we have friends to counsel, comfort and pity us; all his friends and familiars forsook him, and fled in the day of his trouble: we have comforts from Heaven, he had frowns from Heaven: *My God, my God,* (saith he in that doleful day) *why hast thou forsaken me?* there's no compare betwixt our load and Christs.

Infer. 2. If there be such a burden in sin, then certainly sinners will pay dear for all the pleasure they find in sin in the days of their vanity. What one faith of crafty counsels, we may say of all sins; tho' they seem pleasant in their first appearance, they will be found sad in the event: they are honey in the mouth, but the gall of Asps in the belly: they tickle the fancy, but read the conscience. O Sinner, thy mirth will certainly be turned into mourning, as sure as thou livest, that

vain and frothy breast or thine shall be wounded: thou shalt feel the sting and pain, as well as relish the sweet and pleasure of sin. O that thou wouldst but give thyself the leisure seriously to ponder those Scriptures in the Margin: methinks they should have the same effect that the hand-writing upon the plaiter of the Wall had upon that Jovial King in the height of a frolick, *Dan. 5. 5.* Reason thus with thine own heart, and thou wilt find the conclusion unavoidable: Either I shall repent for sin, or I shall not: if I shall not, then must I howl under the wrath of God for sin in the lowest Hell for evermore. If I shall, then by what I have now read, of the throbs and wounds of Conscience, I see what this heart of mine, this vain heart of mine, must feel in this World. O how much wiser was the choice that Moses made, Heb. 11. 25. the worst of sufferings, rather than the best of sin, the pleasures of sin which are but for a season!

Infer. 3. Is there such a burden in sin, then the most tender compassion is due debt to souls afflicted and heavily laden with sin. Their condition cries for pity, whatever their tongues do: they seem to call upon you, as Job upon his friends, *Have pity, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me,* Job 19. 21. and O let all that have felt the wounds and anguish of an afflicted Conscience themselves, learn from their own experience tenderly to pity and help others, Gal. 6. 1. *Ye that are spiritually minded, restore (or set him in joint again) in the spirit of meekness, considering in your own hearts.*

Israel was commanded to be kind to strangers, for saith God, you know the heart of a stranger: and surely if any case in the World require help, pity, and all compassionate tenderness, this doth: and yet how do some slight spiritual troubles upon others? Parents slight them in their own Children, Masters in their Servants; the more brutish and wicked they. O had you but felt your selves what they feel, you would never handle them as you do. But let this comfort such poor creatures, Christ hath felt them, and will pity and help them: yea, he therefore would feel them himself, that he might have compassion upon you. If Men will not, God will pity you: if Men be so cruel to persecute him whom God hath smitten, God will be so kind to pour balm into the wounds that sin hath made: if they pull away the shoulder from you, and will not be concern'd about your troubles, except it be to aggravate them, God will not serve you so: but certainly you that have past through the same difficulties, you cannot be without compassion to them that are now grappling with them.

Infer. 4. How unexpressibly dreadful is the state of the damned, who must bear the burden of all their sins upon themselves without relief or hope of deliverance! Mark. 9. 44. *where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*

O if sin upon the Soul, that's coming to Christ for deliverance, be so burdensome, what is it upon the Soul that is shut out from Christ, and all hopes of deliverance for ever! For do but ponder these differences betwixt these two burdens.

*Cocilia
callida pri-
ma specie
lata; tra-
hiunt duras
ocenta tri-
stia Livy.*

First, No Soul is so capacious now, to take in the fullness of the evil and misery of Sin, as they are, who were gone down to the Place of Torments. Even as the Joys of Gods Face above, are much unknown to them that have the foretastes and first Fruits of them here by Faith, so the Misery of the damned is much unknown, even to them that have in their Consciences the bitterest Taste and Sense of Sin in this World: As we have the Visions of Heaven, so we have the Visions of Hell also, but darkly through a Glass.

Secondly, No burden of Sin presseth so continually upon the Soul here, as it doth there: Afflicted Souls on Earth have intermissions and breathing times; but in Hell there are no lucid intervals: The Wrath of God there is still flowing: It is in *fluxu continuo*, Isa. 30. 33. A stream of Brimstone.

Thirdly, no burden of Sin lies upon any of Gods Elect so long as the damned do, and must bear it: Our troubles, about Sin are but short, tho' they should run parallel with the line of Life; but the Troubles of the damned are parallel with the endless line of Eternity.

Fourthly, Under these Troubles the Soul hath hope, but there all hope is cut off: All the Gospel is full of hope, it breaths nothing but hope to Sinners that are moving Christward under their Troubles: But in Hell the pangs of desperation rend their Consciences for ever. So that upon all accounts the State of the damned is inexpressibly dreadful.

Infer. If the burden of Sin be so heavy, how sweet then must the Pardon of Sin be to a Sin-burdened Soul! Is it a refreshment to a Prisoner, to have his chains knock'd off? A comfort to a Debtor, to have his debts paid, and obligations cancelled? What joy must it then be to a sin-burthened Soul, to hear the voice of Pardon and Peace in his trembling Conscience? Is the light of the morning pleasant to a Man after a weary tiresome night? the Spring of the year pleasant after a hard and tedious Winter? they are so indeed; but nothing so sweet, as the favour, peace and pardon of God, to a Soul that hath been long restless and anxious under the terrors and fears of Conscience: for tho after pardon and peace a Man remembers sin still, yet it is as one that remembers the dangerous Pits, and deep Waters, from which he hath been wonderfully delivered, and had a narrow escape. O the unconceivable sweetness of a Pardon! Who can read it, and not wet it with tears of joy? Are we glad when the grinding pain of the Stone, or racking fits of the Cholick are over? And shall we not be transported, when the accusations and condemnations of Conscience are over? Tongue cannot express what these things are; his joy is something that no words can convey to the understanding of another, that never felt the anguish of sin.

Infer. 6. Lastly, In how sad a case are those that never felt any burden in sin, that never were kept waking and restless one night for sin?

There is a *barren* Conscience, and there is a *benighted* Conscience. The first is more painful but the last more dangerous. O 'tis a fearful blow of God upon a Mans Soul, to strike it senseless and stupid, so that tho Mountains of guilt lie upon it, it feels no pain or pressure: and this is so much the more sad, because it incapacitates the Soul for Christ, and is a preface and

fore runner of Hell. It would grieve the heart of a Man, to see a *delirious person* in the rage and height of a *feaver*, to laugh at those that are weeping for him, call them fools, and telling them, he is as well as any of them: much so is the case of many thousand Souls, the God of mercy pity them.

Second Use for Counsel.

The only further Use I shall make of this point here, shall be to direct and counsel Souls that are weary and heavy laden with the burden of sin, in order to their obtaining true rest and peace. And first,

First Counsel.

Satisfie not your selves in fruitless complaints to Men. Many do so, but its never the near. I grant its lawful in spiritual distresses to complain to Men; yea, and it is a great mercy if we have any near us in times of trouble, that are judicious, tender and faithful, into whose bosoms we may pour out our troubles: but to rest in this sort of Christ, is no better than a snare of the Devil to destroy us. Is there not a God to go to in trouble? The best of Men, in the neglect of Christ, are but Physicians of no value. Be wise and wary in your choice of Christian friends, to whom you open your complaints: some are not clear themselves in the Doctrine of Christ and Faith, others are of a dark and troubled spirit as you are, and will but entangle you more. *As for me* (saith Job) *is my complaint to man, and if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?* Job 21. 4. One hour betwixt Christ and thy Soul in secret, will do more to thy true relief, than all other Counsellors and Comforters in the World can do.

Second Counsel.

Beware of a false peace, which is more dangerous than your trouble for sin can be. Many Men are afraid of their troubles, but I think they have more cause to fear their peace a great deal. There is a twofold peace that ruins most Men. Peace in sin, and peace with sin. O how glad are some persons when their troubles are gone, but I dare not joyce with them: Its like him that joyces his Ague is gone, tho it hath left him in a deep Conspition. You are got rid of your troubles, but God knows how you have left them: your wounds are skinn'd over, better they were kept open. There's no wife Woman would desire to have her pains and throes cease till the Child be born. And surely they have much to answer, that help on these delusions, healing the hurt of Souls slightly, by crying peace, peace, when there is no peace. The false peace you beget in them, will be a real trouble to your selves in the issue, Jer. 6. 14.

Third Counsel.

Let all that are under inward troubles for sin, take heed of drawing desperate conclusions against themselves, and the final state of their own Souls. Tho your case be sad, 'tis not desperate: tho the night be troublesome and tedious, keep on in the way to Christ, and light will spring up. To mourn for sin is you duty; to conclude there is no hope for you in Christ, is your sin. You have wronged God enough already, don't add a farther and greater abuse to all the rest, by an absolute despair of mercy. 'Twas your sin formerly to presume beyond any promise,

tis your Sin now to *despair against many commands*. I would say as the Apostle in another Case, I would not have you mourn as Men that have no Hope: Your Condition is sad as it is, but yet it's much better than once it was: You were once full of Sin, and void of Sense; now you have the Sense of Sin, which is no small Mercy; You were once quite out of the Way and Method of Mercy, now you are in that very Path wherein Mercy meets the Elect of God. Keep hope therefore at the Bottom of all your Troubles.

Fourth Counsel, Observe whether your Troubles for Sin produce such Fruits and Effects in your Souls, as theirs do which end at last in Christ and Everlasting Peace.

First, One that is truly burdened with Sin will not allow himself to live in the secret Practice of Sin: Either your Trouble will put an end to your course of sinning, or your sinning will put an end to your Troubles. Consult 2 Cor. 7. 11.

Secondly, True Sorrow for Sin will give you very low and vile Thoughts of your selves: As you were covered with *Pride* before, so you will be covered with *Shame* after God hath convinced and humbled you, Rom. 6. 21.

Thirdly, A Soul really burdened with Sin, will never stand in his own Justification before God, nor extenuate and mince it in his Confessions to him, Psalm 51. 3, 4.

Fourthly, The burdens of Sin will make a Man set Light by all other burdens of Affliction, Lam. 3. 22. Mic. 7. 9. The more you feel Sin, the less you feel Affliction.

Fifthly, A Soul truly burdened for Sin, will take no hearty Joy or Comfort in any outward Enjoyment of this World, till Christ come and speak Peace to the Soul, Lam. 3. 28. Just so the Soul sits alone and keepeth silence; merry Company is a burden, and Musick is but howling to him.

Fifth Counsel. Beware of those Things that make your Troubles longer than they ought to be. There be several Errors and Mistakes that hold poor Souls much longer in their Fears and Terrors than else they might be: And such are,

First, Ignorance of the Nature of saving Faith, and the Necessity of it: Till you come to believe, you cannot have Peace; and while you mistake the Nature, or apprehend not the Necessity of Faith, you are not like to fall into that path of Peace.

Secondly, Labouring to heal the wounds that the Law hath made upon your Consciences, by a more strict Obedience to it for the Future, in the neglect of Christ and his Righteousness.

Thirdly, In observance of what God hath already done for you, in these Preparatory works of the Law, in order to your Salvation by Jesus Christ. O if you would but compare what you now are, with what you lately were, it would give some relief: But the last and principal Thing is this:

Sixth Counsel, Hasten to Christ in the way of Faith, and you shall find rest; and till then, all the World cannot give you rest. The sooner you transact with Christ in the way of Faith, the sooner you shall be at Peace, and enter into his rest: For those that believe, do now enter in-

to rest. You may tug and strive, look this way and that, but all in vain; Christ and Peace come together. No sooner do you come to him, and roll your burden on him, receive him as he offers himself, but the Soul feels it self eased on a sudden; being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God, Rom. 5. 1. And thus in finishing the first, we are brought home to the second Observation.

Doct. 2.

That Sin-burdened Souls are solemnly invited to come to Christ.

This Point sounds sweetly in the Ear of a distressed Sinner, it is the most joyful Voice that ever the Soul heard; the Voice of blessing from Mount *Gerezim*, the ravishing Voice from Mount *Sion*, *Ye are come to Jesus the Mediator*. In opening of it I will shew,

1. *What it is to come to Christ.*

2. *How Christ invites Men to come to him.*

3. *Why his Invitation is directed to burdened Souls.*

First, We will enquire what it is to come to Christ, and how many Things are involved in it.

In general, To come to Christ, is a Phrase *equipollent*, or of the same amount with the believing in Christ. It is an Expression that carries the Nature and Necessity of Faith in it, and is reciprocated with believing, John 6. 35. *He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst.* Coming to Christ, is believing in Christ; and believing in Christ, is coming to Christ: They are *Synonyma's*, and import the self same Thing: Only in this Notion of Faith there are many rich and excellent Things hinted to us, which no other Word can so aptly convey to our Minds: As,

First, It hints this to us, That the Souls of convinced and burdened Sinners, do not only discern the reality of Christ, or that he is, but also the Necessity of applying Christ, and that their Eternal Life is in their Union with him: For this is most certain, that the Object of Faith must be determinate and fixed; the Soul must believe that Christ is, or else there can be no Emotions of the Soul after him: All coming presupposes a fixed Term to which we come, Heb. 11. 6. *He that cometh to God, must believe that God is.* Take away this, and all Motion after Christ presently stops. No wonder then that Souls, in their first Motions to Christ, find themselves clogg'd with so many Atheistical Temptations, shaking their Assent to the Truth of the Gospel at the very Root and Foundation of it: But they that come to Christ do see that he is, and that their Life and Happiness lies in their Union with him; else they would never come to him upon such Terms as they do.

Secondly, Coming to Christ, implies the Souls despair of Salvation any other way: The way of Faith is a supernatural way, and Souls will not attempt it, until they have tried all natural ways to help and save themselves, and find it all in vain: Therefore the Text describes these *Comers to Christ* as weary Persons, that have been tugging and striving all other ways for rest, but can find none; and so are forced to relinquish all their fond Expectations of Salvation in any other way,

way, and come to Christ as their Last and only Remedy.

Thirdly, Coming to Christ, notes a Supernatural and Almighty Power acting the Soul quite above its own natural Abilities in this Motion, *John 6 44. No Man can come to me, except my Father which hath sent me draw him.* It is as possible for the ponderous Mountains to start from their Bases and Centres, mount themselves aloft into the Air, and there fly like wandring Atoms hither and thither; as it is for any Man of himself, (*i. e.*) by a pure natural Power of his own, to come to Christ: It was not a stranger thing for Peter to come to Christ, walking upon the Waves of the Sea, than for his, or any Mans Soul, to come to Christ in the way of Faith.

Fourthly, Coming to Christ, notes the voluntariness of the Soul in its Motion to Christ. 'Tis true, there's no coming without the Fathers drawing; but that drawing hath nothing of Co-action in it; it doth not destroy, but powerfully, and with an overcoming sweetness, persuade the Will. 'Tis not forced or driven, but it comes: Being made willing in the Day of Gods Power, *Psaln 110. 3.* Ask a poor distressed Sinner in that season, Are you willing to come to Christ? O rather than live. Life is not so necessary as Christ is. O with all my Heart, ten Thousand Worlds for Jesus Christ, if he could be purchased, were nothing answerable to his value in mine Eyes. The Souls Motion to Christ is free and voluntary, 'tis coming.

Fifthly, It implies this in it, That no Duties or Ordinances (which are but the Ways or Means by which we come to Christ) are, or ought to be central and terminative to the Soul: (*i. e.*) The Soul of a Believer is not to sit down and rest in them; but to come by them, or through them, to Jesus Christ, and take up his rest in him only. No Duties, no Reformation, no Ordinances of God, how excellent soever these things are in themselves, and how necessary soever they are in their proper Place and Use, can give rest to the weary and heavy laden Soul: It cannot Centre in any of them; and you may see it cannot, because it still *gravitates*, and inclines to another thing, even Christ; and cannot terminate its Motion till it be come to him. Christ is the Term to which a Believer moves; and therefore cannot sit down by the way as well satisfied, as if he were at his Journeys end. Ordinances and Duties have the Nature and Use of Means to bring us to Christ, but not to be to any Man instead of Christ.

Sixthly, Coming to Christ, implies an Hope or Expectation from Christ in the coming Soul. If it have no hope, why doth it move forward? As good sit still, and resolve to perish where it is, as come to Christ, if there be no ground to expect Salvation by him. Hope is the Spring of Motion and Industry: If you cut off Hope, you hamstring Faith: It cannot move to Christ, except it be satisfied at least of the possibility of Mercy and Salvation by him. Hence it is, that when comers to Christ are struggling with the Doubts and Fears of the Issue, the Lord is pleased to enlighten their faint hopes, by setting on such Scriptures as that, *John 6. 37. He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out:* And *Heb. 7. 25. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.* This puts Life into Hope, and Hope puts Life into Industry and Motion.

Seventhly, Coming to Christ for Rest, implies that Believers have, and lawfully may have an Eye to their own happiness in closing with the Lord Jesus Christ: The poor Soul comes for rest; it comes for Salvation: Its Eye and Aim is upon it. And this aim of the Soul, at its own good, is legitimated and allowed by that Expression of Christ, *John 5. 40. Ye will not come unto me that ye may have Life.* If Christ blame them for not coming to him, that they might have Life, sure he would not blame them, had they come to him for Life.

Eightly, But Lastly, and which is the principal Thing carried in this Expression, Coming to Christ, notes the All-sufficiency of Christ, to answer all the Needs and Wants of distressed Souls, and their betaking themselves accordingly to him only for relief; being content to come to Christ for whatever they need, and live upon that fulness that is in him. If there were not an All-sufficiency, in Christ, no Soul would come to him: For this is the very ground upon which Men come, *Heb. 7. 25. He is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him: eis ni zailwite,* to the uttermost: In the greatest plunges, difficulties and dangers: He hath a fulness of saving Power in him; and this encourages Souls to come unto him. One Beggar uses not to wait at the door of another, but all at the doors of them they conceiveable to relieve them. And as this notes the fulness of Christ as a Saviour, so it must needs note the emptiness and humility of the Soul as a comer to him. This is call'd Submission, in *Rom. 10. 3.* Proud Nature must be deeply distressed, humbled and moulded, into another Temper, before it will be persuaded to live upon those Terms, to come to Christ for every Thing it wants, to live upon Christ's fulness in the way of Grace and Favour, and have no Stock of its own to live upon. O this is hard, but it's the way of Faith.

Secondly, In the next Place, let us see how Christ invites Men to come unto him, and you shall find the Means employ'd in this Work, are either Internal and Principal, namely the Spirit of God, who is Christ's Vicegerent, and comes to us in his Name and Room to persuade us to believe, *John 15. 26.* Or External, namely the preaching of the Gospel by Commissionated Embassadors, who in Christ's stead beseech Men to be reconciled to God: (*i. e.*) to come to Christ by Faith, in Order to their Reconciliation and Peace with God. But all Means and Instruments employ'd in this Work of bringing Men to Christ, entirely depend upon the blessing and concurrence of the Spirit of God, without whom they signify nothing: How long may Ministers preach, before one Soul come to Christ, except the Spirit co-operate in that Work? Now as to the manner in which Men are persuaded, and their Wills wrought upon to come to Christ, I will briefly note several Acts of the Spirit in order thereunto.

First, There is an illustrating-work of the Spirit upon the Minds of Sinners, opening their Eyes to see their Danger and Misery. Till this be discovered, no Man rises from his Place: 'Tis Sense of Danger that rouses the secure Sinner, that distresses him, and makes him look about for Deliverance, crying, *What shall I do to be saved?* And 'tis the discovery of Christs Ability to save, which is the ground and reason, (as was observed above) of its Motion to Christ. Hence, seeing the Son,

T t

is

Venite ad
me, (*i. e.*)
afflictibus
fidei, &
spei religi-
osa, & de-
siderii. Bur-
genitis in
Loc.

is joyned with believing or coming to him, in John 6. 40.

Secondly, There is the *Authoritative Call*, or commanding Voice of the Spirit in the Word; a Voice that's full of awful Majesty and Power, 1 John 3. 23. *This is his Commandment, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ.* This Call of the Spirit to come to Christ rolls one great block, namely the fear of Presumption, out of the Souls way to Christ, and instead of Presumption in coming, makes it Rebellion, and inexcusable Obstinacy, to refuse to come. This answers all Pleas against coming to Christ from our unworthiness and deep guilt, and mightily encourages the Soul to come to Christ, whatever it hath been or done.

Thirdly, There are *Soul-encouraging conditional Promises* to all that do come to Christ in Obedience to the Command. Such is that in my Text, *I will give you rest*: And that in John 6. 37. *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* And these breathe Life and Encouragement into poor Souls that hang back, and are daunted through own unworthiness.

Fourthly, There are *dreadful threatnings* denounced by the Spirit in the Word, against all that refuse or neglect to come to Christ, which are of great use to engage and quicken Souls in their way to Christ, Mark 16. 16. *He that believes not shall be damned.* Die in his Sin, John 8. 24. *The Wrath of God shall remain on him,* John 3. ult. Which is as if the Lord had said, Sinners don't dally with my Christ: Don't be always treating, and never concluding or resolving: For if there be Justice in Heaven, or Fire in Hell, every Soul that comes not to Christ, must and shall perish to all Eternity: Upon your own Heads, let the Blood and Destruction of your own Souls be for ever, if you will not come unto him.

Fifthly, There are *moving and working Examples* set before Souls in the Word, to prevail with them to come, alluring and encouraging Examples of such as have come to Christ under deepest guilt and discouragement, and yet found Mercy, 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners, of whom I am chief: Howbeit (or nevertheless) for this Cause I obtained Mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a Pattern to them which should hereafter believe in him to Life everlasting.* Who would not come to Christ after such an Example as this? And if this will not prevail, there are dreadful Examples recorded in the Word, setting before us the miserable Condition of all such as refuse the Calls of the Word to come to Christ, 1 Pet. 3. 19, 20. *By which also he went and preached to the Spirits which are in Prison, which sometime were disobedient when once the long-suffering of God waited in the Days of Noah.* The meaning is, the Sinners that lived before the Flood, but now are in Hell, clapt up into that Prison, had the offers of Grace made them, but despised them, and now lie for their disobedience in Prison, under the Wrath of God for it, in the lowest Hell.

Sixthly and Last, There is an effectual *persuading*, overcoming and victorious Work of the Spirit upon the Hearts and Wills of Sinners, under which they come to Jesus Christ. Of this I have spoken at large before in the Fourth Ser-

mon, and therefore shall not add any thing more here. This is the Way and Manner, in which Souls are prevailed with to come to Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, In the last Place, if you enquire why Christ makes his Invitations to weary and heavy laden Souls, and to no other, the Answer is briefly this: First, Because in so doing, he follows the Commission which he received from his Father; for so you will find it runs in Isa. 61. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good Tidings to the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that are bound.* You see here now Christ's Commission binds him up: His Father sent him to poor broken hearted Sinners, and he will keep close to his Commission. *He came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners* (i. e. sensible burthened Sinners) to Repentance, Matt. 9. 13. *I am not sent (saith he) but unto the lost Sheep of the House of Israel.* Thus his Instructions and Commission from the Father, limit him only to sensible and burthened Souls, and he will be faithful to his Commission.

Secondly, The very Order of the Spirits work in bringing Men to Christ, shews us to whom the Invitations and offers of Grace in Christ are to be made. For none are convinced of Righteousness (i. e.) of the compleat and perfect Righteousness which is in Christ for their Justification, until first they be convinced of Sin; and consequently, no Man will or can come to Christ by Faith, till Convictions of Sin have awakened and distressed them, John 16. 8, 9. This being the due Order of the Spirits Operation, the same Order must be observed in Gospel Offers and Invitations.

Thirdly, It behoves, that Christ should provide for his own Glory, as well as for our Safety, and not expose that, to secure this, but save us in that way which will bring him most Honour and Praise. And certainly such a way as is this, by first convincing, humbling and burthening the Souls of Men, and then bringing them to rest in himself.

Alas! Let those that never saw or felt the evil of Sin, be told of Rest, Peace and Pardon in Christ, they will but despise it, as a Thing of no value, Luke 5. 31. *The whole need not a Physician, but those that are Sick.* Bid a Man that thinks himself sound and whole, go to the Physician, and he will but laugh at the Motion. If you offer him the richest Composition, he will refuse it, slight it, and it may be spill it upon the Ground: Ay, but if the same Man did once feel an acute disease; and were made to sweat and groan under strong Pains, if ever he come to know what sick Days and restless Nights are, and to apprehend his Life to be in eminent Hazard, then Messengers are sent one after another in Post-haste to the Physician; then he begs him with Tears to do what in him lies for his relief; he thankfully takes the bitterest Potions, and praises the Care and Skill of his Physician with Tears of Joy; and so the Patients safety, and the Physicians Honour, are both secured. So is it in this Method of Grace. The Lives follow.

Infer. 1. If Sin-burthened Souls are solemnly invited to come to Christ, Then it follows, that whatever guilt lie upon the Conscience of a poor humbled Sinner, 'tis no Presumption, but his

his Duty to come to Christ, notwithstanding his own apprehended *vileness* and great unworthiness.

Let it be carefully observed how happily that universal Particle *All* is inserted in Christs Invitation for the Encouragement of Sinners. *Come unto me [All] ye that labour* : q. d. let no broken-hearted Sinner exclude himself, when as he is not by me excluded from Mercy : My Grace is my own, I may bestow it where I will, and upon whom I will. 'Tis not I, but Satan that impedes and incloses my Mercy from humbled Souls that are made willing to come unto me : He calls that your *Presumption*, which my Invitation makes your *Duty*.

Object. 1. But I doubt my Case is excepted by Christ himself, in *Mat. 12. 31.* where blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is exempted from Pardon : And I have had many horrid blasphemous Thoughts injected into my Soul.

Sol. Art thou a burdened and heavy laden Soul? If so, thy Case is not in that, or any other Scripture, exempted from Mercy : For the unpardonable Sin is always found in an impenitent Heart : As that Sin finds no Pardon with God, so neither is it followed with Contrition and Sorrow in the Soul that commits it.

Object. 2. But if I am not guilty of that Sin, I am certainly guilty of many great and heinous Abominations of another kind, too great for me to expect Mercy for, and therefore I dare not go to Christ.

Sol. The greater your Sins have been, the more need you have to go to Jesus Christ. Let not a *Motive* to Christ, be made an *Obstacle* in your way to him. Great Sinners are expressly called, *Isa. 1. 18.* Great Sinners have come to Christ, and found Mercy, *1 Cor. 6. 7.* And to conclude, it's an high reproach and dishonour to the Blood of Christ, and Mercy of God, which flows so freely through him, to object the greatness of Sin to either of them. Certainly you have not sinned beyond the extent of Mercy, or beyond the efficacy of the Blood of Christ : But Pardon and Peace may be had, if you will thus come to Christ for it.

Object. 3. Oh but it's now too late ; I have had many thousand Calls by the Gospel, and refused them ; many Purposes in my Heart to go to Christ, and quenched them ; my Time therefore is past, and now 'tis no Purpose.

Sol. If the Time of Grace be past, and God intends no Mercy for Thee, how comes it to pass thy Soul is now filled with Trouble and Distress for Sin ? Is this the frame of a Mans Heart that is past hope ? Do such Signs as these appear in Men that are hopeless ? Beside, the Time of Grace is a secret hid in the Breast of God ; but coming to Christ is a Duty plainly revealed in the Text : And why will you Object a Thing that is secret and uncertain, against a Duty that is so plain and evident ? Nor do you your selves believe what you Object : For at the same time that you say your seasons are over, it is too late ; you are notwithstanding found repenting, mourning, praying and striving, to come to Christ. Certainly if you knew it were too late, you would not be found labouring in the use of Means. Go on therefore, and the Lord be with you. 'Tis not Presumption but Obedience, to come when Christ calls ; as here he doth, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden.*

Infer. 2. Hence it follows, *That none have cause to be troubled, when God makes the Souls of their Friends or Relations sick with the Sense of Sin.* It was the saying (as I remember) of Hierom to Sabimon, Nothing (said he) makes my Heart sadder, than that nothing can make my Heart sad. 'Tis Matter of Joy to all that rightly understand the Matter, when God smites the Heart of any Man with the painful sense of Sin, of such sickness it may be said, *This sickness is not unto Death, but for the Glory of God.* Yet how do many carnal Relations lament and bewail this as a Misery, as an undoing to their Friends and Acquaintance ; as if then they must be reckon'd lost, and never till then that Christ is finding and saving them. O if your Hearts were spiritual and wise, their groans for Sin would be as Music in your Ears. When they go alone to bewail their Sin, you would go alone also to bless God for such a Mercy ; that ever you should live to such a happy Day : You would say, now is my Friend in the blessed Pangs of the new Birth : Now is he in the very way of Mercy : Never in so hopeful a Condition as now. I had rather he should groan now at the Feet of Christ, than groan hereafter under the Wrath of God for ever. O Parents, beware as you love the Souls of your Children, that you don't damp and discourage them, tempt or threaten them, divert or hinder them in such Cases as this, lest you bring the Blood of their Souls upon your own heads.

Infer. 3. It also follows from hence, *That those to whom Sin was never any burthen, are not yet come to Christ, nor have they any Interest in him.* We may as well suppose a Child to be born without any pangs or throes, as a Soul to be born again, and united to Christ without any sense or sorrow for Sin. I know many have great frights of Conscience, that never were made duly sensible of the Evil of Sin : Many are afraid of burning, that never were afraid of sinning. Slight and transient Troubles some have had, but it vanish'd like an early Cloud, lick'd up like a Morning Dew. Few Men are without checks and throbs of Conscience at one Time or other, but instead of going to the Closet, they run to the *Alt-house* or *Tavern* for a Cure : If their sorrow for Sin had been right, nothing but the sprinkling of the Blood of Christ could have appeased their Consciences, *Heb. 10. 22.* How cold should the Consideration of this thing strike to the Hearts of such Persons ! Methinks, Reader, if this be thy Case, it should send thee away with an aking Heart : Thou hast not yet tasted the bitterness of Sin, and if thou do not, then shalt thou never taste the sweetness of Christ, his Pardons and Peace.

Infer. 4. How great a Mercy is it for Sin burthened Souls, to be within the Sound and Call of Christ in the Gospel !

There be many thousands in the *Pagan* and *Papish* Parts of the World, that labour under distresses of Conscience as well as we, but have no such reliefs or means of Peace and Comfort as we have that live within the joyful sound of the Gospel. If the Conscience of a *Papist* be burdened with guilt, all the relief he hath, is to afflict his Body to quiet his Soul : A Penance or Pilgrimage is all the relief they have. If a *Pagan* be in trouble for Sin, he hath no Knowledge of Christ, nor Notion of a Satisfaction made by him. The voice of Nature is, Shall I give my first-born for my Transgression, the fruit of my Body for the

T t 2 Sin

sin of my Soul? The damned endure the terrible blows and wounds of Conscience for sin, they roar under that terrible lash, but no voice of peace or pardon is heard among them. It is not, *Come unto me ye that labour and are heavy-laden, but depart from me ye cursed.*

Blessed are your ears, for you hear the voice of peace, you are come to Jesus the Mediator, and to the blood of sprinkling. O you can never set a due value upon this privilege.

Infer. 5. *How sweet and unspeakably relieving is the closing of a burdened Soul with Jesus Christ by faith! 'Tis rest to the weary Soul.*

Soul-troubles are spending and wasting troubles. The pains of a distressed conscience are the most acute pains. A poor Soul would fain be at rest, but knows not where; he tries this duty and that, but finds none; at last he falls into the way of believing; he casts himself, with his burden of guilt and fear, upon Christ, and there is the rest his Soul desired. Christ and Rest come together: till Faith bring you to the bosom of Jesus, you can find no true rest; the Soul is rolling and tossing, sick and weary, upon the billows of its own guilt and fears. Now the Soul is come like a Ship tossed with Storms and Tempests, out of a raging Ocean into the quiet Harbour; or like a *lost Sheep* that hath been wandering in weariness, hunger and danger, into the Fold. Is a soft Bed in a quiet Chamber, sweet to one that is spent and tired with Travel? Is the sight of a shore sweet to the *Shipwreck'd Mariner*, that looks for nothing but death? Much more sweet is Christ to a Soul that comes to him pressed in conscience, and broken in spirit, under the sinking weight of sin.

How did the *Italians* rejoice, after a long and dangerous Voyage, to see *Italy* again! Crying with a loud and united voices, which made the very Heavens ring again, *Italy! Italy!* But no shore is so sweet to the weather-beaten Passenger, as Christ is to a broken-hearted Sinner: this brings the Soul to a sweet repose, *Heb. 4. 3. We which have believed, do enter into rest*; and this endears the way of Faith to their Souls ever after.

Infer. 6. *Learn hence the usefulness of the Law, to bring Souls to Jesus Christ.* Its utterly useless as a *Covenant* to justify us, but exceeding useful to convince and humble us. It cannot relieve or ease us, but it can, and doth awake and rouze us: its a fair glass to shew us the face of sin; and till we have seen that, we cannot see the face of Jesus Christ.

The Law, like the *fiery Serpent*, smites, stings and torments the conscience: This drives us to the Lord Jesus lifted up in the Gospel, like the *Brazen Serpent* in the Wilderness, to heal us. The use of the Law, is to make us feel our *sickness*; this makes us look out for a *Physician*. *I was alive once without the Law* (saith Paul) *but when the Commandment came sin revived, and I died*, *Rom. 7. 9.* The hard, vain, proud hearts of Men, require such an Hammer to break them to pieces.

Infer. 7. *Its the immediate duty of weary and heavy laden sinners to come to Christ by Faith, and not stand off from Christ, or delay to accept him upon any pretence whatsoever.*

Christ invites and commands such to come unto him, 'tis therefore your sin to neglect, draw back, or defer, whatever seeming reasons

and pretences there may be to the contrary. When the *Taylor* was brought (where I suppose thee now to be) to a pinching distress that made him cry, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* The very next counsel the Apostles gave him, was, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*, *Acts 16. 30, 31.* And for your encouragement know, he that calleth you to come, knows your burden, what your sins have been, and troubles are, yet he calls you: if your sin hinder not Christ from calling, neither should it hinder you from coming. He that calls you, is able to ease you; to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him, *Heb. 7. 25.* Whatever fulness of sin be in you, there is a greater fulness of saving power in Christ. Moreover, he that calls you to come, never yet rejected any poor burdened Soul that came to him: and hath said he never will, *Job. 6. 37. He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* Fear not therefore, he will not begin with thee, or make thee the first instance and example of the feared Rejection.

And lastly, Bethink thy self, what wilt thou do, and whether wilt thou go in this case, if not to Jesus Christ? Nothing shall ease or relieve thee, till thou dost come to him. Thou art under an happy necessity to go to him. With him only is found rest for the weary Soul. Which brings us to the third and last Observation.

Doct. 3.

That there is rest in Christ for all that come unto him under the heavy burden of Sin.

REST, is a sweet word to a weary Soul, all seek it, but none but Believers find it. *We which have believed, (saith the Apostle) do enter into rest*, *Heb. 4. 3.* He doth not say they *enter* (shall), but they *do enter* into rest; noting their spiritual rest to be already begun by Faith on Earth in the tranquility of Conscience, and shall be consummated in Heaven in the full enjoyment of felicity. God. There is a sweet calm upon the troubled Soul after believing, an ease or rest of the mind, which is an unspeakable mercy to a poor weary Soul. Christ is to it, as the *Ark* was to the *Dove*, when she wandered over the watery World, and found no place to rest the soles of her foot. Faith centers the unquiet spirit of Man in Christ, brings it to repose it self and its burden on him. It is the Souls dropping *Anchor* in a Storm, which stays and settles it.

The great debate which cost so many anxious thoughts, is now issued into this Resolution; I will venture my All upon Christ, let him do with me as seemeth him good. It was impossible for the Soul to find rest, whilst it knew not where to bestow it self, or how to be secured from the wrath to come; but when all is embarked in Christ for Eternity, and the Soul fully resolved to lean upon him, and trust to him; now it feels the very initials of eternal rest in it self: it finds an heavy burden unloaded from its shoulders: it is come as it were into a new World: the case is strangely altered. The word *rest* in this place notes, (and is so rendered by some) a recreation: 'tis restored, renewed and recreated as it were, by that sweet repose it hath upon Christ. Believers know, that faith is the sweetest recreation you can take. Others seek to di-

vert

*Italian,
Italian,
Leto clamore
reclamant.
Virg.*

*Not diis
omnibus
ingressi
sumus, sed
enter into
rest, but
they do
enter into
rest; noting
their
spiritual
rest to be
already
begun by
Faith on
Earth in
the tranqui-
lity of Con-
science, and
shall be
consummated
in Heaven
in the full
enjoyment
of felicity.
God. There
is a sweet
calm upon
the troubled
Soul after
believing, an
ease or rest
of the mind,
which is an
unspeakable
mercy to a
poor weary
Soul. Christ
is to it, as
the Ark was
to the Dove,
when she
wandered
over the
watery World,
and found
no place to
rest the soles
of her foot.
Faith centers
the unquiet
spirit of Man
in Christ,
brings it to
repose it self
and its burden
on him. It
is the Souls
dropping
Anchor in a
Storm, which
stays and
settles it.*

*Recreabo
vos, nempe
a lassitudi-
ne, a mo-
lestia, &
onere. Vi-
tab. &
Erafm.*

vert and lose their troubles by sinful recreations, vain company, and the like; but they little know what the recreation, and sweet restoring rest, that faith gives the Soul, is. You find in Christ what they seek in vain among the Creatures. Believing is the highest recreation known in this World. But to prevent mistakes, three *Cautions* need to be premised, lest we do in *ipso limine impingere*, stumble at the threshold, and so lose our way all along afterward.

Cautions 1.

You are not to conceive, that all the Souls fears, troubles and sorrows, are presently over and at an end, as soon as it is come to Christ by faith. They will have many troubles in the World after that, it may be more than ever they had in their lives: *Our flesh (saith Paul) had no rest*, 2 Cor. 7: 5. They will be infested with many temptations after that, that it may be the assaults of Satan may be more violent upon their Souls than ever: *horribilia de deo, terribilia de fide*: Injections that make the very bones to quake, and the belly to tremble: they will not be freed from sin, that rest remains for the People of God; nor from inward trouble and grief of Soul about sin. These things are not to be expected presently.

Cautions 2.

We may not think all Believers do immediately enter into the full actual sense of rest and comfort, but they presently enter into the state of rest. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, Rom. 5: 1. (i. e.) we enter into the state of peace immediately. Peace is seen for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart, Psal. 97: 11. And he is a rich Man that hath a thousand Acres of Corn in the ground, as well as he that hath so much in his Barn, or the Money in his Purse. They have rest and peace in the seed of it, when they have it not in the fruit: they have rest in the promise, when they have it not in possession: and he is a rich Man that hath good Bonds and Bills for a great sum of Money, if he have not twelve pence in his Pocket. All Believers have the Promise, have rest and peace granted them under Gods own hand in many Promises, which faith brings them under: and we know that the truth and faithfulness of God stands engaged to make good every line and word of the Promise to them. So that tho' they have not a full and clear actual sense and feeling of rest, they are nevertheless by Faith come into the state of rest.

Cautions 3.

We may not conceive, that Faith it self is the Souls rest, but the means and instrument of it only. We cannot find rest in any work or duty of our own, but we may find it in Christ, whom Faith apprehends for justification and Salvation.

Having thus guarded the Point against misapprehensions by these needful Cautions, I shall next shew you, how our coming to Christ by Faith brings us to rest in him. And here let it be considered what those things are that burden, grieve and disquiet the Soul, before its coming to Christ, and how it is relieved and eased in all those respects by its coming to the Lord Jesus: and you shall find,

First, That one principal ground of trouble, is the guilt of sin upon the Conscience, of which I spake in the former point. The Curse of the

Law lies heavy upon the Soul, so heavy that nothing is found in all the World able to relieve it under that burden: as you see in a condemned Man, spread a Table in Prison with the greatest dainties, and send for the rarest Musicians, all will not charm his sorrow; but if you can produce an *authentick Pardon*, you ease him presently: just so it is here, Faith plucks the thorn out of the conscience which so grieved it, unites the Soul with Christ, and then that ground of trouble is removed: for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ, Rom. 8: 1. The same moment the Soul comes to Christ, it is past from death to life; is no more under the Law, but Grace. If a Mans Debt be paid by his Surety, he need not fear to shew his face boldly abroad: he may freely meet the Sergeant at the Prison door.

Secondly, The Soul of a convinced Sinner is exceedingly burdened with the uncleanness and filthiness wherewith sin hath defiled and polluted it. Conviction discovers the universal pollution of heart and life, so that a Man loathes and abhors himself by reason thereof: If he do not look into his own corruptions, he cannot be safe; and if he do, he cannot bear the sight of it, he hath no quiet. Nothing can give rest, but what gives relief against this evil. And this only is done by Faith uniting the Soul with Jesus Christ. Fortho it be true, that the pollution of sin be not presently and perfectly taken away, by coming to Christ, yet the burden thereof is exceedingly eased: for upon our believing, there is an heart-purifying principle planted in the Soul, which doth by degrees cleanse that Fountain of corruption, and will at last perfectly free the Soul from it; *Abiding in Christ, purifying their hearts by faith*: and being once in Christ, he is concerned for the Soul, as a Member now of his own mystical body, to purify and cleanse it, that at last he may present it perfect to the Father without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, Eph. 5: 26. The reigning power of it is gone immediately upon believing, and the very existence and being of it shall at last be destroyed. O what rest must this give under those troubles for sin?

Thirdly, It was an intolerable burden to the Soul to be under the continual fears, alarms and frights of Death and Damnation. Its life hath been a life of bondage upon this account, ever since the Lord opened his eyes to see his condition. Poor Souls lie down with trembling, for fear what a night may bring forth. 'Tis a sad life indeed to live in continual bondage to such fears. But Faith sweetly relieves the Trembling Conscience, by removing the guilt which breeds it; fears. The sting of Death is Sin: when guilt is removed, fears vanish. *Smite Lord, smite, said Luther, for my sins are forgiven.* Now if sickness come, 'tis another mine, fiery thing than it was wont to be, *Ist. 33: 24.* The man a peccator shall not say I am sick, the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquities: a sum, *Luth.* Man scarce feels his sickness in comparison to what he did, whilst he was without Christ, and hope of pardon.

Fourthly, A convinced sinner out of Christ sees every thing against him: nothing yields any comfort, yea, every thing increases and aggravates his burthen, whether he look to things

past, present, or to come. If he reflect upon *things past*; his Soul is filled with anguish to remember the sins committed, and the seasons neglected; and the precious mercies that have been abused: if he look upon *things present*, the case is doleful and miserable: nothing but trouble and danger; Christless, and Comfortless: and if he look forward to *things to come*, that gives him a deeper cut to the heart than any thing else; for tho it be sad and miserable for the present, yet he fears it will be much worse hereafter; all these are but the beginning of sorrows: and thus the poor awakened Sinner becomes a *Magor missabib*; fear round about.

But upon his coming to Christ, all things are marvelously altered: a quite contrary face of things appears to him: every thing gives him hope and comfort which way soever he looks: so speaks the Apostle, 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. *All things are yours, (saith he) whether life, or death; or things present, or things to come, all is yours, and ye are Christs, and Christ is Gods: they are ours; (i.e.) for our advantage, benefit and comfort; more particularly upon our coming to Christ.*

First, *Things past are ours*, they conduce to our advantage and comfort. Now the Soul can begin to read the gracious end and design of God, in all its preservations and deliverances; whereby it hath been reserved for such a day as this. O! it melts his heart to consider, his Companions in sin and vanity are cut off, and he spared; and that for a day of such mercy as the day of his espousals with Christ is. Now all his past sorrows, and deep troubles of spirit, which God hath exercised him with, begin to appear the greatest mercies that ever he received; being all necessary, and introductive to this blessed Union with Christ.

Secondly, *Things present are ours*, tho it be not yet with us as we would have it; Christ is not *sure* enough, the heart is not *pure* enough; sin is too strong, and grace is too weak; many things are yet out of order; yet can the Soul bless God for this with tears of joy, and praise him for this brimful of admiration, and holy astonishment; that it is, as it is; that he is where he is, tho he be not yet where he would be. O 'tis a blessed life to live as a poor *recumbent*, by acts of trust and affiance, tho as yet it have but little evidence: that it is resolved to trust all with Christ, tho it be not yet certain of the issue. O this is a comfortable station, a sweet condition to what it was, either when it wallowed in sin in the days before conviction, or was *swallowed* up in fears and troubles for sin after conviction: now it hath hope tho it want assurance; and hope is sweet to a Soul coming out of such deep distresses: now it sees the remedy, and is applying it, whereas before the wound seemed desperate: now all hesitations and debates are at an end in the Soul, 'tis no longer bivious and unresolved what to do; all things have been deeply considered, and after consideration, issued into this resolve or decree of the Will. I will go to Christ; I will venture all upon his Command and Call; I will imbarque my eternal interests in that Bottom: here I fix; and upon this ground I resolve to live and die. O how much better is this, than that floating life it lived before, rolling upon the billows of inward

fears and troubles, not able to drop Anchor any where, nor knowing where to find an Harbour.

Thirdly, *Things to come are ours*: and this is the best and sweetest of all: Man is a prospecting Creature, his eye is much upon things to come, and it will not satisfy him that it is well at present, except he have a prospect that it shall be so hereafter: but now the Soul hath committed it self and all its Condemnments to Christ for Eternity, and this being done, its greatly relieved against evils to come.

I cannot (saith the Believer) think all my troubles over, and that I shall never meet any more afflictions, it were a fond vanity to dream of that; but I leave all these things where I have left my Soul: he that hath supported me under inward, will carry me through outward troubles also. I cannot think all my temptations to sin past, O, I may yet meet with fore assaults from Satan: yet it is infinitely better to be watching, praying and striving against sin, than it was when I was obeying it in the lusts of it. God that hath delivered me from the love of sin, will, I trust, preserve me from ruine by sin. I know also death is to come, I must feel the pangs and agonies of it; but yet the aspect of death is much more pleasant than it was. I come Lord Jesus to thee, who art the death of death, whose death hath disarmed Death of its sting. I fear not its dart, if I feel not its strength. And thus you see briefly, how by Faith Believers enter into rest. How Christ gives rest even at present to them that come to him, and all this but as a beginning of their everlasting rest.

Infer. 1. Is there rest in Christ for weary Souls that come unto him? Then certainly its a design of Satan against the peace and welfare of Mens Souls to discourage them from coming to Christ in the way of Faith.

He is a restless Spirit himself, and would make us so too: it is an excellent note of *Minutus Felix*, Those desperate and restless Spirits (saith he) have no other pleasure, but in bringing us to the same misery themselves are in: he goeth about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour. It frets and grates his proud and envious mind to see others find rest, when he can find none: an effectual Plaister applied to heal our wound, when his own must bleed to eternity: and he obtains his end fully, if he can but keep off Souls from Christ: Look therefore upon all those objections and discouragements raised in your hearts against coming to Christ, as so many Artifices and cunning Devices of the Devil to destroy and ruin your Souls. 'Tis true, they have a very specious and colourable appearance, they are gilded over with pretences of the Justice of God, the heinous nature of sin; the want of due and befitting qualifications for so holy and pure a God: the lapsing of the season of mercy, and an hundred other of like nature: but I beseech you lay down this as a sure conclusion, and hold it fast; that whatever it be that discourages and hinders you from coming to Christ, is directly against the interest of your Souls, and the hand of the Devil is certainly in it.

Infer. 2. Hence also it follows, That unbelief is the true reason of all that disquietness and trouble, by which the minds of poor sinners are so rack'd and tortured.

If you will not believe, you cannot be established: till you come to Christ, peace cannot come

*All Sol-
men cele-
minis
suis, non
desunt
perdit
perdet
Minut.
Felix.*

come to you : Christ and peace are undivided. Good Souls consider this, you have tried all other ways, you have tried Duties, and no rest comes; you have tried Reformation, Restitution, and a stricter course of Life, yet your Wounds are still open and fresh bleeding : These things, I grant, are in their Places both good and necessary, but of themselves, without Christ, utterly insufficient to give what you expect from them : Why will you not try the way of Faith : Why will you not carry your burden to Christ ? O that you would be persuaded to it, how soon would you find what so long you have been seeking in vain ! How long will you thus oppose your own good ! How long will you keep your selves upon the rack of Conscience ! Is it easie to go under the Throbs and Wounds of an accusing and condemning Conscience ? You know it is not : You look for peace, but no good comes, for a time of healing, and behold trouble : Alas, it must and will be so still, until you fall into the way of Faith, which is the true and only Method to obtain rest.

Infer. 3. *What cause have we all to admire the goodness of God, in providing for us a Christ, in whom we may find rest to our Souls !*

How hath the Lord filled and furnished Jesus Christ with all that is suitable to a Believers want ! Doth the Guilt of Sin terrifie his Conscience ? Lo, in him is perfect Righteousness to remove that Guilt, so that it shall neither be imputed to his Person, nor reflected by his Conscience in the way of condemnation as it was before. In him also is a Fountain opened, for washing and for cleansing the filth of Sin from our Souls : In him is the fulness both of *Merit*, and of *Spirit*, two sweet Springs of Peace to the Souls of Men : Well might the Apostle say, *Christ the Wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. and well might the Church say, *He is altogether lovely*, Cant. 5. 16. Had not God provided Jesus Christ for us, we had never known one Hours rest to all Eternity.

Infer. 4. *How unreasonable, and wholly inexcusable in Believers, is the Sin of backsliding from Christ ? Have you found rest in him, when you could not find it in any other ? Did he receive and ease your Souls, when all other Persons and things were Physicians of no value ? And will you after this, backslide from him again ? O what madness is this ! Will a Man leave the Snow of Lebanon which cometh from the Rock of the Field ? Or shall the cold flowing Waters, that come from another place, be forsaken ? No Man that is in his Wits,*

would leave the pure cold refreshing Stream of a Chrystal Fountain, to go to a filthy Puddle, Lake, or an empty Cistern, as the best enjoyments of this World are in comparison with Jesus Christ.

It was Christs melting exhortation, with the Disciples, *Joh. 6. 67, 68.* when some had forsaken him, *will ye also go away ?* And it was a very suitable return they made, *Lord, whither away from thee should we go ! q. d. from thee, Lord, no, no, where can we mend our selves ? Be sure of it, when ever you go from Christ, ye go from rest to trouble. Had Judas rest ? Had Spira rest ? And do you think you shall have rest ? No, no, The backslider in Heart shall be filled with his own ways, Prov. 14. 14. you shall have your Bellies full of it : Cursed be the Man that departeth from him, he shall be as the Heath in the Desert, that feedeth not when good cometh, and shall inhabit the parched Places of the wilderness, Jer 17. 5.* If fear of sufferings and worldly Temptations ever draw you off from Christ you may come to those Straights and terrors of Conscience, that will make you wish your selves back again with Christ in a Prison, with Christ at a Stake.

Inference. 5. *Let all that come to Christ, learn to improve him to the rest and peace of their own Souls, in the midst of all the troubles and outward distresses they meet with in the World.*

Surely rest may be found in Christ in any Condition : He is able to give you Peace in the midst of all your Troubles here. So he tells you in *Joh. 16. ult. These things have I spoken to you, that in me you might have peace ; in the World ye shall have tribulation :* By peace he means not a deliverance from troubles, by taking of affliction from them, or taking them away by death from all afflictions ; but it is something they enjoy from Christ in the very thick of troubles, and amidst all their afflictions, that quiets and gives them rest, so that troubles cannot hurt them : Certainly Believers, you have peace in Christ, when there is little in your own Hearts : And your Hearts might be filled with peace too, if you would exercise Faith upon Christ for that end : 'Tis your own Fault, if you be without rest in any condition in this World. Set your selves to Study the fulness of Christ, and to clear your Interest in him, believe what the Scriptures reveal of him, and live as you believe, and you will quickly find the peace of God filling your Hearts and Minds.

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

The Tenth SERMON.

MATTH. IX. xii.

But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be Whole need not a Physician, but they that be Sick.

Text.
Wherein
the general
Exhortation
is enforced,
by one
Motiv drawn
from the
first Title
of Christ.

HAVING opened in the former Discourses the Nature and Method of the Application of Christ to Sinners, it remains now that I press it upon every Soul, as ever it expects Peace and Pardon from God, to apply, and put on Jesus Christ, (i. e.) to get Union with

him by Faith whilst he is yet held forth in the free and gracious renders of the Gospel ; to which purpose I shall now labour in this general Use of Exhortation, in which my last Subject engaged me ; wherein divers Arguments will be further urged, both from.

The

The { 1. Titles, and } of Jesus Christ.
 { 2. Privileges }

The Titles of Christ are so many *Motives* or Arguments fitted to persuade Men to come unto him. Amongst which, *Christ as the Physician of Souls* comes under our first Consideration in the Text before us.

The occasion of these Words of Christ, was the call of *Matthew the Publican* : Who having first opened his *Heart*, next opened his *House* to Christ, and entertains him there : This strange and unexpected change wrought upon *Matthew*, quickly brings in all the Neighbourhood, and many *Publicans* and Sinners resorted thither ; at which the *Stomachs* of the proud *Pharisees* began to swell : From this occasion they took offence at Christ, and in this *verse* Christ takes off the offence by such an Answer as was fitted both for their *Contumacious* and his own *Vindication*. But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them ; *The whole have no need of a Physician, but they that be sick.*

He gives it (saith one) as a Reason why he conversed so much with *Publicans* and Sinners, and so little among the *Pharisees*, because there was more Work for him : Men set up where they think Trade will be quickest : Christ came to be a *Physician* to sick Souls. *Pharisees* were so well in their own Conceit, that Christ saw he should have little to do among them ; and so he applied himself to those who were more sensible of their Sickneſs.

In the Words we have an account of the *Temper* and *State* both of ;

1. The secure and unconvinced Sinner.
2. The humbled and convinced Sinner.

And 3. of the Carriage of Christ, and his different respect to either.

First, The secure Sinner is here described, both with respect to his own Apprehensions of himself, as one that is *whole*, and also by his low Value and Esteem for Christ, he sees no need of him ; *the whole have no need of the Physician.*

Secondly, The Convinced and Humbled Sinner is here also described, and that both by his State and Condition, he is *sick* ; and by his Valuation of Jesus Christ, he greatly needs him : They that be Sick need the *Physician*.

Thirdly, We have here Christ's carriage and different respect to both : The former he rejects, and passeth by, as those with whom he hath no Concernment : The latter he converses with in order to their Cure.

The Words thus opened are fruitful in Observations. — I shall neither note nor insist upon any beside this one, which suits the scope of my Discourse, *viz.*

Doct. That the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Physician for sick Souls.

The World is a great *Hospital* full of Sick and dying Souls, all wounded by one and the same mortal Weapon, Sin. Some are senseless of their Misery, feel not their Pains, value not a *Physician* : Others are full of Sense, as well as danger ; mourn under the Apprehension of their Condition, and sadly bewail it. The merciful God hath, in his abundant Compassion to the perishing World, sent a *Physician* from Heaven, and given him his Orders under the Great Seal of Heaven for his Office, *Iſa.* 61. 1, 2. which he opened and read in the Audience of the People, *Luke* 4. 18.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to Preach good Tydings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, &c. He is the Tree of Life, whose Leaves are for the healing of the Nations : He is *Jeſhova Rophe*, the Lord that healeth us ; and that as he is *Jeſehab Tsidkenu*, the Lord our Righteousness. The *Brazen Serpent* that healed the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderness, was an excellent Type of our Great Physician Christ, and is expressly applied to him, *John* 3. 14. He rejects none that come, and heals all whom he undertakes : But more particularly I will,

First, Point at those *Diseases* which Christ heals in sick Souls, and by what means he heals them.

Secondly, The Excellency of this Physician above all others : There is none like Christ, he is the only Physician for wounded Souls.

First, We will enquire into the Diseases which Christ the Physician Cures ; and they are reducible to two Heads, *viz.*

1. Sin, and
2. Sorrow.

First, The Disease of Sin, in which Three Things are found exceeding burthenſom to sick Souls.

1. The Guilt
 2. The Dominion
 3. The Inherence
- } of Sin ; all cured by this Physician, and how.

First, The Guilt of Sin, this is a mortal Wound, a stab in the very Heart of a poor Sinner. 'Tis a fond and groundless Distinction that *Papists* makes of Sins *Mortal* and *Venial* : All Sin in its own Nature is Mortal, *Rom.* 6. 23. *The Wages of Sin is Death* : Yet though it be so in its own Nature, Christ can, and doth Cure it by the Sovereign Balm of his own precious Blood, *Eph.* 1. 7. *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace.* This is the deepest and deadliest Wound the Soul of Man feels in this World : What is *Guilt*, but the Obligation of the Soul to Everlasting Punishment and Misery ? It puts the Soul under the Sentence of God to Eternal Wrath ; the condemning Sentence of the great and terrible God ; than which, nothing is found more dreadful and insupportable : Put all Pains, all Poverty, all Afflictions, all Miseries in one Scale, and Gods Condemnation in the other, and you weigh but so many Feathers against a Talent of Lead.

This Disease or great Physician Christ Cures by *Remission*, which is the dissolving of the Obligation to Punishment ; the loosing of the Soul that was bound over to the Wrath and Condemnation of God, *Col.* 1. 13, 14. *Heb.* 6. 12. *Micah* 7. 17, 18, 19. This Remission being made, the Soul is immediately cleared from all its Obligations to Punishment, *Rom.* 8. 1. *There is no Condemnation* : All Bonds are cancelled ; the *Guilt* of all Sins is healed or removed ; original, and actual ; great, and small. This Cure is performed upon Souls by the *Blood of Christ* : Nothing is found in Heaven or Earth besides his Blood, that is able to heal this Disease ; *Heb.* 9. 22. *Without shedding of Blood there is no Remission* ; nor is it any Blood that will do it, but that only which dropt from the Wounds of Christ, *Iſa.* 54. 5. *By his stripes we are healed* : His Blood only is innocent and precious Blood, *1 Pet.* 1. 19. Blood of infinite worth and value ; the Blood of God, *Acts* 20. 28. Blood prepared for this very purpose, *Heb.* 10. 5. This is the Blood that performs the Cure ; and how great

great a Cure is it! For this Cure the Souls of Believers shall be praising and magnifying their great Physician in Heaven to all Eternity, *Rev. 1. 5, 6. To him that loved us, and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood. &c. to him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever.*

Secondly, The next evil in Sin, cured by Christ, is the Dominion of it over the Souls of poor Sinners. Where Sin is in Dominion, the Soul is in a very sad Condition; for it darkens the Understanding, depraves the Conscience, stiffens the Will, hardens the Heart, misplaces and disorders all the Affections: And thus every Faculty is wounded by the Power and Dominion of Sin over the Soul. How difficult is the Cure of this Disease! It passes the skill of Angels or Men to heal it: But Christ undertakes it, and makes a perfect Cure of it at last; and this he doth by his Spirit. As he Cures the guilt of Sin by pouring out his Blood for us; so he Cures the Dominion of Sin, by pouring out his Spirit upon us. Justification is the Cure of Guilt, Sanctification the Cure of the Dominion of Sin. For,

First, As the Dominion of Sin darkens the Understanding, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* So the Spirit of Holiness which Christ sheds upon his People, cures the darkness and blindness of that noble Faculty, and restores it again, *Eph. 3. 8.* They that were darkness are hereby Light in the Lord: The anointing of this Spirit teacheth them all things, *1 John 2. 27.*

Secondly, As the Dominion of Sin depraved and defiled the Conscience, *Tit. 1. 15.* wounded it to that degree, as to disable it to the performances of all its Offices and Functions; so that it was neither able to apply, convince, or tremble at the Word: So when the Spirit of Holiness is shed forth, O what a tender Sense fills the renewed Conscience! For what small Things will it check, smite and rebuke! How strongly will it bind to Duty, and bar against Sin!

Thirdly, As the Dominion of Sin stiffened the Will, and made it stubborn and rebellious; so Christ by sanctifying it, brings it to be pliant and obedient to the Will of God. Lord, saith the Sinner, *what wilt thou have me to do!* *Acts 9. 6.*

Fourthly, As the Power of Sin hardeneth the Heart, so that nothing could affect it, or make any Impression upon it; when Sanctification comes upon the Soul, it thaws and breaks it, as hard as it was, and makes it dissolve in the Breast of a Sinner in godly Sorrow, *Ezek. 36. 26. I will take away the Heart of Stone out of your Flesh, and I will give you an Heart of Flesh.* It will now melt ingenuously under the Threatnings of the Word, *2 Kings 22. 19.* or the Strokes of the Rod, *Jer. 31. 18.* Or the Manifestations of Grace and Mercy, *Luke 7. 38.*

Fifthly, As the Power of Sin misplaced and disordered all the Affections, so Sanctification reduces them again, and sets them right, *Psal. 4. 6, 7.* And thus you see how Sanctification becomes the rectitude, health and due Temper of the Soul, so far as it prevails, curing the Diseases that Sin in its Dominion filled the Soul with. True it is, this Cure is not perfected in this Life: There are still some grudgings of the old Diseases in the holiest Souls, notwithstanding Sin be dethroned from its Dominion over them: But the Cure is begun, and daily advances towards Perfection, and at last will be compleat,

as will appear in the Cure of the next evil of Sin, namely,

Thirdly, The Inherence of Sin in the Soul; this is a fore Disease, the very core and root of all our other Complaints and Ailes. This made the Holy Apostle bemoan himself, and wait so bitterly, *Rom. 7. 17.* Because of Sin that dwelt in him: And the same Misery is bewailed by all sanctified Persons all the World over.

'Tis a wonderful Mercy to have the Guilt and Dominion of Sin cured; but we shall never be perfectly sound and well till the Existence, or indwelling of Sin in our Natures be cured too. When once that is done, then we shall feel no more Pain, nor Sorrows for Sin: And this our great Physician will at last perform for us, and upon us: But as the Cure of Guilt was by our Justification, the Cure of the Dominion of Sin by our Sanctification; so the third and last which perfects the whole Cure, will be by our Glorification; and till then it is not to be expected. For its a clear Case, that Sin like Ivy in the old Walls, will never be gotten out, till the Wall be pulled down, and then its pulled up by the Roots. This Cure Christ will perform in a Moment upon our Dissolution. For 'tis plain,

First, That none but perfected Souls, freed from all Sin, are admitted into Heaven, *Eph. 5. 27. Heb. 12. 23. Rev. 21. 27.*

Secondly, 'Tis as plain, that no such personal Perfection and Freedom is found in any Man on this side Death, and the Grave, *1 John 1. 8. 1 Kings 8. 46. Philip. 3. 12.* A Truth sealed by the sad Experience of all the Saints on Earth.

Thirdly, If such Freedom and Perfection must be before we can be perfectly Happy, and no such thing be done in this Life; it remains that it must be done immediately upon their Dissolution, and at the very time of their Glorification: As Sin came in at the Time of the Union of their Souls and Bodies in the Womb, so it will go out at the time of their Separation by Death: Then will Christ put the last Hand to this glorious Work, and perfect that Cure which hath been so long under his Hand in this World: And thenceforth Sin shall have no Power upon them; it shall never tempt them more, it shall never defile them more; it shall never grieve and sadden their Hearts any more: Henceforth it shall never Cloud their Evidences, darken their Understandings, or give the least Interruption of their Communion with God. When Sin is gone, all these its mischievous Effects are gone with it. So that I may speak it to the Comfort of all gracious Hearts, according to what the Lord told the *Israelites in Deut. 12. 8, 9.* (to which I allude for Illustration of this most comfortable Truth) *Ye shall not do after all the things that ye do here this Day, every Man whatsoever is right in his own Eyes, for ye are not as yet come to the rest, and to the Inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you.* Whilst you are under Christs cure upon Earth, but not perfectly healed; your Understandings mistake, your Thoughts wander, your Affections are dead, your Communion with God is daily interrupted: But it shall not be so in Heaven, where the Cure is perfect: You shall not know, love, or delight in God as you do this Day; for you are not as yet come to the Rest, and to the Inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you: And so much as to the Diseases of Sin, and Christs Method of curing them.

U u

Secondly,

Secondly, As Sin is the Disease of the Saints, so also is Sorrow. The best of Saints must pass through the Valley of *Rachab* to Heaven. How many Tears fall from the Eyes of the Saints upon the account of outward, as well as inward troubles; even after their Reconciliation with God? *Through much Tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God*, Acts 14. 22. It would be too great a Digression in this Place, to note but the more general Heads, under which almost infinite particulars of Troubles and Afflictions are found. It shall suffice only to shew, that whatever distress or trouble any poor Souls is in upon any account whatsoever; if that Soul belong to Jesus Christ, he will take Care of it for the present, and deliver it at last by a compleat Cure:

First, Christ cures Troubles by *sanctifying* them to the Souls of his that are under Affliction, and makes their very troubles *Medicinal* and healing to them. Trouble is a *Scorpion*, and hath a deadly Sting; but Christ is a wise Physician, and extracts a Sovereign Oyl out of this *Scorpion*, that heals the wound it makes. By Afflictions our wise Physician purges our Corruptions, and so prevents or Cures greater troubles by lesser; inward forrows, by outward ones, *Isa. 27. 9. By this therefore shall the Iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the Fruit, to take away his Sin.*

Secondly, Christ cures outward Troubles by inward Consolations, which are made to rise in the inner Man as high as the Waters of Affliction do upon the outward Man, *2 Cor. 1. 5. One drop of Spiritual Comfort is sufficient to sweeten a whole Ocean of outward Trouble.* It was an high Expression of an afflicted Father, whom God comforted just upon the Death of his dear and only Son, with some clearer Manifestations of his Love than was usual. *O, said he, might I but have such Consolations as these, I could be willing (were it possible) to lay an only Son into the Grave every Day I have to live in this World.* Thus all the troubles of the World are cured by Christ, *John 16. 33. In the World ye shall have trouble, but in me ye shall have Peace.*

Thirdly, Christ Cures all outward Sorrows and Troubles in his People by *Death*, which is their removal from the Place of Sorrows to Peace and Rest for evermore. Now God wipes all Tears from their Eyes, and the Days of their Mourning are at an end: They then put off the Garments and Spirit of Mourning, and enter into Peace, *Isa. 57. 2. They come to that place and state, where Tears and Sighs are things unknown to the Inhabitants: One step beyond the state of this Mortality, brings us quite out of the sight and hearing of all Troubles and Lamentations; These are the Diseases of Souls, Sin and Sorrow; and thus they are cured by Christ the Physician.*

Secondly, Next, I shall shew you that Jesus Christ is the only Physician of Souls: None like him for a sick Sinner: And this will be evident in divers respects.

First, None so wise and judicious as Jesus Christ to understand, and comprehend the Nature, depth, and danger of Soul diseases. O how ignorant and unacquainted are Men with the State and Case of afflicted Souls! But Christ by the Torment of the Learned, that he should know

how to speak a word in season to him that is weary, *Isa. 50. 4. He only understands the weight of Sin, and depth of inward Troubles of Sin.*

Secondly, None so able to cure and heal the wounds of afflicted Souls as Christ is: He only hath those Medicines that can Cure a sick Soul. The Blood of Christ, and nothing else in Heaven or Earth, is able to cure the Mortal wounds which guilt inflicts upon a trembling Conscience: Let Men try all other Receipts, and costly experience shall convince them of their insufficiency. Conscience may be benumbed by stupefactive Medicines, prepared by the Devil for that end, but pacified it can never be, but by the Blood of Christ, *Heb. 10. 22.*

Thirdly, None so tender hearted, and sympathizing with sick Souls, as Jesus Christ: He is full of Bowels and tender Compassions to afflicted Souls: He is one that can have Compassion, because he hath had Experience, *Heb. 5. 2. If I must come into the Chirurgeons Hands with broken Bones, give me such a one to choose, whose own Bones have been broken, who hath felt the anguish in himself. Christ knows what it is by Experience, having felt the anguish of inward troubles, the weight of Gods Wrath, and the Terrors of a forsaking God, more than any, or all the Sons of Men: This makes him tender over distressed Souls, Isa. 42. 3. A bruised Reed he will not break, and smoking Flax he will not quench.*

Fourthly, None cures in so wonderful a method as Christ doth: He heals us by his stripes, *Isa. 53. 5. The Physician Dies that the Patient may live: His Wounds must bleed, that ours may be cured: He feels the smart and pain, that we might have the Ease and Comfort. No Physician but Christ will cure others at this rate.*

Fifthly, None so ready to relieve a sick Soul as Christ: He is within the call of a distressed Soul at all times. Art thou sick for Sin, weary of Sin, and made truly willing to part with Sin? Lift up but thy sincere cry to the Lord Jesus for help, and he will quickly be with thee: When the Prodigal, the emblem of a convinced humbled Sinner, said in himself, I will return to my father, the Father ran to meet him, *Luke. 15. 20. He can be with thee in a moment.*

Sixthly, None so willing to receive and undertake all distressed and afflicted Souls as Jesus Christ is: He refuses none that come to him, *John 6. 37. He that cometh unto me, I will in no ways cast out: Whatever their Sins have been, or their Sorrows are; however they have wounded their own Souls with the deepest gashes of Guilt; how desperate and helpless soever their Case appears in their own or others Eyes: He never puts them off, or discourages them, if they be but willing to come, Isa. 1. 18, 19.*

Seventhly, None so happy and successful as Christ: He never fails of performing a perfect Cure upon those he undertakes: Never was it known that any Soul miscarried in his Hands, *John 3. 15, 16. Other Physicians by mistakes, by ignorance, or carelessness, fill Church-Yards, and cast away the Lives of Men: But Christ suffers none to perish that commit themselves to him.*

Eighthly, None so free and generous as Christ, he doth all gratis: He sells not his Medicine, though they be of infinite value, but freely gives them, *Isa. 55. 1. He that hath no Money let him come: if any be sent away, 'tis the Rich, Luke 1. 53. not the Poor and Needy: Those that will not accept their remedy as a free Gift, but will needs purchase it at a Price.* Nimble,

*Nihil Corpus
sensit
in nervo,
cum Anima
sit in Culo.*

Ninthly and Lastly, None rejoices in the recovery of Souls more than Christ doth. O it is unspeakably delightful to him to see the efficacy of his Blood upon our Souls, Isa. 53. 11. He shall see the travel of his Soul (i. e. the success of his Death and Sufferings) and shall be satisfied: When he forelaw the success of the Gospel upon the World, it's said Luke 10. 21. In that Hour Jesus rejoiced in Spirit: And thus you see, there is no Physician like Christ for sick Souls.

The Uses of this Point are,
For Information and
Direction.

First, From thence we are informed of many great and necessary Truths deducible from this: As,

Inference 1. *How inexpressible is the Grace of God, in providing such a Physician as Christ, for the sick and dying Souls of Sinners!* O blessed be God, that there is Balm in Gilead, and a Physician there: That their Case is not as desperate, forlorn and remediless as that of the Devils and damned is. There is but one Case excepted from cure, and that such as is not incident to any sensible afflicted Soul, *Mat. 12. 31.* and this only excepted, all manner of Sins and Diseases are capable of a Cure. Though there be such a Disease as is incurable, yet take this for thy Comfort, never any Soul was sick (i. e.) sensibly burthened with it, and willing to come to Jesus Christ for healing: For under that Sin, the Will is so wounded that they have no desire to Christ. O inestimable Mercy, that the sickest Sinner is capable of a perfect Cure! There be thousands, and ten thousands now in Heaven and Earth, who said once, never was any Case like theirs; so dangerous, so hopeless. The greatest of Sinners have been perfectly recovered by Christ, *1 Tim. 1. 15. 1 Cor. 6. 11.* O Mercy never to be duly estimated!

Inference 2. *What a powerful restraint from Sin, is the very method ordained by God for the cure of it!* *Isa. 53. 5. By his stripes we are healed.* The Physician must Dye, that the Patient might Live: No other thing but the Blood, the precious Blood of Christ is found in Heaven or Earth able to heal us, *Heb. 9. 22, 26.* This Blood of Christ must be freshly applied to every new wound Sin makes upon our Souls, *1 John 2. 1, 2.* every new Sin wounds him afresh, opens the wounds of Christ anew. O think of this again, and again, 'you that so easily yield to the sollicitations of Satan: Is it so easie and so cheap to Sin, as you seem to make it? Doth the cure of Souls cost nothing? True, it is free to us, but was it so to Christ? No, no, it was not; he knows the price of it, though you do not: Hath Christ healed you by his stripes, and can you put him under fresh Sufferings for you so easily? Have you forgot also your own sick Days and Nights for Sin, that you are careless in resisting, and preventing it? Sure 'tis not easie for Saints to wound Christ and their own Souls, at one stroke: If you renew your Sins, you must also renew your Sorrows and Repentance, *Psal. 51. Title. 2 Sam. 12. 13.* you must feel the throes and pains of a troubled Spirit again, things with which the Saints are not unacquainted: Of which they may say as the Church, *Remembering my Affliction, the Wormwood and the Gall, my Soul hath them still in remembrance, Lam. 3. 19.* Yea, and if you will yet be remis in your watch, and so easily incur new guilt; though a pardon in the Blood of Christ

may heal your Souls, yet some Rod or other in the Hand of a displeased Father shall afflict your Bodies, or smite you in your outward Comforts, *Psal. 89. 32.*

Inference 3. *If Christ be the only Physician of sick Souls, what Sin and Folly is it for Men to take Christs work out of his Hands, and attempt to be their own Physician?*

Thus do those that superstitiously endeavour to heal their Souls by afflicting their Bodies: Not Christs Blood, but their own must be the Plaster: And as blind Papists, so many carnal and ignorant Protestants strive by Confession, Restitution, Reformation, and a stricter course of Life to heal those wounds that Sin hath made upon their Souls, without any respect to the Blood of Christ: But this course shall not profit them at all. It may for a time divers, but can never heal them: The wounds so skinned over, will open and bleed again; God grant it be not when our Souls shall be out of the reach of the true and only Remedy:

Inference 4. *How sad is those Case of the Souls, to whom Christ hath not yet been a Physician? They are mortally wounded by Sin, and are like to Die of their sickness; no saving healing Applications having hitherto been made unto their Souls: And this is the Case of the greatest part of Mankind; yea, of them that live under the discoveries of Christ in the Gospel: Which appears by these sad symptoms.*

First, In that their Eyes have not yet been opened to see their Sin and Misery, in which Illumination the cure of Souls begins, *Acts 26. 18.* To this Day he hath not given them Eyes to see, *Deut. 29. 4.* But that terrible stroke of God, which blinds and hardens them, is too visibly upon them, mentioned in *Isa. 6. 9, 10.* No hope of healing till the Sinners Eyes be opened to see his Sin and Misery.

Secondly, In that nothing will divorce and separate them from their Lusts: A sure sign they are not under Christs cure, nor were ever made sick of Sin: O if ever Christ be a Physician to thy Soul, he will make thee loath what now thou lovest, and say to thy most pleasant and profitable Lusts, *get ye hence, Isa. 30. 22.* Till then there is no ground to think that Christ is a Physician to you.

Thirdly, In that they have no sensible and pressing need of Christ, nor make any earnest enquiry after him, as most certainly you would do, if you were in the way of healing and recovery. These and many other sad symptoms do too plainly discover the Disease of Sin to be in 'tis full Strength upon your Souls; and if it so continue, how dreadful will the Issue be? See *Isa. 6. 9, 10.*

Inference 5. *What cause have they to be glad, that are under the hand and care of Christ in order to a cure; and who do find, or may upon due Examination find, their Souls are in a very hopeful way of recovery!* Can we rejoice when the Strength of a natural Disease is broken, and Nature begins to recover ease, and vigour again, and shall we not much more rejoice when our Souls begin to mend, and recover sensibly, and all comfortable signs of Life and Health appear upon them? Particularly when the understanding which was ignorant and dark, hath the Light of Life beginning to dawn in it, such is that in *1 Job. 2. 27.* when the Will which was rebellious and inflexible to the Will of God,

is brought to comply with that Holy Will, saying, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Acts 9. 6. When the Heart which was harder than an Adamant, is now brought to Contrition for Sin, and can mourn as heartily over it, as ever a tender Father did for a dead Son, a beloved and only Son. When its *Aversions* from God are gone, at least have no such Power as once they had: But the Thoughts are now fixed much upon God, and spiritual Things begin to grow pleasant to the Soul: When times of Duty come to be longed for, and the Soul never better pleased than in such Seasons. When the *Hypocrisy* of the Heart is purged out, so that we begin to do all that we do heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto Men, Col. 3. 23. 1 *Thes.* 2. 4. When we begin to make Conscience of secret Sins, Psalm 119. 113. And of secret Duties, Mat. 6. 5, 6. When we have an equal respect to all God's Commandments, Psalm 119. 6. And our Hearts are under the Holy and Awful Eye of God, which doth indeed over-awe our Souls, Gen. 17. 1. O what sweet Signs of a recovering Soul are these! Surely such are in the skilful Hand of the great Physician, who will perfect what yet remains to be done.

Second Use for Direction.

In the last place, this Point yields us Matter of Advice and Direction to poor Souls that are under the Disease of Sin, and they are of two Sorts, which I will distinctly speak to, *viz.* First, Such as are under their first Sickness or spiritual Sorrow for Sin, and know not what Course to take; Or, Secondly, Such as have been longer in the Hands of Christ the Physician, but are troubled to see the Cure advance so slowly upon them, and fear the Issue.

First, As to those that are in their first troubles for Sin, and know not what Course to take for Ease and Safety; I would address to them these following Counsels.

First, Shut your Ears against the dangerous Counsels of Carnal Persons or Relations; for as they themselves are unacquainted with these Troubles: So also are they with all proper Remedies; and it is very usual with the Devil to convey his Temptations to distressed Souls by such Hands; because by them he can do it with least Suspicion. It was *Augustin's* Complaint, that his own Father took little Care for his Soul; and many Parents act in this Case, as if they were employed by Satan.

Secondly, Be not too eager to get out of Trouble, but be content to take God's way, and wait his Time; No Woman that is wise, would desire to have her Travel hastened one Day before the due Time: Nor will it be your Interest to hasten too soon out of Trouble. 'Tis true, times of Trouble are apt to seem tedious; but a false Peace will endanger you more than a long Trouble: A Man may lengthen his own Troubles to the Loss of his own Peace, and he may shorten them to the Hazard of his own Soul.

Thirdly, Open your Case to wise, judicious and experienced Christians, and especially the Ministers of Christ, whose Office it is to counsel and direct you in these Difficulties; and let not your Troubles lie like a secret smothering Fire, always in your own Breasts. I know Men are more ashamed to open their Sins under Convictions, than they were to commit them before Conviction; But this is your Interest, and the true way to your Rest and Peace. If there be with, or near you an

Interpreter, one of a thousand, to shew you your Righteousness and Remedy, as it lies in Christ; neglect not your own Souls in a sinful Concealment of your Case. It will be the Joy of their Heart to be employed in such Work as this is.

Fourthly, Be much with God in secret: Open your Hearts to him, and pour out your Complaints into his Bosom. The 102d. Psalm bears a Title very suitable to your Case and Duty: Yea, you will find your Troubles work kindly, and God intend a Cure upon your Souls, that nothing will be able to keep God and your Souls asunder: Whatever your Incumbrances in the World be, some time will be daily redeemed to be so spent betwixt you and God.

Fifthly, Plead hard with God in Prayer for Help and Healing: *Heal my Soul* (saith David) *for I have sinned against thee*, Psalm 41. 4. tell him, Christ hath his Commission sealed for such as you are: He was sent to *Bind up the broken Hearted*, Isa. 61. 1. tell him he came into the World to seek and save that which was lost, and so are you now in your own Account and Apprehensions. Lord, what Profit is there in my Blood? Wilt thou pursue a dried Leaf? And why is my Heart wounded with the Sense of Sin, and mine Eyes open to see my Danger and Misery, are not these the first dawnings of Mercy upon Sinners? O let it appear, that the time of Mercy, even the set Time is now come.

Sixthly, Understand your Peace to be in Christ only, and Faith to be the only way to Christ and Rest: Let the great Enquiry of your Souls be after Christ and Faith, study the Nature and Necessity of these, and cry to God Day and Night for Strength to carry you to Christ in the way of Faith.

Secondly, As to those that have been longer under the Hands of Christ, and yet are in Troubles still, and cannot attain Peace, but their Wounds bleed still, and all they hear in Sermons, or do in way of Duty, will not bring them to Rest: To such I only add two or three Words for a close.

First, Consider whether you ever rightly closed with Christ since your first awakening, and whether there be not some way of Sin in which you still live: If so, no wonder your Wounds are kept open, and your Souls are Strangers to Peace.

Secondly, If you be conscious of no such flaw in the Foundation, consider how much of this trouble may arise from your Constitution and natural Temper, which being Melancholy, will be doubtful and suspicious: You may find it so in other Cases of less Moment, and be sure Satan will not be wanting to improve it.

Thirdly, Acquaint your selves more with the Nature of true justifying Faith; a Mistake in that hath prolonged the Troubles of many: If you look for it in no other Act but Assurance, you may easily overlook it, as it lies in the mean time in your Assurance or Acceptance. A true and proper Conception of saving Faith would go far in the cure of many troubled Souls.

Fourthly, Be more careful to shun Sin, than to get your selves clear of Trouble. 'Tis sad to walk in Darkness, but worse to lie under Guilt. Say, Lord, I would rather be grieved my self, than be a Grief to thy Spirit. O keep me from Sin, how long soever thou keep me under Sorrow. Wait on God in the way of Faith, and in a tender Spirit towards Sin, and thy Wounds shall be healed at last by thy great Physician.

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.

The

Ser. 11.

Text.
Containing the second
Motive to enforce the
general
Exhortation from
a second
Title of
Christ.

The Eleventh SERMON.

LUKE I lxxii.

To perform the Mercy promised to our Fathers, and to remember his Holy Covenant.

THis Scripture is part of *Zechariah's* Prophecy at the rising of that bright Star, *John the Harbinger* and Forerunner of Christ: They are some of the first Words he spake after God had loosed his Tongue, which for a time was struck dumb for his Unbelief. His Tongue is now unbound, and at Liberty to proclaim to all the World the Riches of Mercy through Jesus Christ, in a Song of Praise. Wherein Note,

The Mercy celebrated, viz. Redemption by Christ, ver. 68.

The Description of Christ by Place and Property, ver. 69.

The Faithfulness of God in our Redemption this Way, ver. 70.

The Benefit of being so Redeemed by Christ, ver. 71.

The exact Accomplishment of all the Promises made to the *Fathers*, in sending Christ, the Mercy promised, into the World, ver. 72. To perform the Mercy promised to our *Fathers*, &c. In these Words we find two Parts, viz.

1. A Mercy freely promised.
2. The promised Mercy faithfully performed.

First, You have here a Mercy freely promised, viz. by God the Father from the Beginning of the World, and often repeated and confirmed in several succeeding Ages to the *Fathers*, in his Covenant Transactions.

This Mercy is *Jesus Christ*, of whom he speaks in this Prophecy; the same which he styles *An Horn of Salvation in the House of David*, ver. 69.

The Mercy of God in Scripture is put either for,

1. His free Favour to the Creature. Or,
2. The Effects and Fruits of that Favour.

'Tis put for the free and undeserved Favour of God to the Creature, and this Favour of God may respect the Creature two Ways, either as *Undeserving*, or as *Ill deserving*.

It respected Innocent Man as *undeserving*, for *Adam* could put no Obligation upon his Benefactor: It respected fallen Man as *ill deserving*. Innocent Man could not merit Favour, and fallen Man did merit Wrath: The Favour or Mercy of God to both is every way free, and that is the first Acceptation of the Word Mercy: But then it is also taken for the Effects and Fruits of God's Favour, and they are, Either,

1. Principal and Primary. Or,
2. Subordinate and Secondary.

Of Secondary and Subordinate Mercies, there are multitudes, both Temporal, respecting the Body, and Spiritual, respecting the Soul; but the Principal and Primary Mercy is but one, and that is Christ, the first-born of Mercy; the Capital Mercy, the Comprehensive-Root-Mercy, from whom are all other Mercies; and therefore called by a singular *Emphasis* in my

Text *The Mercy*, (i. e.) the Mercy of all Mercies; without whom no Drop of saving Mercy can flow to any of the Sons of Men; and in whom are all the tender Bowels of Divine Mercy yearning upon poor Sinners. *The Mercy*, and the Mercy promised. The first Promise of Christ was made to *Adam*, Gen. 3. 15. and was frequently renewed afterwards to *Abraham*, to *David*; and as the Text speaks, unto the *Fathers*, in their respective Generations.

Secondly, We find here also, *The promised Mercy faithfully performed*. To perform the Mercy promised. What Mercy soever the Love of God engaged him to Promise, the Faithfulness of God stands engaged for the Performance thereof. Christ the promised Mercy, is not only performed truly, but he is also performed according to the Promise in all the Circumstances thereof exactly. So he was promised to the *Fathers*, and just so performed to us their Children: Hence the Note is,

Doct. That *Jesus Christ* the Mercy of Mercies was graciously promised, and faithfully performed by God to his People.

Three Things are here to be opened.

First, Why Christ is styled *The Mercy*.

Secondly, What kind of Mercy Christ is to his People.

Thirdly, How this promised Mercy was performed.

First, Christ is the Mercy, *Emphatically* so called, the peerless, invaluable, and matchless Mercy; because he is the prime Fruit of the Mercy of God to Sinners. The Mercies of God are infinite: Mercy gave the World and us our Being; all our Protections, Provisions and Comforts in this Word are the Fruits of Mercy; the After-births of Divine Favour: But Christ is the First-born from the Womb of Mercy, all other Mercies compared with him, are but Fruits from that Root, and Streams from that Fountain of Mercy; the very Bowels of Divine Mercy are in Christ, as in *Verse* 78. according to the tender Mercies, or as the *Greek*; the yearning Bowels of the Mercy of God.

Secondly, Christ is the Mercy, because all the Mercy of God to Sinners is dispensed and conveyed through Christ to them, *John* 1. 16. *Eph.* 4. 7. Christ is the *Medium* of all Divine Communications: The *Channel* of Grace; through him is both the *decursus* & *recursus gratiarum*; the Flows of Mercy from God to us, and the Returns of Praise from us to God; fond and vain therefore are all the Expectations of Mercy out of Christ: No Drop of saving Mercy runs beside this Channel.

Thirdly, Christ is the Mercy, because all infectious Mercies derive both their *Nature*, *Value*, *Spectness* and *Duration* from Christ, the Fountain Mercy of all other Mercies.

First,

First, They derive their *Nature* from Christ, for out of him those things which Men call Mercies, are rather Traps and Snares; than Mercies to them, *Prov.* 1. 32. The Time will come when the *Rich* that are Christless will wish, O that we had been poor! And *Nobles* that are not ennobled by the New Birth, O that we had been among the lower Rank of Men! All these things that pass for valuable Mercies, like *Cypbers* signify much when such a speaking Figure as Christ stands before them, else they signify nothing to any Mans Comfort or Benefit.

Secondly, They derive their *Value* as well as *Nature* from Christ: For how little, I pray you, doth it signify to any Man to be Rich, Honourable, Politick, and Successful in all his Designs in the World; if after all he must lie down in Hell?

Thirdly, All other Mercies derive their *Sweetness* from Christ, and are but insipid things without him. There is a twofold Sweetness in things; one *Natural*, another *Spiritual*; those that are out of Christ can relish the first, Believers only relish both: They have the Natural Sweetness that is in Mercy it self, and a Sweetness supernatural from Christ and the Covenant, the Way in which they receive them. Hence it is that some Men taste more Spiritual Sweetness in their daily Bread, than others do in the *Lords-Supper*; one and the same Mercy by this Means becomes a Feast to Soul and Body at once.

Fourthly, All Mercies have their *Duration* and *Perpetuity* from Christ; all Christless Persons hold their Mercies upon the greatest Contingencies and Terms of Uncertainty; if they be continued during this Life, that's all: There is not a drop of Mercy after Death; but the Mercies of the Saints are continued to Eternity; the End of their Mercies on Earth, is the Beginning of their Mercies in Heaven. There is a twofold End of Mercies, one *Perfektive*, another *Desfructive*; the Death of the Saints perfects and compleats their Mercies; the Death of the Wicked destroys and cuts off their Mercies: For these Reasons Christ is called *The Mercy*.

Secondly, In the next Place, let us enquire what Manner of Mercy Christ is; and we shall find many Lovely, and Transcendent Properties to commend him to our Souls.

First, He is a free and undeserved Mercy, called upon that Account, *The Gift of God*, *John* 4. 10. And to shew how free this Gift was, God gave him to us when we were Enemies, *Rom.* 5. 8. Needs must that Mercy be free, which is given not only to the undeserving, but to the ill deserving; the Benevolence of God was the sole impulsive Cause of this Gift, *John* 3. 16.

Secondly, Christ is a full Mercy replenished with all that answers to the *Wishes* or *Wants* of Sinners; in him alone is found whatever the Justice of an angry God requires for Satisfaction, or the Necessities of Souls require for their Supply. Christ is full of Mercy, both *extensively* and *intensively*; in him are all kinds and sorts of Mercies, and in him are the highest and most perfect Degrees of Mercy; For it pleased the Father, that in him should all Fulness dwell, *Col.* 1. 19.

Thirdly, Christ is the *seasonable* Mercy, given by the Father to us in due time, *Rom.* 5. 6. In the fulness of time, *Gal.* 4. 4. a seasonable Mercy in his Exhibition to the World in General, and a seasonable

Mercy in his Application to the Soul in Particular; the Wisdom of God pitched upon the best Time for his Incarnation, and it hits the very nick of time, for his Application. When a poor Soul is distressed, lost, at its Wits end, ready to perish; then comes Christ: All Gods Works are done in Season, but none more seasonable than this great Work of Salvation by Christ.

Fourthly, Christ is the *necessary* Mercy, there is an absolute Necessity of Jesus Christ; hence in Scripture he is called the *Bread of Life*, *John* 6. 48. he is Bread to the Hungry; he is the *Water of Life*, *John* 7. 37. As cold Water to the thirsty Soul; he is a Ransom for Captives, *Mat.* 20. 28. a Garment to the Naked, *Rom.* 13. *ult.* only Bread is not so necessary to the Hungry, nor Water to the Thirsty, nor a Ransom to the Captive, nor a Garment to the Naked; as Christ is to the Soul of a Sinner, the Breath of our Nostrils, the Life of our Souls is in Jesus Christ.

Fifthly, Christ is a *Fountain* Mercy, and all other Mercies flow from him; a Believer may say of Christ, *All my fresh Springs are in thee*; from his Merit, and from his Spirit flow our Redemption, Justification, Sanctification, Peace, Joy in the Holy Ghost, and Blessedness in the World to come: *In that day shall there be a Fountain opened*, *Zech.* 13. 1.

Sixthly, Christ is a *satisfying* Mercy, he that is full of Christ can feel the want of nothing. *I desire to know nothing, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified*, *1 Cor.* 2. 2. Christ bounds and terminates the vast Desires of the Soul; he is the very Sabbath of the Soul: How hungry, empty, straitened, and pinched in upon every side, is the Soul of Man in the abundance and fullness of all outward things, till it come to Christ? The weary Motions of a restless Soul, like those of a River, cannot be at Rest till they pour themselves into Christ, the Ocean of Blessedness.

Seventhly, Christ is a *peculiar* Mercy intended for, and applied to a Remnant among Men; some would extend Redemption as large as the World, but the Gospel limits it to those only that believe; and those Believers are upon that Account called a *Peculiar People*, *1 Pet.* 2. 9. The Offers of Christ indeed are large, and general; but the Application of Christ is but to few, *Isa.* 53. 1. The greater Cause have they to whom Christ comes, to lie with their Mouths in the Dust, astonished and overwhelmed with the Sense of so peculiar and distinguishing Mercy.

Eighthly, Jesus Christ is a *suitable* Mercy, fitted in all respects to our Needs and Wants, *1 Cor.* 1. 10. wherein the admirable Wisdom of God is illustriously displayed; *Ye are compleat in him* (saith the Apostle) *Col.* 2. 20. Are we Enemies? He is *Reconciliation*: Are we sold to Sin and Satan? He is *Redemption*: Are we condemned by Law? He is the *Lord our Righteousness*: Hath Sin polluted us? He is a *Fountain opened* for Sin and for Uncleanness: Are we lost by departing from God? He is the *Way* to the Father. Rest is not so suitable to the weary, nor Bread to the hungry, as Christ is to the sensible Sinner.

Ninthly, Christ is an *astonishing* and *wonderful* Mercy: His Name is called *Wonderful*, *Isa.* 9. 6. And as his Name is, so is he; a wonderful Christ: His Person is a Wonder, *1 Tim.* 3. 16. Great is the *Mystery of Godliness*, God manifested in the Flesh: His Abatement wonderful, *Phil.* 2. 6. His Love is

a wonderful Love: His Redemption full of wonders; Angels desire to look into it; he is and will be admired by *Angels and Saints* to all Eternity.

Tenthly, Jesus Christ is an incomparable and matchless *Mercy*; as the *Apple-tree* among the *Trees of the Wood*, so is my Beloved among the *Sons* (saith the enamoured Spouse) *Cant. 2. 3.* Draw the Comparison how you will betwixt Christ and all other enjoyments, you will find none in Heaven or Earth to match him; he is more than all *externals*, as the *Light of the Sun* is more than that of a *Candle*: Nay the worst of Christ is better than the best of the World; his reproaches are better than the Worlds Pleasures, *Heb. 11. 25.* He is more than all *Spirituals*, as the *Fountain* is more than the *Streams*: He is more than *Justification*, as the *Cause* is more than the *Effect*; more than *Sanctification*, as the *Person* himself is more than his *Image* or *Picture*: He is more than all *Peace*, all *Comfort*, all *Joys*, as the *Tree* is more than the *Fruit*. Nay, draw the Comparison betwixt Christ and things *Eternal*, and you will find him better than they; for what is Heaven without Christ? *Psalms 73. 25.* Whom have I in Heaven but thee? If Christ should say to the *Saints*, take Heaven among you, but as for me, I will draw my self from you; the *Saints* would fall a weeping, even in Heaven it self, and say, Lord, Heaven will be no more Heaven to us, except thou be there; thou art the better half of Heaven.

Eleventhly, Christ is an *unsearchable Mercy*: Who can spell his wonderful Name, *Prov. 30. 4.* Who can tell over his *unsearchable Riches*, *Eph. 3. 8.* Hence it is that *Souls* never tire in the Study or Love of Christ, because new Wonders are *Externally* rising out of him; He is a Deep which no line of any created Understanding, angelical or humane can fathom.

Twelfthly, and *Lastly*, Christ is an *everlasting Mercy*; the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, *Heb. 13. 8.* All other enjoyments are perishable, time-eaten things; time like a *Moth* will fret them out: But the *Riches of Christ* are durable *Riches*, *Prov. 8. 18.* The *Graces of Christ* are durable *Graces*, *John 4. 14.* All the *Creatures* are Flowers that appear and fade in their Month; but this *Rose of Sharon*, this *Lilly of the Valley*, never withers. Thus you see the *Mercy* performed, with his desirable Properties.

Thridly, The last thing to be opened in the manner of Gods performing this *Mercy* to his People: Which the Lord did,

1. Really and truly, as he had promised him.
2. Exactly agreeable to the Promises and Predictions of him.

First, Really and truly; as he hath promised, so he made good the Promise, *Acts 2. 36.* Let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ.

The Manifestation of Christ in the Flesh was no Phantasm or Delusion, but a most evident and palpable Truth, *1 John 1. 1.* That which we have heard, which we have seen with our Eyes, which we have looked upon, and our Hands have handled. A Truth so certain, that the Assertors of it appealed to the very Enemies of Christ for the certainty thereof, *Acts 2. 22.* Yea, not only the sacred and prophane Writers Witness to it; not only the *Evangelists* and *Apostles*, but even the *Heathen Writers* of those times, both *Roman* and

Jewish, as *Suetonius*, *Tacitus*, *Plinius*, the younger, and *Iosephus* the Jewish Antiquary do all acknowledge it.

Secondly, As God did really and truly perform Christ the promised *Mercy*, so he performed this promised *Mercy* exactly agreeable to the Promises, Types, and Predictions made of him to the Fathers, even to the most minute Circumstances thereof. This is a great Truth for our Faith to be established in: Let us therefore cast our Eyes both upon the Promises and Performances of God, with respect to Christ the *Mercy of Mercies*. See how he was represented to the Fathers long before his Manifestation in the Flesh; and what an one he appeared to be when he was really exhibited in the Flesh.

First, As to his Person and Qualifications, as it was foretold, so it was fulfilled. His Original was said to be unsearchable and Eternal, *Micah 5. 2.* and so he affirmed himself to be, *Rev. 1. 11.* I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, *John 6. 31, 32.* Before Abraham was, I am; his two Natures united into one Person was plainly foretold, *Zech. 13. 7.* The Man my Fellow; and such a one God performed, *Rom. 9. 5.* His immaculate Purity and Holiness was foretold, *Dan. 9. 24.* To anoint the most Holy; some render it the great Saint: The Prince of Saints, and such an one he was indeed, when he lived in this World; *John 8. 24.* Which of you convinceth me of Sin? His Offices were foretold, the prophetic Office predicted, *Dent. 18. 15.* and fulfilled in him, *John 1. 18.* His Priestly Office foretold, *Psalms 110. 4.* fulfilled, *Heb. 9. 14.* His Kingly Office foretold, *Micah 5. 2.* And in him fulfilled, his very Enemies being Judges, *Mat. 27. 37.*

Secondly, As to his Birth, the Time, Place, and Manner thereof was foretold to the Fathers, and exactly performed to a Tittle.

First, The time perfixed more generally in *Jacobs Prophecy*, *Gen. 49. 10.* When the Scepter should depart from Judah, as indeed it did in *Herod the Idumean*: More particularly in *Daniel Seventy Weeks* from the Decree of *Darius*, *Dan. 9. 24.* answering exactly to the time of his Birth; so cogent and full of Proof, that *Porphyrus*, the great Enemy of Christians had no other evasion, but that this Prophecy was devised after the event; which yet the Jews (as bitter Enemies to Christ as himself) will by no means allow to be true; and *Lastly*, The Time of his Birth was exactly pointed at in *Haggai's Prophecy*, *Hag. 2. 7, 9.* compared with *Mal. 3. 1.* He must come whilst the Second Temple stood; at that Time was a general Expectation of him, *John 1. 19.* and at that very Time he came, *Luke 2. 38.*

Secondly, The Place of his Birth was foretold to be *Bethlehem Ephrata*, *Micah 5. 2.* And so it was, *Mat. 2. 5, 6.* to be brought up in *Nazareth*, *Zech. 6. 12.* Behold the Man whose Name is the Branch, the Word is *Netzer*, whence is the Word *Nazarite*: And there indeed was our Lord brought up, *Mat. 2. 23.*

Thridly, His Parent was to be a Virgin, *Isa. 7. 14.* punctually fulfilled, *Mat. 1. 20, 21, 22, 23.*

Fourthly, His Stock or Tribe was foretold to be *Judah*, *Gen. 49. 10.* And it is evident (saith the Apostle) that our Lord sprang out of *Judah*, *Heb. 7. 14.*

Fifthly, His Harbinger or Forerunner was foretold, *Mal. 4. 5, 6.* fulfilled in *John the Baptist*, *Luke 1. 16, 17.*

Sixthly, The obscurity and meanness of his Birth was predicted, *Isa.* 53. 2. *Zech.* 9. 9. to which the event answered, *Luke* 2. 12.

Thirdly, His Doctrine and Miracles were foretold, *Isa.* 16. 1, 2. *Isa.* 35. 4, 5. the accomplishment whereof in Christ is evident in the History of all the *Evangelists*.

Fourthly, His Death for us was foretold by the Prophets, *Dan.* 9. 26. *The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself: Isa.* 53. 5. *He was wounded for our Transgressions.* And so he was, *John* 11. 50. The very kind and manner of his Death was prefigured in the brazen Serpent, his Type; and answered in his Death upon the Cross, *John* 3. 14.

Fifthly, His burial in the Tomb of a rich Man was foretold, *Isa.* 53. 9. and accomplished most exactly, *Mat.* 27. 59, 60.

Sixthly, His Resurrection from the Dead was Typed out in *Jonah*, and fulfilled in Christ's abode three Days and Nights in the Grave, *Mat.* 12. 39.

Sevently, The wonderful spreading of the Gospel in the World, even to the Isles of the *Gentiles*, was fore-prophefied, *Isa.* 49. 6. To the Truth whereof we are not only the Witnesses, but the happy Instances and Examples of it. Thus the promised Mercy was performed.

Inference 1. *If Christ be the Mercy of Mercies; the medium of conveying all other Mercies from God to Men: Then in vain do Men expect and hope for the Mercy of God out of Jesus Christ.*

I know many poor Sinners Comfort themselves with this, when they come upon a Bed of sickness, I am sinful, but God is merciful: And it is very true, God is merciful; plenteous in Mercy; his Mercy is great above the Heavens; Mercy pleafeth him: And all this they that are in Christ shall find experimentally to their Comfort and Salvation: But what is all this to thee, if thou beest Christless? There is not one drop of saving Mercy that comes in any other Chancel than Christ to the Soul of any Man.

But must I then expect no Mercy out of Christ? This is a hard Case, very uncomfortable Doctrine. Yes, thou maist be a Christless and Covenantless Soul, and yet have variety of temporal Mercies as *Ishmael* had, *Gen.* 17. 20, 21. God may give thee the fatness of the Earth, Riches, Honours, Pleasures, a numerous and prosperous Posterity; will that content thee? Yes, yes if I may have Heaven too: No, no, neither Heaven nor Pardon, nor any other Spiritual or Eternal Mercy may be expected out of Christ, *Jude* verse 21. O deceive not your selves in this Point. There are two Bars betwixt you and all Spiritual Mercies, *viz.* The guilt of Sin, and the filth of Sin: And nothing but your own Union with Christ can remove these, and so open the passage for Spiritual Mercies to your Souls.

Why, but I will repent of Sin, strive to obey the Commands of God, make Restitutions for the wrongs I have done, cry to God for Mercy, bind my Souls with Vows and strong Resolutions against Sin for time to come: Will not all this lay a ground work for hope of Mercy to my Soul? No, no, this will not, this cannot do it.

First, All your sorrows, tears and mournings for Sin cannot obtain mercy: could you shed as many tears for any one sin that ever you committed, as all the children of *Adam* have shed upon any account whatsoever since the creation of

the World; they will not purchase the pardon of that one sin: for the Law accepts no short payment, it requires plenary satisfaction, and will not discharge any Soul without it: nor can it acknowledge or own your sorrows to be such: the repentance of a soul in Christ finds through him acceptance with God, but out of him its nothing.

Secondly, All your strivings to obey the Commands of God, and live more strictly for the time to come, will not obtain Mercy, *Matthew* 5. 20. *Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Thirdly, Your Restitution and Reparation of wrongs you have done cannot obtain Mercy: *Judas* restored, and yet was damned; Man is repaired, but God is not: Remission is the act of God, 'tis he must loose your Consciences from the bond of Guilt, or they can never be loosed.

Fourthly, All your cries to God for Mercy will not prevail for Mercy, if you be out of Christ, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Joh* 27. 29. A Righteous Judge will not reverse the just Sentence of the Law, though the Prisoner at the Bar fall upon the Knees, and cry, Mercy, Mercy.

Fifthly, Your Vows and Engagements to God for time to come cannot obtain Mercy: For they being made in your own strength, 'tis impossible you should keep them; and if you could, yet it is impossible they should obtain remission and mercy: should you never sin more for time to come, yet how shall God be satisfied for sins past? Justice must have satisfaction, or you can never have remission, *Rom.* 3. 25, 26. and no work wrought by man can satisfy Divine Justice, nor is the satisfaction of Christ made over to any for their discharge, but to such only as are in him: therefore never expect mercy out of Christ.

Inference 2. *Is Christ the mercy of mercies, better and more necessary than all other mercies, then let no inferior mercy satisfy you for your portion.*

God hath mercies of all sorts to give, but Christ is the chief, the prime Mercy of all Mercies: O be not satisfied without that Mercy. When *Luther* had a rich Present sent him, he protested God should not put him off so: And *David* was *sum, me nolic si ab eo suavi, Luth.* of the same mind, *Psal* 17. 14. If the Lord should give any of you the desires of your Hearts in the good things of this Life, let not that satisfy you whilst you are Christless. For,

First, What is there in these earthly enjoyments, whereof the vilest of them have not a greater fulness than you? *Joh.* 21. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *Psal.* 17. 10. & 73. 3, 12.

Secondly, What comfort can all these things give to a soul already condemned as thou art? *John* 3. 18.

Thirdly, What sweetness can be in them, whilst they are all unsanctified things to you? Enjoyments and their sanctification are two distinct things; *Psal.* 37. 16. *Prov.* 10. 22. Thousands of unsanctified enjoyments will not yield your souls one drop of solid spiritual comfort.

Fourthly, What pleasure can you take in these things out of which Death must shortly strip you naked? You must die, you must die; and whose then shall all those things be for which you have laboured? Be not so fond to think of leaving a great Name behind you: 'tis but a poor felicity (as *Chrysostom* well observes) to be

tor-

Tunc exad-
flamma
comburet.
quos nunc
carnalis de-
lectatio po-
luit.
tormented where thou art, and praised where thou art not: The sweeter your Portion hath been on Earth, the more intolerable will your Condition be in Hell: Yea, these earthly Delights do not only encrease the Torments of the Damned, but also prepare (as they are Instruments of Sin) the Souls of Men for Damnation, *Prov. 1. 32. Surely the Prosperity of fools shall destroy them*: Be restless therefore, 'till Christ the Mercy of Mercies be the Root and Fountain, yielding and sanctifying all other Mercies to you.

Inference 3. *Is Christ the Mercy of Mercies, infinitely better than all other Mercies; then let all that be in Christ be content and well satisfied; whatever other inferior Mercies the Wisdom of God sees fit to deny them*: You have a Benjamin's Portion, a plentiful Inheritance in Christ, will you yet grumble? Others have Houses splendid and magnificent upon Earth, but you have *An House made without Hands, Eternal in the Heavens, 2 Cor. 5. 1.* Others are clothed with rich and costly Apparel, your Souls are clothed with the white pure Robes of Christ's Righteousness, *Isa. 61. 10. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my Soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the Garment of Salvation, he hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himself with Ornaments, and as a Bride adorneth her self with Jewels.* Let those that have full Tables, heavy Purfes, rich Lands, but no Christ; be rather Objects of your Pity than Envy: 'Tis better like Store-cattle to be kept lean and hungry, than with the fatted Ox to tumble in flowry Meadows, thence to be led away to the Shambles. God hath not a better Mercy to give than Christ thy Portion, in him all Necessary Mercies are secured to thee, and thy Wants and Straits sanctified to thy Good. O therefore never open thy Mouth to complain against thy bountiful God.

Inference 4. *Is Christ the Mercy (i. e.) he in whom all the tender Mercies of God towards poor Sinners are, Then let none be discouraged in going to Christ, by Reason of the Sin and Unworthiness that is in them*: His very Name is Mercy, and as his Name is so is he. Poor drooping Sinner, encourage thy self in the Way of Faith, the Christ to whom thou art going is Mercy it self to broken-hearted Sinners moving towards him in the Way of Faith: Doubt not that Mercy will repulse thee, 'tis against both its Name and Nature so to do. Jesus Christ is so merciful to poor Souls that come to him, that he hath received and pardoned the chiefest of Sinners; Men that stood as remote from Mercy as any in the World, *1 Tim. 1. 15. 1 Cor. 6. 11.* Those that shed the Blood of Christ, have yet been washed in that Blood from their Sin, *Acts 2. 36, 37.* Mercy receives Sinners without Exception of great and heinous ones, *John 7. 37. If any Man thirst, let him come to me and drink.* Gospel Invitations run in general Terms to all Sinners that are heavy laden, *Mat. 11. 28.* When Mr. *Bilney* the Martyr heard a Minister Preaching at this rate, O thou old Sinner, who hast been serving the Devil these fifty or sixty Years; dost thou think that Christ will receive thee now? O said he, what a Preaching of Christ is here? Had Christ been thus preached to me in the Day of my Trouble for Sin, what had become of me! But Blessed be God, there is a sufficiency both of Merit and Mercy in Je-

sus Christ for all Sinners, for the vilest among Sinners; whose Hearts shall be made willing to come unto him. So merciful is the Lord Jesus Christ that he moves first, *Isa. 62. 1, 2.* So merciful that he upbraids none, *Ezek. 18. 22.* So merciful that he will not despise the weakest, if sincere, Desires of Souls, *Isa. 42. 3.* So merciful, that nothing more grieves him, than our Unwillingness to come unto him for Mercy, *John 5. 40.* So merciful that he waiteth to the last upon Sinners to shew them Mercy, *Rom. 10. Mat. 23. 37.* In a Word, so merciful, that it is his greatest Joy when Sinners come unto him that he may shew them Mercy, *Luke 15. 22.*

Object. But yet it cannot enter into my Thoughts that I should obtain Mercy.

Sol. First, You measure God by your selves, *1 Sam. 24. 19.* If a Man find his Enemy, will he let him go well away? Man will not, but the merciful God will upon the Submission of the Enemies to him.

Secondly, You are discouraged because you have not tried. Go to Jesus Christ, poor distressed Sinner, try him; and then report what a Christ thou findest him to be.

Object. But I have neglected the Time of Mercy, and now it is too late.

Sol. How know you that? Have you seen the Book of Life, or turned over the Records of Eternity? Or do you not unwarrantably intrude into the Secrets of God which belong not to you? Besides, if the Treaty were at an end, how is it that thy Heart is distressed for Sin, and solicitous after Deliverance from it?

Object. But I have waited long, and yet see no Mercy for me.

Sol. May not Mercy be coming, and you not see it? Or have you not waited at the wrong Door? If you wait for the Mercy of God, through Christ, in the way of Humiliation and Faith, and continue waiting; assuredly Mercy shall come at last.

Inference 5. *Hath God performed the Mercy promised to the Fathers, the great Mercy, the Capital Mercy Jesus Christ, then let no Man distrust God for the performance of lesser Mercies, contained in any Promises of the Scripture*: The Performance of this Mercy secures the Performance of all other Mercies to us. For,

First, Christ is a greater Mercy than any other which yet remains to be performed, *Rom. 8. 32.*

Secondly, This Mercy virtually comprehends all other Mercies, *1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23.*

Thirdly, The Promises that contain all other Mercies, are ratified and confirmed to Believers in Christ, *2 Cor. 1. 20.*

Fourthly, It was much more improbable that God would bestow his own Son upon the World, than that he should bestow any other Mercy upon it. Wait therefore in a comfortable Expectation of the fulfilling of all the rest of the Promises in their Seasons; hath he given thee Christ, he will give thee Bread to eat, Raiment to put on, Support in Troubles, and whatsoever else thy Soul or Body stands in need of: The Blessings contained in all other Promises are fully secured by the Performance of this great Promise; thy Pardon, Peace, Acceptance with God now, and Enjoyment of him for ever, shall be fulfilled: The great Mercy CHRIST, makes way for all other Mercies to the Souls of Believers.

X x

In-

Inference 6. *Lastly, How mad are they that part with Christ, the best of Mercies, to secure and preserve any temporal, lesser Mercies to themselves! Thus Demas and Judas gave up Christ to gain a little of the World: O Soul-undoing Bargain!*

How dear do they pay for the World, that purchase it with the Loss of Christ, and their own Peace for ever!

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ the Mercy of Mercies.

Serm. 12.

The Twelfth Sermon.

CANT. V. part of Verse 16.

— — — — — *Yea, He is altogether Lovely.*

Text-
Contain-
ing a third
Motive to
enlive-
the gene-
ral Exhor-
tation
from a
third Title
of Christ.

AT the Ninth Verse of this Chapter you have a Query propounded to the Spouse, by the Daughters of Jerusalem, *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved?* To this Question the Spouse returns her Answer in the following Verses, wherein she asserts his Excellency in general, *Ver. 10. He is the Chiefest among ten Thousands:* Confirms that General Assertion by an Enumeration of his particular Excellencies to *Verse 16.* where she closes up her Character and Encomium of her Beloved, with an Elegant Epithonema, in the Words that I have read, *Yea, He is altogether Lovely.*

The Words, you see, are an Affirmative Proposition, setting forth the Transcendent Loveliness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and Naturally resolve themselves into three Parts, *viz.*

1. The Subject.
2. The Predicate.
3. The Manner of Predication.

First, The Subject, He, viz. the Lord Jesus Christ, after whom she had been seeking; for whom she was sick of Love: Concerning whom these Daughters of Jerusalem had enquired: Whom she had endeavoured to *Graphically* to describe in his particular Excellencies. This is the Great and Excellent Subject of whom she here speaks.

Secondly, The Predicate, or what she affirmeth of faith of him, viz. That he is a Lovely One, Machamadim, desires, according to the Import of the Original which signifies earnestly to desire, covet or long for that which is most pleasant, grateful, delectable and amiable; the Original Word is both in the *Astrak*, and of the Plural Number, which speaks Christ to be the very Essence of all Delights and Pleasures, the very Soul and Substance of them. As all the Rivers be gathered into the Ocean, which is the Congregation or Meeting-place of all the Waters in the World: So Christ is that Ocean in which all true Delights and Pleasures meet.

Thirdly, The Manner of Predication: He is [altogether] *Lovely, Totus, totus desiderabilis, lovely* in all and in every part, as if she had said, Look on him in what respect or particular you will, cast your Eye upon this Lovely Object and view him any way, turn him in your serious Thoughts which way you will; Consider his Person, his Offices, his Works, or any thing belonging to him, you shall find him *altogether Lovely:* There is nothing ungrateful in him, there is nothing lovely without him. Hence Note.

Doct. That Jesus Christ is the *loveliest Person*

Souls can set their Eyes upon: Psalm 45. 2. Thou art fairer than the Children of Men. That is said of Jesus Christ, which cannot be said of any Creature, that he is *altogether lovely.* In opening this Lovely Point, I shall,

1. Weigh the Importance of this Phrase, *Altogether Lovely.*

2. Shew you in what respects Christ is so.

First, Let us weigh this Excellent Expression, and particularly consider, what is involved in it, and you shall find this Expression, Altogether Lovely:

First, That it excludes all Unloveliness, and Distastefulness from Jesus Christ. So Vatablus, there is nothing in him which is not amiable: The Excellencies of Christ are perfectly exclusive of all their Opposites; there is nothing of a Contrary Nature or Quality found in him to allay or debase his Excellency: And in this respect Christ infinitely transcends the most Excellent and Loveliest Creatures: For whatsoever Loveliness is found in them it is not without a distasteful Tang; the fairest Pictures must have their Shadows: The most Orient and Translucent Stones must have their Foibles to set off their Beauty; the best Creature is but a bitter-sweet at best: If there be somewhat pleasing, there is also somewhat distating; if there be gracious and natural Excellencies in the same Person to delight us, yet there is also some natural Corruption intermixed with it to distaste us. But it is not so in our altogether lovely Christ: His Excellencies are pure and unmixed, he is a Sea of Sweetness, without one drop of Gall.

Secondly, Altogether lovely (i. e.) as there is nothing unlovely found in him, so all that is in him is wholly lovely; as every Ray of Gold is precious, so every thing that is in Christ is precious; who can weigh Christ in a pair of Ballances, and tell you what his Worth is? His Price is above Rubies, and all that thou canst desire is not to be compared with him, Prov. 8. 11.

*Thirdly, Altogether Lovely (i. e.) He is comprehensive of all things that are lovely; he seals up the Sum of all Loveliness: *Que faciunt deus beatum, in hoc mixta sunt;* Things that shine as single Stars with a particular Glory, all meet in Christ, as a glorious Constellation, Col. 1. 19. *It pleased the Father, that in him should all Fullness dwell.* Cast your Eyes among all Created Beings, survey the Universe, observe Strength in one, Beauty in a second, Faithfulness in a third, Wisdom in a fourth; but you shall find none excelling in them all as Christ doth. Bread hath one Quality, Water another, Raiment another,*

*Quamvis
quantus est,
junctis illa-
dis & vo-
lit expecte-
rentur.*
Brightman

*Significat
appetere,
expectere
quod ju-
cundum,
gratum,
voluptuo-
sum, utile
& amabile
est. Pag.*

other, Physick another, but none hath all in it self as Christ hath; he is Bread to the hungry, Water to the Thirsty, a Garment to the Naked, Healing to the Wounded, and whatever a Soul can desire is found in him, 1 Cor. 1. 30.

Fourthly, Altogether lovely, (i. e.) nothing is lovely in *Opposition* to him, or in *Separation* from him; if he be altogether lovely, then whatsoever is opposite to, or separate from him, can have no loveliness in it; take away Christ, and where is the loveliness of any Enjoyment? The best Creature Comfort out of Christ is but a broken Cistern, or a Vessel whose bottom is fallen out, it cannot hold one drop of true Comfort, *Psalms* 73. 25. It is with the Creature, the sweetest and loveliest Creature, as with a beautiful Image in the Glass; turn away the Face, and where is the Image? Riches, Honours, and comfortable Relations are sweet when the Face of Christ smiles upon us through them, but without him what empty trifles are they all?

Fifthly, Altogether lovely, (i. e.) transcending all created Excellencies in beauty and loveliness, so much it speaks: If you compare Christ and other things, be they never so lovely, never so excellent and desirable; Christ carries away all loveliness from them, *he is* (saith the Apostle) *before all things*, Col. 1. 17. Not only before all things in Time, Nature, and Order; but before all things in Dignity, Glory and true Excellency: In all things he must have the preeminence; for let us but compare Christ's Excellency with the Creatures, in a few particulars, and how evidently will the transcendent loveliness of Jesus Christ appear! For,

First, All other loveliness is *derivative* and secondary, but the loveliness of Christ is *originary* and *primary*. Angels and Men, the World and all the desirables in it, receive what Excellency they have from him, they are Streams from the Fountain: But as the Waters in the Fountain it self are more abundant, so more pure and pleasant than in the Streams: And the farther any thing departs and is removed from its Fountain and Original, the less Excellency there is in it.

Secondly, The loveliness and excellency of all other things is but *Relative* and *Respective*, consisting in its reference to Christ, and subserviency to his Glory; but Christ is lovely considered *absolutely* in himself; he is desirable for himself, other things are so for him.

Thirdly, The beauty and loveliness of all other things is *fading* and perishing, but the loveliness of Christ is *fresh* to all Eternity: The sweetness of the best of Creatures is a fading flower, if not before, yet certainly at Death it must fade away, *Job* 4. 21. *Doth not their excellency which is in them go away?* Yes, yes, whether natural excellencies of the Body, or acquired Endowments of the Mind, lovely Features, amiable Qualities, attracting Excellencies: All these like pleasant Flowers are withered, faded, and destroyed by Death: But Christ is still the same, yesterday, to Day and for ever, *Heb.* 13. 8.

Fourthly, The beauty and loveliness of Creatures is *ensnaring*, and dangerous: a Man may make an *Idol* of it, and dote beyond the bounds of Moderation upon it: But there is no danger of excess in the Love of Christ; the Soul is then in the healthiest frame and temper, when it is most sick of Love to Christ, *Cant.* 5. 8.

Fifthly, The loveliness of every Creature is of a *cloying* and *glutting* Nature: Our Estimation of it abates, and sinks by our Nearer approach to it, or longer Enjoyment of it: Creatures like Pictures are fairest at a due distance; but it is not so with Christ, the nearer the Soul approacheth him, and the longer it lives in the Enjoyment of him, still the more sweet and desirable he is.

Sixthly, Lastly, All other loveliness is *unsatisfying*, and straining to the Soul of Man: There is not room enough in any one, or in all the Creatures for the Soul of Man to dilate and expatiate it self; but it still feels it self pinch'd in, and narrowed within those strait limits: And this comes to pass from the inadequateness and unfaithfulness of the Creature to the nobler and more excellent Soul of Man: Which like a Ship in a narrow River hath not room to turn, and besides is ever and anon striking Ground, and foundering in those Shallows: But Jesus Christ is every way adequate to the vast desires of the Soul: In him it hath Sea-room enough; there it may spread all its Sails, no fear of touching the Bottom. And thus you see what is the importance of this Phrase, *altogether lovely*.

Secondly, Next I promised to shew you in what respects Jesus Christ is altogether lovely. And,

First, *He is altogether lovely in his Person*; a Deity dwelling in Flesh, *John* 1. 14. The wonderful Union and Perfection of the Divine and Humane Nature in Christ renders him an Object of Admiration and Adoration to Angels and Men, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. God never presented to the World such a Vision of Glory before: And then considering how the Humane Nature of our Lord Jesus Christ is replenished with all the Graces of the Spirit, so as never any of all the Saints was filled; O how lovely doth this render him! *John* 3. 34. *God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him*: This makes him fairer than the Children of Men, Grace being poured into his Lips, *Psal.* 45. 2. If a small measure of Grace in the Saints makes them such sweet and desirable Companions, what must the Riches and Fulness of the Spirit of Grace, filling Jesus Christ without measure, make him in the Eyes of Believers? O what a Glory and a Luster must it stamp upon him!

Secondly, *He is altogether lovely in his Offices*: For let us but consider the suitableness, fulness, and comfortableness of them.

First, *The suitableness* of the Offices of Christ to the miseries and wants of Men, and we cannot but adore the infinite Wisdom of God in his investiture with them; we are by Nature blind and ignorant, at best but groping in the dim Light of Nature after God: *Acts* 17. 27. Jesus Christ is a light to lighten the *Gentiles*, *Isa.* 49. 6. When this great Prophet came into the World; then did the Day-Spring from on high visit us, *Luke* 1. 78. The state of Nature is a state of Alienation and Enmity to God; Christ comes into the World an atoning Sacrifice, making Peace by the Blood of his Cross, *Col.* 1. 20. All the World, by Nature, are in bondage and captivity to Satan, a lamentable Thralldom: Christ comes with a Kingly Power to rescue Sinners, as a prey, from the Mouth of the terrible one.

*Dulcissimæ
ipso fonte
bibuntur
aqua.*

*Assue
infel
ex
miseria
di.*

Secondly, Let the *Fulness* of his Offices be also considered, by Reason whereof he is able *To save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. The three Offices comprizing in them all that our Souls do need become an universal Relief to all our Wants; and therefore,

Thirdly, Unspeakably comfortable must the Offices of Christ be to the Souls of Sinners; if Light be pleasant to our Eyes, how pleasant is that Light of Life springing from the Sun of Righteousness! *Mal.* 4. 2. If a Pardon be sweet to a Condemned Malefactor, how sweet must the Sprinkling the Blood of Jesus be to the trembling Conscience of a Law-condemned Sinner? If a Rescue from a Cruel Tyrant be sweet to a poor Captive; how sweet must it be to the Ears of enslaved Sinners to hear the Voice of Liberty and Deliverance proclaimed by Jesus Christ? Out of the several Offices of Christ, as out of so many Fountains, all the Promises of the New Covenant flow; as so many Soul refreshing Streams of Peace and Joy: All the Promises of Illumination, Counsel and Direction flow out of the *Prophetic Office*: All the Promises of Reconciliation, Peace, Pardon, and Acceptation flow out of the *Priestly Office*, with the sweet Streams of Joy and Spiritual Comfort depending thereupon; all the Promises of converting, increasing, defending, directing, and supplying Grace, flow out of the *Kingly Office* of Christ; indeed all Promises may be reduced to the three Offices: So that Jesus Christ must needs be *Altogether lovely in his Offices*.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ is *altogether lovely in his Relations*.

First, He is a *Lovely Redeemer*, *Isa.* 61. 1. He came to open the Prison-doors to them that are bound. Needs must this Redeemer be a *Lovely One*, if we consider the *Depth of Misery* from which he redeemed us, *even from the Wrath to come*, *1 Thes.* 1. 10. How *Lovely* was *Titus* in the Eyes of the poor enthralled Greeks, whom he delivered from their Bondage! This endeared him to them unto that Degree, that when their Liberty was proclaimed, they even trode one another to Death to see the *Herald* that proclaimed it; and all the Night following with Instruments of Musick danced about his Tent, crying with united Voices, *A Saviour, a Saviour*. Or, whether we consider the *Numbers redeemed*, and the *Means* of their Redemption, *Rev.* 4. 9. *And they sang a new Song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation*. He redeemed us not with Silver and Gold, but with his own precious Blood by way of *Price*, *1 Pet.* 1. 18, 19. with his out-stretched and glorious Arm, by way of *Power*, *Col.* 1. 13. He redeemed us freely, *Eph.* 1. 7. fully, *Rom.* 8. 1. seasonably, *Gal.* 4. 4. and out of special and peculiar Love, *Joh.* 1. 7. 9. In a Word, he hath redeemed us for ever, never more for us to come into Bondage, *1 Pet.* 1. 5. *Joh.* 10. 28. Oh how *Lovely* is Jesus Christ in the Relation of a Redeemer to God's Elect!

Secondly, He is a *Lovely Bridegroom* to all that he espouses to himself; how doth the Church glory in him, in the Words following my Text, *This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O ye Daughters of Jerusalem; (i. d.) Heaven and Earth cannot show such another; which needs no fuller Proof than the following Particulars.*

First, That he espouseth to himself in Mercy, and in Loving Kindness, such deformed, defiled, and altogether unworthy Souls as we are; who have no Beauty, no Excellency to make us desirable in his Eyes: *All the Springs of his Love to us are in his own Breast, Deut.* 7. 7. He chooseth us not because we were, but that he might make us *Lovely, Eph.* 5. 27. He passed by us when we lay in our Blood, and said unto us live, and that was the Time of Love, *Ezek.* 16. 5.

Secondly, He expects nothing with us, and yet bestows himself, and all that he hath upon us: Our Poverty cannot enrich him, but he made himself Poor to enrich us, *2 Cor.* 8. 9. *1 Cor.* 3. 22.

Thirdly, No Husband loves the Wife of his Bosom at the rate Christ loved his People, *Eph.* 5. 25. He loved the Church, and gave himself for it.

Fourthly, None bears with Weaknesses and Provocations as Christ doth, the Church is stiled the *Lamb's Wife, Rev.* 21. 9.

Fifthly, No Husband is so Immortal and Everlasting as Christ is. Death separates all other Relations, but the Souls Union with Christ is not dissolved in the Grave: Yea, the Day of a Believers Death is his Marriage-day, the Day of his fullest Enjoyment of Christ: No Husband can say to his Wife what Christ saith to the Believer, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, Heb.* 13. 5.

Sixthly, No Bridegroom advanceth his Bride to such Honours by Marriage as Christ doth: He relates them to God as their Father; and from that Day the mighty and glorious Angels think it no Dishonour to be their Servants, *Heb.* 1. 14. They are brought in admiring the Beauty and Glory of the Spouse of Christ, *Rev.* 21. 9.

Seventhly, and Lastly, No Marriage was ever consummated with that Triumphant Solemnity, as the Marriage of Christ and Believers shall be in Heaven, *Psal.* 45. 14, 15. *She shall be brought to the King in Raiment of Needle-work, the Virgins, her Companions, that follow her, shall be brought unto thee, with Gladness and Rejoycing shall they be brought, they shall enter into the Kings Palace.* Among the Jews the Marriage-House was called *Bethulā*, the House of Praise: There was Joy upon all Hands; but not like the Joy that will be in Heaven, when Believers, the Spouse of Christ, shall be brought thither; God the Father will rejoice to behold the Blessed Accomplishment and Consummation of that Glorious Design and Project of his Love. Jesus Christ the Bridegroom will rejoice to see the Travel of his Soul, the Blessed Birth and Issue of all his bitter Pangs and Agonies, *Isa.* 53. 11. *The Holy Spirit* will rejoice to see the Complement and Perfection of that sanctifying Design which was committed to his Hand, *2 Cor.* 5. 5. To see those Souls whom he once found as rough Stones, now to shine as the bright polished Stones of the Spiritual Temple. Angels will rejoice; great was the Joy when the Foundation of this Design was laid in the Incarnation of Christ: *Luke* 2. 13. Great therefore must their Joy be when the Top-stone is set up with shouting, crying, Grace, Grace. The Saints themselves shall rejoice unspeakably when they shall enter into the Kings Palace, and be for ever with the Lord, *1 Thes.* 4. 17. Indeed there will be Joy on all Hands, except among the Devils, and damned; who shall gnash their Teeth with Envy at the Everlasting Advancement and Glory of Believers.

Thus

Thus Christ is altogether lovely, in the Relation of a *Bridegroom*.

Thirdly, Christ is altogether lovely in the Relation of an *Advocate*, 1 John 2. 1. *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus-Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation: 'tis He that pleads the Cause of Believers in Heaven: Appears for them in the Presence of God, to prevent all new Breaches, and continue the State of Friendship and Peace betwixt God and us. For in this Relation Christ is altogether lovely. For,*

First, He makes our Cause his own, and acts for us in Heaven as for himself, Heb. 4. 15. He is touched with the tender Sense of our Troubles and Dangers, and is not only one with us by way of Representation, but also one with us in respect of Sympathy and Affection.

Secondly, Christ our Advocate follows our Suit and Business in Heaven, as his great and main Design and Business, therefore in Heb. 7. 25, He is said to *Live for ever to make Intercession for us*: As if our Concernments were so minded by him there, as to give up himself wholly to that Work; as if all the Glory and Honour which is paid him in Heaven, would not satisfy him, or divert him one Moment from our Business.

Thirdly, He pleads the Cause of Believers by his Blood; it satisfies him not as other *Advocates*, to be at the Expence of Words and Oratory, which is a cheaper way of Pleading; but he pleads for us by the Voice of his own Blood, Heb. 12. 24. where we are said to be come *To the Blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel*: Every Wound he received for us on Earth, is a Mouth opened to plead with God on our Behalf in Heaven, *Quot Vulnera, tot Ora*: And hence it is that in Rev. 5. 6. He is represented standing before God, *As a Lamb that had been slain*: As it were exhibiting and opening in Heaven those deadly Wounds received on Earth, from the Justice of God upon our Account: Other Advocates spend their *Breath*, Christ his *Blood*.

Fourthly, He pleads the Cause of Believers freely: Other Advocates plead for Reward, and exhaust the Purse while they plead the Causes of their Clients.

Fifthly, In a Word, he obtaineth for us all the Mercies for which he pleads; no Cause miscarries in his Hand which he undertakes, Rom. 8. 33, 34. O what a lovely Advocate is Christ for Believers!

Fourthly, Christ is altogether lovely in the Relation of a *Friend*, for in this Relation he is pleased to own his People, Luke 12. 4, 5. There are certain things in which one Friend manifests his Affection and Friendship to another, but none like Christ. For,

First, No Friend is so open-hearted to his Friend as Christ is to his People: He reveals the very Counsels and Secrets of his Heart to them, John 15. 15. *Henceforth I call you not Servants, for the Servants knoweth not what his Lord doth; but I have called you Friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.*

Secondly, No Friend in the World is so expensive and bountiful to his Friend, as Jesus Christ is to Believers, John 15. 13. He parts with his very Blood for them; Greater Love (saith he) hath no Man than this, that a Man lay down his Life for his Friends: He hath exhausted the precious Treasure of this invaluable Blood to pay our Debts. O what a lovely Friend is Jesus Christ to Believers.

Thirdly, No Friend sympathizes so tenderly with his Friend in Affliction, as Jesus Christ doth with his Friends: In all our Afflictions he is afflicted, Heb. 4. 15. He feels all our Sorrows, Wants and Burthens as his own. Whence it is that the Sufferings of Believers are called the Sufferings of Christ, Col. 1. 24.

Fourthly, No Friend in the World takes that Complacency in his Friend as Jesus Christ doth in Believers, Cant. 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished my Heart (saith he to the Spouse) thou hast ravished my Heart with one of thine Eyes, with one Chain of thy Neck*: The Hebrew here rendered *ravished*, signifies to puff up, or to make one proud; how is the Lord Jesus pleased to glory in his People! How is he taken and delighted with those Gracious Ornaments which himself bestows upon them! No Friend so lovely as Christ.

Fifthly, No Friend in the World loves his Friend with so *ferocious*, and strong Affection, as Jesus Christ loves Believers. Jacob loved Rachel, and endured for her sake the parching Heat of Summer, and Cold of Winter: But Christ endured the Storms of the Wrath of God, the Heat of his Indignation for our sakes. David manifested his Love to Absalom, in wishing, *O that I had died for thee!* Christ manifested his Love to us, not in Wishes that he had died, but in Death it self, in our stead, and for our sakes.

Sixthly, No Friend in the World is so constant and unchangeable in Friendship, as Christ is, John 13. 1. *Having loved his own which were in the World, he loved them unto the end*. He bears with Millions of Provocations, and Injuries, and yet will not break Friendship with his People. Peter denied him, yet he will not disown him; but after his Resurrection he saith, *Go, tell the Disciples, and tell Peter*; (q. d.) Let him not think he hath forfeited by that Sin of his, his Interest in me; tho' he have denied me, I will not disown him, Mark 16. 7. Oh how lovely is Christ in the Relation of a Friend! I might farther shew you the Loveliness of Christ in his Ordinances, and in his Providences, in his Communion with us, and Communications to us: But there is no End of the Account of Christ's Loveliness. I will rather choose to press Believers to their Duties towards this altogether lovely Christ, which I shall briefly dispatch in a few Words.

1st. First, Is Jesus Christ altogether lovely, then I beseech you set your Souls upon this lovely Jesus: Methinks such an Object as hath been here represented should compel Love from the coldest Breast, and hardest Heart. Away with those empty nothings, away with this vain Deceitful World, which deserves not the thousandth part of the Love you give it: Let all stand aside, and give way to Christ. O did you but know his Worth and Excellency, what he is in himself, what he hath done for, and deserved from you; you would need no Arguments of mine to persuade you to love him.

Secondly, Esteem nothing lovely, but as it is enjoyed in Christ, or improved for Christ: Affect nothing for it self, love nothing separate from Jesus Christ. In two things we all sin in the Love of Creatures, viz. In the Excess of our Affections, loving them above the Rate and Value of Creatures, and in the Inordinacy of our Affections, (i. e.) in loving them out of their proper Places.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *Let us all be humbled for the baseness of our Hearts, that are so free of their Affections to Vanities, and Trifles; and so hard to be persuaded to the Love of Christ, who is altogether lovely.* Oh how many pour out Streams of Love and Delight upon the vain and empty Creature, whilst no Arguments can squeeze out one drop of Love from their obdurate and unbelieving Hearts to Jesus Christ! I have read of one *Johannes Mollius*, who was observed to go often alone, and weep bitterly; and being prest by a Friend to know the Cause of his trouble; Oh, said he, it grieves me that I cannot bring this Heart of mine to Love Jesus Christ more fervently.

Fourthly, *Represent Christ as he is to the World, by your Carriages towards him: Is he altogether lovely? Let all the World see and know that he is so, by your delights in him, and Communion with him, Zeal for him, and readiness to part with any other Lovely Thing upon his Account; proclaim his Excellencies to the World, as the Spouse here did: Convince them how much your Beloved is better than any other Beloved. Display his Glorious Excellencies in your Heavenly Conversations: Hold him forth to others, as he is in himself, altogether lovely. See that you Walk worthy of him unto all well-pleasing, Col. 1. 10. Show forth the Praises of Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 19. Let not that Worthy Name be blasphemed through you, James 2. 7. He is Glorious in himself, and will put Glory upon you; take heed ye put not Shame and Dishonour upon him: He hath committed his Honour to you, do not betray that Trust.*

Fifthly, *Never be ashamed to own Christ: He is altogether lovely; he can never be a Shame to you; 'twill be your Great Sin, to be ashamed of him. Some Men glory in their Shame, be not*

you ashamed of your Glory; if you be ashamed of Christ now, he will be ashamed of you, when he shall appear in his own Glory, and the Glory of all his Holy Angels. Be ashamed of nothing but Sin, and among other Sins, be ashamed especially for this Sin, that you have no more Love for him who is altogether Lovely.

Sixthly, *Be willing to leave every thing that is lovely upon Earth, that you may be with the altogether lovely Lord Jesus Christ in Heaven. Lift up your Voices with the Spouse, Rev. 20. 10. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.* 'Tis true, you must pass through the Pangs of Death into his Bosom and Enjoyment; but sure 'tis worth Suffering much more than that, to be with this Lovely Jesus. The Lord direct your Hearts into the Love of God, and the patient waiting for of Jesus Christ, 2 Thes. 3. 5.

Seventhly, *Strive to be Christ-like, as ever you would be lovely in the Eyes of God and Man. Certainly my Brethren, 'tis the Spirit of Christ within you, and the Beauty of Christ upon you, which only can make you lovely Persons; the more you resemble him in Holiness, the more will you discover of true Excellency and Loveliness: And the more frequent and spiritual your Converse and Communion with Christ is, the more of the Beauty and Loveliness of Christ will still be stamped upon your Spirits, changing you into the same Image from Glory to Glory.*

Eighthly, *Let the Loveliness of Christ draw all Men to him. Is Loveliness in the Creature, embodied Beauty, so attractive? And can the Transcendent Loveliness of Christ draw none? Oh the Blindness of Man! If you see no Beauty in Christ, why you should desire him, 'tis because the God of this World hath blinded your Minds.*

Ser. 13.

The Thirteenth SERMON.

HAGGAI II. vii.

— And the Desire of all Nations, shall come.

Text. Alluring the Hearts of Men to come to Christ by a fourth Motive contained in another Title of Christ.

THE former Chapter is mainly spent in reproving the Negligence of the Jews, who being discouraged from Time to Time, had delayed the Rebuilding the Temple: And in the mean Time employed their Care, and cost in building and adorning their own Houses: but at last being persuaded to set about the Work, they meet with this Discouragement, that such was the Poverty of the present Time, that the Second Structure would no way answer the Magnificence and Splendor of the first. In Solomon's Days the Nation was wealthy, now drained, so that there would be no Proportion betwixt the second and the first. To this grand Discouragement, the Prophet applies this Relief, that whatsoever should be wanting in External Pomp and Glory, should be more than recompensed by the Presence of Jesus Christ in this second Temple. For Christ the Desire of all Nations (saith he) shall come into it. Which by the way may give us this useful Note, That the presence of Jesus Christ gives a more real and excellent Glory to the Places of his Worship, than

any External Beauty, or outward Ornaments whatsoever can bestow upon them. Our Eyes like the Disciples are apt to be dazzled with the goodly Stones of the Temple, and in the mean time to neglect, and overlook that which gives it its greatest Honour and Beauty.

But to return, In these Words we have both the Description of Christ, and an Index pointing at the Time of his Incarnation; he is called *The desire of all Nations*: And the Time of his Coming in the Flesh, 'tis plainly intimated to be while the second Temple should be standing: Where by the Way, we find just Cause to admire and bemoan the Blindness that is hapned to the Jews; who owning the Truth of this Prophecy, and not able to deny the Destruction of the Second Temple, many hundred Years past, will not yet be brought to acknowledge the Incarnation of the true Messiah, notwithstanding.

But to the Point, the Character of Christ, styled *The Desire of all Nations*, who was to come into the World in the Time of the Second Temple, Mal.

Mal. 3. 12. And that after grievous Concussions and Shakings of the World, which were to make way for his coming, for so our Prophet here speaks, *I will shake all Nations, and the desire of all Nations shall come*, to which the *Apostles* alludes in *Heb. 12. 26.* Applying this Prophecy to Jesus Christ, here called the *desire of all Nations*: Putting the *AD* for the *Object*, desire for the thing desired; as in *Ezek. 24. 16.* *The Desire of thine Eyes*, that is the desirable Wife of thy Bosom. So here the *desire of all Nations*, that is *Christ* the *Object* of the desires of Gods Elect in all Nations of the World. A Saviour infinitely desirable in himself, and actually desired by all the People of God, dispersed among all Kindreds, Tongues and Nations in the World. From whence this Note is,

Doct. *That the desires of Gods Elect in all Kingdoms, and among all People of the Earth, are and shall be drawn out after, and fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ.*

The merciful God beholding the universal Ruines of the World by Sin, hath provided an universal Remedy for his own Elect, in every part of the Earth. Christ is not impropriated to any one Kingdom or Nation in the World; but intended to be God's Salvation to the ends of the Earth, and accordingly speaks the *Apostle*, *Col. 2. 11.* *There is neither Greek nor Jew, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond nor Free; but Christ is all, and in all.* In the Explication of this Point, two Things must be enquired into.

1. Why Christ is called the desire of all Nations.

2. Upon what Account the People of God in all Nations desire him.

First, Why he is called the desire of all Nations: And what that may import: And there are divers Things that are supposed or included in it.

First, That God the Father hath appointed him as a common Remedy, for the Sins and Miseries of his People in all Parts and Quarters of the World. So in the Covenant of Redemption betwixt the Father and the Son, the Lord expresth himself, *Isa. 49. 6.* and he said, *It is a light Thing that thou shouldest be my Servant, to raise up the Tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a Light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my Salvation to the End of the Earth.* Suitable whereunto is that Prophecy, *Isa. 52. 15.* *He shall sprinkle many Nations.* If God had not appointed him for, he could not be desired by all Nations.

And indeed herein the Graces of God doth admirably shine forth in the freeness of it, that even the most barbarous Nations are not excluded from the Benefit of Redemption by Christ. This is that the *Apostle* admires, that Christ should be *Preached to the Gentiles*, *1 Tim. 3. 16.* A People that seemed to be lost in the Darknefs of Idolatry; yet even for them Christ was given by the Father. *Ask of me* (saith he) *and I will give thee the Heavens for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for thy Possession.*

Secondly, Christ the desire of all Nations, plainly Notes the *sufficiency* that is in him to supply the wants of the whole World: As the Sun in the Heavens suffices all Nations for Light and Influence, so doth the Son of Righteousness suffice for the Redemption, Justification, Sanctification and Salvation of the People of God, all

the World over, *Isa. 45. 22.* *Look unto me, and be ye saved all ye ends of the Earth.*

Thirdly, It implies the reality that is in *Godliness*. It shews you that Religion is no fancy, as the Atheistical World would perswade us; and this evidently appears in the *uniform Effects* of it upon the Hearts of all Men in all Nations of the World, that are truly Religious; all their Desires, like so many Needles touched by one and the same Load-stone, move towards Jesus Christ, and all meet together in one and the same blessed Object Christ. Were it possible for the People of God to come out of all Nations, Kindreds and Languages in the World, into one Place, and there confer and compare the desires and workings of their Hearts; though they never saw each others Face, nor heard of each others Name; yet as Face answers to Face in a glass, so would their desires after Christ answer to each other: All Hearts work after him in the same Manner, what one saith, all say; these are my Troubles and Burthens, these my Wants and Miseries; the same things my Desires and Fears: One and the same Spirit harmonically Works in all Believers through the World, which could never be, if Religion were but a Fancy as some call it, or a Combination or Confederacy, as others call it: Fancies are as various as Faces; and Confederacies presuppose mutual Acquaintance and Conference.

Fourthly, Christ the desire of all Nations implies the vast extent his Kingdom hath and shall have in the World: Out of every Nation under Heaven some shall be brought to Christ, and to Heaven by him. And though the number of Gods Elect, compared with the Multitudes of the Ungodly in all Nations, is but a Remnant, a little Flock, and in that Comparative Sense there are few that shall be saved; yet considered absolutely, and in themselves, they are a vast number, which no Man can number, *Mat. 8. 11.* *Many shall come from the East, and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven.* In order whereunto the Gospel, like the Sun in the Heavens, circuits the World: It arose in the East, and takes its Course towards the Western World; rising by Degrees upon the remote Idolatrous Nations of the Earth; out of all which a number is to be saved, even *Ethiopia shall stretch out her Hands to God*, *Psal. 68. 31.* And this Consideration should move us to pray earnestly for the poor Heathens, who yet sit in Darknefs, and the shadow of Death; there is yet Hope for them.

Fifthly, It holds forth this, that when God opens the Eyes of Men to see their Sin, and danger by it; nothing but Christ can give them Satisfaction: 'Tis not the amenity, fertility, Riches and Pleasures the Inhabitants of any Kingdom of the World do enjoy, that can quench and satisfie the desires of their Souls: When once God touches their Hearts with the Sense of Sin and Miserie: Christ and none but Christ is desirable and necessary in the Eyes of such Perions. Many Kingdoms of the World abound with Riches and Pleasures, the Providence of God hath carved liberal Portions of the good Things of this Life to many of them, and scarce left any thing to their Desires that the World can afford. Yet all this can give no Satisfaction

Clia

etion without Jesus Christ, the desire of Nations, the one thing necessary, when once they come to see the Necessity and Excellency of him: Then take the World who will, so they may have Christ the desire of their Souls. Thus we see upon what Grounds and Reasons Christ is stiled the desire of all Nations.

Object. But there lies one great Objection against this Truth, which must be satisfied, *viz.* If Christ be the desire of all Nations, how comes it to pass, that Jesus Christ finds no Entertainment in so many Nations of the World, among whom Christianity is stiled at, and Christians not tolerated to live among them? Who see no Beauty in him that they should desire him.

Sol. First, We must remember the Nations of the World have their Times and Seasons of Conversion. Those that once embraced Christ, have now lost him, and Idols are now set up in the Places where he once was sweetly Worshipped. The Sun of the Gospel is gone down upon them, and now shines in another Hemisphere: And so the Nations of the World are to have their distinct Days, and Seasons of Illumination. The Gospel, like the Sea, gaineth in one place what it loseth in another: And in the Times and Seasons appointed by the Father they come successively to be enlightened in the Knowledge of Christ; and then shall that Promise be fulfilled, *Isa. 49. 7. Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom the Nation abhorreth, to a Servant of Rulers; Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall Worship, because of the Lord that is faithful.*

Secondly, Let it also be remembered, that although Christ be rejected by the Rulers and Body of many Nations; yet he is the desire of all the Elect of God, dispersed and scattered among those Nations.

Secondly, In the next Place we are to enquire, upon what Account Christ becomes the Desire of all Nations, (*i. e.*) of all those in all the Nations of the World that belong to the Election of Grace. And the true Ground and Reason thereof is, because Christ only hath that in himself which relieves their wants and answers to all their Needs. As,

First, They are all by Nature under Condemnation, *Rom. 5. 16, 18.* Under the Curse of the Law; against which nothing is found in Heaven or Earth able to relieve their Consciences but the Blood of sprinkling, the pure and perfect Righteousness of the Lord Jesus: And hence it is that Christ becomes so desirable in the Eyes of poor Sinners all the World over. If any thing in Nature could be found to pacifie and purge the Consciences of Men from guilt and fear; Christ would never be desirable in their Eyes; but finding no other Remedy but the Blood of Jesus, to him therefore shall all the ends of the Earth look for Righteousness and for Peace.

Secondly, All Nations of the World are polluted with the filth of Sin, both in Nature and Practice, which they shall see, and bitterly bewail when the Light of the Gospel shall shine amongst them; and the same Light by which this shall be discovered, will also discover the only Remedy of this Evil to lie in the Spirit of Christ, the only Fountain opened to all Nations for Sanctification and Cleansing: And this will make the Lord Jesus incomparably delicious in their

Eyes. Oh how welcome will he be that cometh unto them, not by Blood only, but by Water also! *John 1. 5, 6.*

Thirdly, When the Light of the Gospel shall shine upon the Nations, they shall then see, that by Reason of the guilt and filth of Sin, they are all barr'd out of Heaven. Those doors are chained up against them, and that none but Christ can open an entrance for them into that Kingdom of God: That no Man cometh to the Father but by him, *John 14. 6.* Neither is there any Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby they must be saved, but the Name of Christ, *Acts 4. 12.* Hence the Hearts of Sinners shall pant after him, as the Hart panteth for the Water-brooks. And thus we see upon what grounds Christ becomes the desire of all Nations. The Improvement of all followeth in several Uses of the Point, *viz.*

1. For Information.
2. For Examination.
3. For Consolation.
4. For Exhortation.
5. For Direction.

First Use for Information.

First, Is Christ the desire of all Nations, *How vile a Sin is it then in any Nation, upon whom the Light hath shined, to reject Jesus Christ, and say as those in Job 21. 14. Depart from us, we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways.* To thrust away his Worship, Government, and Servants from amongst them, and in Effect to say as it is, *Luke 19. 14. We will not have this Man to Reign over us:* Thus did the Jews, *Mt. 13. 46.* They put away Christ from amongst them, and thereby judged themselves unworthy of Eternal Life. This is at once a fearful Sin, and a dreadful Sign: How soon did Vengeance overtake them, like the overthrow of Sodom! O let it be for a warning unto all Nations to the end of the World. He would have gathered the Children of Israel under his Wings, as a Hen doth her brood, even when the Roman Eagle was hovering over them, but they would not; therefore their Houses were left unto them desolate, their City and Temple made an heap.

Secondly, If Jesus Christ be the desire of all Nations, how incomparably Happy then must that Nation be, that enjoys Christ in the Power and Purity of his Gospel-Ordinances! If Christ under a Vail made Canaan a glorious Land (as it's called) *Dan. 11. 41.* What a glorious Place must that Nation be that beholds him with open Face in the bright Sunshine of the Gospel! O England know thy Happiness, and the Day of thy Visitation: What others desire thou enjoyest: Provoke not the Lord Jesus to depart from thee, by corrupting his Worship, hankering after Idolatry, abusing his Messengers, oppressing his People, lest his Soul depart from thee.

Second Use for Examination. If Christ be the desire of all Nations, examine whether he be the desire of your Souls in particular, else you shall have no Benefit by him. Are your desires after Christ true spiritual Desires? Reflect, I beseech you, upon the Frames and Tempers of your Hearts. Can you say of your desires after Christ, as Peter did of his Love to Christ, Lord, thou knowest all Things, thou knowest that I desire thee: Try your desires as to their Sincerity, by the following Characters.

First,

First, Are they vehement and ardent? Hath Christ the suprem Place in your Desires? Do you esteem all Things to be but drops and dung in Comparison of the Excellencies of Jesus Christ your Lord? *Phil.* 3. 8. Is he to you as the Refuge City to the Manslayer, *Heb.* 6. 18, 19. As a Spring of Water in a dry Place, as the shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land, *Isa.* 32. 2. Such vehement Desires are true Desires.

Secondly, Are your Desires after Christ universal? (i. e.) Is every Thing in Christ desirable in your Eyes? The *Hypocrite* like the *Harlot* is for a divided Christ: They would be called by his Name, but live upon their own Stock, *Isa.* 4. 1. If his Holiness, and Government, his Cross, and Sufferings be desirable for his Sake, such universal Desires are right Desires.

Thirdly, Are your Desires after Christ industrious Desires, using all the means of accomplishing what you Desire? You say you desire Christ, but what will you do to obtain your Desires? If you seek him carefully and incessantly in all the ways of Duty, if you will strive in Prayer, Labour to believe, cut off right Hands, and pluck out right Eyes; (i. e.) be Content to Part with the most profitable and pleasant Ways of Sin, that you may enjoy Christ the desire of your Souls, then are your Desires right Desires.

Fourthly, Are your Desires after Christ permanent Desires, or only a suddain Mood and Fit, which goes off again without Effect? If your Desires after Christ abide upon your Hearts, if your longings be after him at all Times, though not in the same height and Degree, then are your Desires right Desires? Christ always dwells in the desires of his People, they can feel him in their Desires, when they cannot discern him in their Loves or Delights.

Fifthly, Will your Desires after Christ admit no Satisfaction, nor find rest any where but in the enjoyment of Christ, then are your Desires right Desires: The Soul that desires Christ can never be at rest till it come home to Christ, *2 Cor.* 5. 2, 6. *Phil.* 1. 23. The Devil can satisfy others with Riches and Pleasures of this World, as Children are quieted with Rattles. If nothing but Christ can rest and terminate your Desires, surely such restless Desires are right Desires.

Sixthly, Do your Desires after Christ spring from a deep Sense of your Need and Want of Christ: Hath Conviction opened your Eyes to see your Misery, to feel your Burthens, and to make you sensible that your Remedy lies only in the Lord Jesus, then are your Desires right Desires: Bread and Water are made necessary and desirable by hunger and thirst. By these Things try the Truth of your Desires after Christ.

3d. Use for Consolation. Do you indeed upon serious Trial find such Desires after Christ, as were described above, Oh bless the Lord for that Day wherein Christ the desire of Nations became the desire of your Souls, and for your Comfort know that you are happy and blessed Souls at present.

First, Blessed in this, that your Eyes have been opened to see both the want and the worth of Christ. Had not Christ applied his precious Eye-salve to the Eyes of your Mind, you could never have desired him, you would have said with them in *Isa.* 53. 2, 3. *He hath no Form nor Comeliness,*

and when we shall see him, there is no Beauty that we should desire him: Or as they to the Spouse, Cant. 5. 9. *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved? Oh blessed Souls enlightened of the Lord; to see those things that are hid from them that perish!*

Secondly, You are blessed in this, that your desires after Christ are a sure Evidence that the desire of Christ is towards you: Had he not first desired you, you could never have desired him. We may say of Desires as it is said of Love; we desire him because he first desired us: Your desires after Christ are inflamed from the desires of Christ after you.

Thirdly, Blessed in this, that your desires shall surely be satisfied, *Mat.* 5. 6. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled:* *Prov.* 10. 24. *The desires of the Righteous shall be granted.* God never raised such desires as these in the Souls of his People to be a torment to them for ever.

Fourthly, Blessed in this, that God hath guided your desires to make the best Choice that ever was made in the World: Whilst the desires of others are hunting after Riches, Pleasure and Honours in the World, toiling themselves like Children in pursuit of a painted Butterfly, which when they have caught, doth but daub their fingers; God mean while hath directed your desires to Christ, the most excellent Object in Heaven or Earth. Any good will satisfy some Men, Oh happy Soul if none but Christ can satisfy thee, *Psal.* 4. 6.

Fifthly, Blessed in this, that there is a Work of Grace certainly wrought upon thy Soul, and these very desires after Christ are a part thereof.

Sixthly, Blessed in this, that these desires after Christ keep thy Soul active and working after him continually in the ways of Duty, *Psal.* 27. 4. *One thing have I desired, that will I seek after.* Desire will be a continual Spring to Diligence and Industry in the ways of Duty: The desire of the end quickens to the use of Means, *Prov.* 13. 1. Others may fall asleep and cast off Duty, but it will be hard for you to do so, whose Souls burn with desire after Christ.

Sevently, Blessed in this, that your desires after Christ will make Death much the sweeter and easier to you, *Phil.* 1. 23. *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* When a Christian was once asked, whether he were willing to Die? He returned this Answer, let him be unwilling to Die, who is unwilling to go to Christ: And much like it was that of another, *vivere remus, ut Christo vivamus*; I refuse this Life, to live with Christ.

4th Use for Exhortation. In the fourth Place, let me exhort and persuade all to make Jesus Christ the desire and choice of their Souls. And here I fall in with the main Scope and Design of the Gospel: And oh that I could effectually press home this Exhortation upon your Hearts. Let me offer some moving Considerations to you, and the Lord accompany them to your Hearts.

First, Every Creature naturally desires its own Preservation, do not you desire the Preservation of your precious and immortal Souls? If you do, then make Christ your desire and choice, without whom they can never be preserved, *Jude ver.* 1.

Secondly, Don't your Souls earnestly desire the Bodies they live in? How tender are they over them,

*Illius est
nolle mori,
qui nolle i-
re ad Chri-
stum.*

1682

ACT
1680
1681
1682
1683
1684
1685
1686
1687
1688
1689
1690

1691
1692
1693
1694
1695

them, how careful to provide for them? Though they pay a dear Rent for those Tenements they live in: And is not Union with Christ infinitely more desirable than the Union of Soul and Body? Oh covet Union with him, then shall your Souls be Happy, when your Bodies drop off from them at Death, 2 Cor. 5. 1, 3. Yea, Soul and Body shall be happy in him, and with him for evermore.

Thirdly, How do the Men of this World desire the Enjoyments of it? They pant after the Dust of the Earth: They rise early, sit up late, eat the Bread of carefulness; and all this for very Vanity. Shall a worldling do more for Earth than you for Heaven? Shall the Creature be so earnestly desired, and Christ neglected?

Fourthly, What do all your Desires in this World Benefit you, if you go Christless? Suppose you had the desire of your Hearts in these Things, how long shall you have Comfort in them if you miss Christ?

Fifthly, Doth Christ desire you, who have nothing lovely or desirable in you? And have you no desires after Christ, the most lovely, and desirable one in both Worlds? His desires are towards you, *Prov. 8. 31*. O make him the desire and choice of your Souls.

Sixthly, How absolutely necessary is Jesus Christ to your Souls? Bread and Water, Breath and Life is not so necessary as Christ is, *One thing is necessary*, Luke 10. 42. And that one thing is Christ: If you miss your desires in other things, you may yet be happy; but if you miss Christ, you are undone for ever.

Seventhly, How suitable a good is Christ to your Souls? Comprising whatsoever they want, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Set your Hearts where you will, none will be found to match and suit them as Christ doth.

Eighthly, How great are the Benefit that will redound to you by Jesus Christ? In him you shall have a rich Inheritance settled upon you: All things shall be yours when you are Christs, 1 Cor. 3. 22. And is not such a Christ worth desiring?

Ninthly, All your well-grounded hopes of Glory are built upon your Union with Christ, 1 Cor. 1. 21. If you miss Christ, you must Die without hope; will not this draw your Desires to him?

Tenthly, Suppose you were at the Judgment Seat of God, where you must shortly stand; and saw the Terrors of the Lord in that Day; the Sheep divided from the Goats, the Sentences of Absolution and Condemnation past by the great and awful Judge, upon the Righteous and the Wicked; would not Christ be then desirable in your Eyes? As ever you expect to stand with Comfort at that Bar, let Christ be the desire and choice of your Souls now.

11th life for Direction. Do these, or any other Considerations put thee upon this enquiry, how shall I get my desires kindled and inflamed towards Christ? Alas, my Heart is cold and dead, not a serious desire stirring in it after Christ: To such I shall offer the following Directions.

Direction 1. Redeem some time every Day for Meditation: Get out of the noise and clamour of the World, *Psal. 4. 4*. And seriously bethink your selves how the present State of your Soul stands, and how it is like to go with you for ever: Here all sound Conversion begins, *Psal. 119. 19*.

Direction 2. Consider seriously of that lamentable State in which you came into the World: Children of Wrath by Nature, under the Curse and Condemnation of the Law. So that either your State must be changed, or you inevitably damned, *John 3. 3*.

Direction 3. Consider the way and course you have taken, since you came into the World; proceeding from Iniquity to Iniquity. What Command of God have you not violated a thousand Times over? What Sin is committed in the World, that you are not one way or other guilty of before God? How many secret Sins upon your Score, unknown to the most intimate Friend you have in the World? Either this guilt must be separated from your Souls, or your Souls from God to all Eternity.

Direction 4. Think upon the severe Wrath of God due to every Sin, *The Wages of Sin is Death*, Rom. 6. ult. And how intolerable the fulness of that Wrath must be when a few drops sprinkled upon the Conscience in the World is so insupportable, that it hath made some to choose strangling rather than Life: And yet this Wrath must abide for ever upon you, if you get not Interest in Jesus Christ, *John 3. 36*.

Direction 5. Ponder well the happy State and Condition they are in, who have obtained Pardon and Peace by Jesus Christ, *Psal. 32. 12*. And seeing the Grace of God is free, and you are yet under the means thereof; why may not you be as capable thereof as others?

Direction 6. Seriously consider the great uncertainty of your time, and preciousness of the Opportunities of Salvation, never to be recovered when they are once past, *John 9. 4*. Let this provoke you to lay hold upon those golden Seasons, whilst they are yet with you; that you may not bewail your Folly and Madeness when they are out of your reach.

Direction 7. Associate your selves with serious Christians, get into their Acquaintance, and beg their Assistance; beseech them to pray for you: And see that you rest not here, but be frequently upon your Knees begging of the Lord a new Heart; and a new State.

In Conclusion of the whole, let me beseech and beg all the People of God, as upon my Knees, to take heed and beware lest by the carelessness, and scandals of their Lives, they quench the weak desires beginning to kindle in the Hearts of others. You know what the Law of God awards for striking a Woman with Child, so that her fruit go from her, *Exod. 21. 22, 23*. Oh shed not Soul-blood by stifling the hopeful desires of any after Christ.

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ the desire of all Nations.

The Fourteenth SERMON.

I COR. II. vii.

Which none of the Princes of this World have known, for had they known him, they would not have Crucified the Lord of Glory.

Text. Containing the fifth Motive to apply Christ, drawn from another excellent Title of Christ.

IN this Chapter the Apostle Discourses to the Corinthians the Excellency of his Ministry, both to obviate the Contempt which some cast upon it for want of humane Ornaments; and to give the greater Authority unto it among all: And whereas the spiritual Simplicity of his Ministry laid it under the Contempt of some, he removes that several Ways, by shewing them.

First, That it was not suitable to the Design, and End of his Ministry, his aim being to know nothing

among them, save Jesus Christ, and him Crucified, *verse 1, 2*.

Secondly, Neither was it for the Advantage of their Souls: It might indeed tickle their Fancies, but could be no solid Foundation to their Faith and Comfort, *verse 4, 5*.

Thirdly, Though his Discourses seemed jejune, and dry to carnal hearers, yet had a depth, and an excellency in it, which spiritual and judicious Christians saw and acknowledged, *verse 6, 7*.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Therefore this excellent Wisdom which he Preached, far transcended all the natural Wisdom of this World: Yea, the most raised and improved Understandings of those that were most renowned, and admired in that Age for Wisdom, *ver. 2. Which none of the Princes of this World knew.*

In which Words we have,

1. A Negative Proposition.

2. The Proof of the Proposition.

First, A Negative Proposition, none of the Princes of this World knew that Spiritual Wisdom which he taught. By *Princes of this World*, or rather *Principes seculi*, the Princes of that Age he means, as *Camero* well Notes, the Learned *Rabbies, Scribes, and Pharisees*, renowned for Wisdom and Learning among them, and honoured upon that account, as so many *Princes*: But he adds a diminutive Term, which darkens all their Glory. They are but the *Princes of this World*, utterly unacquainted with the Wisdom of the other World. To which he adds,

Secondly, A clear and full Proof, for had they known it, they would not have Crucified the Lord of Glory. In which Words we find one of Christ's Glorious and Royal Titles, the *Lord of Glory*: Upon which Title my present Discourse must fall. The Words being fitly rendered and nothing of ambiguity in them, they give us this Observation.

Doct. That Christ Crucified is the Lord of Glory.

Great and excellent is the Glory of Jesus Christ; the Scriptures every where proclaim his Glory. Yea, we may observe a notable *Climax*, or gradation in those Scriptures that speak of his Glory. The Prophet *Isaiah* speaking of him, calls him *Glorious*, *Isa. 4. 2. In that Day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious.* John speaking of his Glory rises a step higher, and ascribeth to him a *Glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father*, *John 1. 14. (i.e.)* a *Glory* meet for, and becoming the Son of God: Proper to him, and incommunicable to any other. The Apostle *James* rises yet higher, and doth not only call him *Glorious*, or *Glorious as the only begotten of the Father*: But the *Glory*, *Jam. 2. 1. Glory in the abstract; my Brethren (saith he) have not the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Glory, with respect of Persons*: For the Word, *Lord*, which is in our Translation, is a supplement: Christ is *Glory* in himself; yea, the *Glory* emphatically so styled; the *Glory* of Heaven, the *Glory of Zion*; the *Glory* of our Souls for ever. The Author to the *Hebrews* goes yet higher, and calls him not simply the *Glory*, but the *brightness of his Father's Glory*, *Heb. 1. 3.* as who should say, the radiancy, sparkling, or beaming forth of his Father's *Glory*, the very splendour or refulgency of *Divine Glory*. Oh what a glorious Lord is our Lord Jesus Christ! the bright sparkling *Diamond* of Heaven; who shines in *Glory* there, above the *Glory* of Angels and Saints, as the *Glory* of the Sun excels the lesser twinkling Stars. When he appeared to *Paul*, *Acts 26. 13. I saw, said he, a light from Heaven, above the brightness of the Sun, shining round about me*: Needs must the *Glory* of Christ be

unspeakable, who reflects *Glory* upon all that be with him, *John 17. 24.* and flamps *Glory* upon all that belongs to him. His works on Earth were *glorious works*, *Luke 13. 17.* The purchased liberty of his People, a glorious liberty, *Rom. 8. 21.* The Church his mystical Body, a glorious Church, *Eph. 5. 27.* The Gospel which reveals him, is a glorious Gospel, *1 Tim. 1. 11.*

But more particularly, let us consider the *Glory* of Christ, as it is distinguished into his, either,

1. Essential, or

2. Mediatorial *Glory*.

First, The *Essential Glory* of Christ, which he hath as God from everlasting; which is unspeakable and unconceivable *Glory*: For (saith the Apostle) *Phil. 2. 6. He being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, (i. e.)* he had a Peerage, or equality with his Father in *Glory*, *Joh. 10. 30. I and my Father are one*: And again, *Joh. 16. 15. All things that the Father hath are mine*: The same Name, the same Nature, the same essential Properties, the same Will, and the same *Glory*.

Secondly, The *Mediatorial Glory* of Christ is exceeding great: This is proper to him, as Head of the Church, which he hath purchased with his own Blood. Of this *Glory* the Apostle speaks, *Phil. 2. 9, 10. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every Name, &c.* *Exalted above all Exaltation.* Now the Mediatorial *Glory* of our Lord Jesus Christ consisteth either,

1. In the fulness of Grace inherent in him.

2. Or in the Dignity and Authority put upon him.

First, In the fulness of Grace inherent in him: The humanity of Christ is filled with Grace, as the Sun with Light, *Joh. 1. 14. Full of Grace and Truth*: Never any Creature was so filled by the Spirit of Grace, as the Man Christ Jesus is filled, for God gives not the Spirit to him by measure, *John 3. 34.* By reason of this fulness of Grace inherent in him, he is *farer than the Children of Men*, *Psal. 45. 2.* Excelling all the Saints in spiritual Lustre, and gracious Excellencies.

Secondly, In the Dignity and Authority put upon him: He is crowned King in *Sion*: All Power in Heaven and Earth is given unto him, *Matth. 28. 18.* He is Lawgiver to the Church, *Jam. 4. 12.* All acts of Worship are to be performed in his Name; Prayer, Preaching, Censures, Sacraments, all to be administered in his Name. Church Officers are Commissioned by him, *Eph. 4. 11.* The Judgment of the World in the Great Day will be administered by him, *Matth. 25. 31. Then shall he sit upon the Throne of his Glory.*

To conclude, Jesus Christ shall have *Glory* and Honour ascribed to him for evermore by Angels and Saints, upon the account of his Mediatorial work. This some Divines call his *Passive Glory*; the *Glory* which he is to receive from his redeemed ones, *Rev. 5. 8, 9, 10.* And when he had taken the Book, the four Beasts, and the four and twenty Elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them Harps, and golden

* At du-
gag ma-
dēns.

B b b

golden Vials full of Odors, which are the Prayers of the Saints; and they sung a new Song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, &c. And thus you see, that our Lord Jesus Christ is upon all accounts the Lord of Glory. The Uses follow.

Inference 1.

How wonderful was the Love of Christ the Lord of Glory, to be so abased and humbled as he was for us vile and sinful Dust? 'Tis astonishing to conceive that ever Jesus Christ should strip himself out of his Robes of Glory, to cloath himself with the Tread-bare Tatters of our Flesh. Oh what a stoop did he make in his Incarnation for us! If the most magnificent Monarch upon Earth, had been degraded into a Toad: If the Sun in the Heavens had been turned into a wandering Atom: If the most Glorious Angel in Heaven, had been transformed into a silly Fly; it had been nothing to the abasement of the Lord of Glory. This Act is every where celebrated in Scripture, as the great Mystery, the astonishing Wonder of the whole World, 2 Tim. 3. 16. Phil. 2. 8. Rom. 8. 3. The Lord of Glory looked not like himself, when he came in the Habit of a Man, Isa. 53. 3. We hid as it were our Faces from him: Nay, rather like a Worm, than a Man, Psa. 22. 6. A reproach of Men, and despised of the People. The Birds of the Air, and Beasts of the Earth were here provided of better Accommodations than the Lord of Glory, Matth. 8. 20. Oh stupendous Abasement! Oh Love unspeakable! Though he was Rich, yet for our sakes he became Poor, that we through his Poverty might be Rich, 2 Cor. 8. 9. He put off the Crown of Glory, to put on the Crown of Thorns: Quanto pro me vilior, tanto mihi charior, said Bernard, the lower he humbled himself for me, the dearer he shall be to me.

Inference 2.

How transcendently Glorious is the Advancement of Believers by their Union with the Lord of Glory! This also is an admirable and astonishing Mystery; 'tis the highest Dignity of which our Nature is capable, to be Hypostatically united, and the greatest Glory of which our Persons are capable to be Mystically united to this Lord of Glory; to be Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh. O what is this! Christian dost thou know and believe all this, and thy Heart not burn within thee in Love to Christ? O then what a Heart hast thou? What art thou by Nature, but sinful dust, a loathsome Sinner, viler than the vilest Toad, cast out to the loathing of thy Person in the Day of thy Nativity! O that ever the Lord of Glory should unite himself to such a lump of vileness! Take such a Wretch into his very Bosom! Be astonished O Heavens and Earth at this; this is the great Mystery which the Angels swoop down to look into. Such an Honour as this could never enter into the Heart of Man: It would have seemed a rude Blasphemy in us once to have thought, or spoken of such a thing, had not Christ made the first Motion thereof. Yet how long didst thou make this Lord of Glory

wait upon thy undetermined will, before he gained thy Consent? Might he not justly have spurned thee into Hell upon thy first refusal, and never have made thee such another offer? Wilt thou not say, Lord, what am I, and what is my Father's Honour, that so great a King should stoop so far beneath himself to such a Worm as I am! That Strength should unite it self to Weakness, infinite Glory to such Baseness! O Grace, Grace, for ever to be admired!

Inference 3.

Is Jesus Christ the Lord of Glory? Then let no Man count himself dishonoured by Suffering the vilest Indignities for his Sake: The Lord of Glory puts Glory upon the very Sufferings you undergo in this World for him. Moses esteemed the Reproaches of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt, Heb. 11. 26. He cast a Kingdom at his Heels, to be crowned with Reproaches for the Name of Christ. The Diadem of Egypt was not half so glorious, as self-denial for Christ. This Lord of Glory freely degraded himself for thee, wilt thou stand huckling with him upon Terms? 'Tis certainly your Honour to be dishonoured for Christ, Acts 5. 41. To you it is given in behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake, Phil. 1. 29. The Gift of Suffering is there matched with the Gift of Faith: 'Tis given as an honorarium, a badge of Honour to suffer for the Lord of Glory: As all have not the Honour to wear the Crown of Glory in Heaven; so few have the Honour to wear the Chain of Christ upon Earth. THOMAS reports of Lodovicus Marfacus, a Knight of France, that being led to suffer with other Martyrs who were bound, and he unbound, because a Person of Honour; he cried out, Why don't you Honour me with a Chain too, and create me a Knight of that Noble Order? My Brethren, count it all Joy when ye fall into divers Temptations, Jam. 1. 2. (i.e.) Tryals by sufferings, annus. David thought it an Honour to be vile for God, and that's a true Observation, that Disgrace it self is glorious, when endured for the Lord of Glory.

Inference 4.

Is Christ the Lord of Glory? How Glorious then shall the Saints one Day be, when they shall be made like this glorious Lord, and partake of his Glory in Heaven, John 17. 22. the Glory which thou gavest me, I have given them: Yea, the vile Bodies of Believers, shall be made like to the glorious Body of Christ, Phil. 3. 21. What Glory then will be communicated to their Souls? True, his essential Glory is incommunicable; but there is a Glory, which Christ will communicate to his People, When he comes to Judge the World, he will come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, 2 Thes. 1. 10. Where he seemeth to account his social Glory, which shall result from his Saints, a great part of his own Glory: As we have now fellowship with him in his Sufferings, so we shall have a Fellowship or Communion with him in his Glory: When he shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in Glory: Then the poorest Believer shall be more glorious than Solomon in all his Royalty: It

Cur me non quætorque denas, I insignis hujus ordinis militem creas? Thou annus.

It was a pious saying of *Iulius*, that he had rather be *Christianus Rusticus*, quam *Etanicus Alexander*, a Christian Clown, than a Pagan Emperor; the Righteous is more excellent than his Neighbour, though he live next door to a graceless Nobleman: But it doth not yet appear what they shall be. The Day will come, it will certainly come, for the Lord hath spoken it, when they shall shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father.

Inference 5.

How hath the Devil blindfolded, and deluded them, that are scared off from Christ by the fears of being dishonoured by him? Many Persons have half a mind to Religion, but when they consider the generality of its Professors to be Persons of the lowest and meanest rank in the World, and that Reproaches and Sufferings attend that way, they shrink back as Men ashamed, and as *Salvian* saith, *Mali esse coguntur, ne viles habeantur*, they chuse rather to remain Wicked, than to become Vile: But to them that believe, Christ is an Honour: As the Word which we translate Precious might be rendered, 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. Till God open Mens Eyes thus, they will put evil for good, and good for evil. But O dear bought Honours for which Men stake their Souls, and everlasting Happiness! *Paul* was not of your Mind, yet for Birth he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews; for Dignity and Esteem, a Pharisee; for Moral Accomplishments, touching the Law blameless: Yet all this he trampled under his Feet, counting it all but dross and dung in Comparison of Jesus Christ. *Moses* had more Honour to lay down for Christ than you, yet it was no Temptation to him to conceal or deny the Faith of Christ. Noble *Galecius* would not be withheld from Christ by the Splendour and Glory of *Italy*. But Oh how doth the Glory of this World dazzle and blind the Eyes of many! How can ye believe (saith Christ) who receive Honour one of another, *John* 5. 44. Saints and Sinners upon this account are wonders one to the other. 'Tis the wonder of the World to see Christians glorying in reproaches, they wonder that the Saints run not with them into the same excess of riot. And it is a wonder to Believers how such poor Toys and empty Titles (rather than Titles of Honour) should keep the World as it doth from Jesus Christ, and their Everlasting Happiness in him.

Inference 6.

If Christ be the Lord of Glory, how careful should all be who profess him, that they do not dishonour Jesus Christ, whose Name is called upon by them? Christ is a Glory to you, be not you a shame and dishonour to him. How careful had Christians need be to draw every Line and Action of their Lives exactly. The more glorious Christ is, the more circumspect and watchful ye had need to be. How lovely would Jesus Christ appear to the World, if the Lives of Christians did adorn the Doctrine of God their Saviour in all things! Remember you represent the Lord of Glory to the World: 'Tis not your honour only, but the Honour of Christ which is engaged and concerned in your actions. O let not the carelessness or scandals of your Life make Jesus Christ ashamed.

Vol. I.

ed to be called your LORD. When *Israel* had grievously revolted from God, he bids *Moses* rise, and get him down from thence, for (saith he) thy People, which thou hast brought forth out of *Egypt*, have corrupted themselves, *Deut.* 9. 12. as if the Lord were ashamed to own them for his People any longer. It was a cutting Question, *James* 2. 7. apt to startle the Consciences of those loose Professors; Do they not blaspheme that worthy Name by which ye are called? Your Duty is to adorn the Gospel by your Conversations, *Titim* 2. 10. The words signify to deck, trim, or adorn the Gospel, to make it trim, neat and lovely to the Eyes of beholders. When there is such a beautiful harmony, and lovely proportion betwixt Christ's Doctrine and your Practices, as there is in the Works of Creation; wherein the comeliness and elegance of the World much consists, (for to this the Apostles Word here alludes) then do we walk suitably to the Lord of Glory.

Inference 7.

What delight should Christians take in their daily converse with Jesus Christ in the way of Duty? Your Converses in Prayer, Hearing, and Meditation are with the Lord of Glory: The greatest Peers in a Kingdom, account it more Honour to be in the presence of a King bare-headed, or upon the Knee at Court, than to have thousands standing bare to them in the Country. When you are called to Duties of Communion with Christ, you are called to the greatest Honour, dignified with the noblest Privilege Creatures are capable of in this World: Had you but a sense of that Honour God puts upon you by this means, you would not need so much tugging and striving to bring a dead and backward Heart into the special presence of Jesus Christ. When he saith, seek ye my Face, your Hearts would echo to his Calls, thy Face, Lord, will we seek: But, alas, the Glory of Christ is much hid and veiled by ignorance and unbelief from the Eyes of his own People; 'tis but seldom the best of Saints, by the Eye of Faith, do see the King in his Glory.

Inference 8.

If Christ be so glorious, how should Believers long to be with him, and behold him in his Glory above? Most Men need Patience to Die, a Believer should need Patience to Live. *Paul* thought it well worth enduring the Pangs of Death, to get a sight of Jesus Christ in his Glory, *Phil.* 1. 23. The Lord direct your Hearts into the Love of God, and patient waiting for of Christ, (saith the Apostle) 2 *Thes.* 3. 5. intimating that the Saints have great need of Patience to enable them to endure the state of Distance and Separation from Christ, so long as they must endure it in this World. The Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that beareth say come, and let him that is a-thirst come, even so come Lord Jesus, and be thou as a swift Roe upon the Mountains of Separation.

Blessed be God for Jesus Christ the Lord of Glory.

B b b 2

SER-

SERMON XV.

LUKE II. 25.

—Waiting for the [Consolation] of Israel.

Serm. 15.
Text. O-
pening the
sixth Mo-
tive to
come to
Christ,
contained
in the
sixth and
last Title
of Christ.

Several Glorious Titles of Christ have been already spoken to, out of each of which, much Comfort flows to Believers: 'Tis comfortable to a wounded Soul to eye him as a *Physician*: Comfortable to a condemned and unworthy Soul, to look upon him under the Notion of the *Mercy*. The loveliness, the desirableness, and the Glory of Christ are all so many Springs of Consolation. But now I am to shew you from this Scripture, that the Saints have not only much Consolation from Christ, but that Christ himself is the *very Consolation* of Believers: He is pure Comfort wrapped up in Flesh and Blood.

In this Context you have an account of *Simeon's* Prophecy concerning Christ; and in this Text, a Description of the Person, and quality of *Simeon* himself, who is described two Ways.

1. By his *Practice*.
2. By his *Principle*.

His Practice was Heavenly and Holy, he was a *Just and Devout Man*: The Principle from which his Righteousness and Holiness did flow, was his Faith in Christ; *he waited for the Consolation of Israel*. In which Words by way of *Periphrasis* we have,

1. A Description of Christ, the Consolation of *Israel*.
2. The Description of a Believer, one that waiteth for Christ.

First, That the *Consolation of Israel* is a Phrase descriptive of Jesus Christ is beyond all doubt, if you consult, *ver. 26*. where he, (*i.e.*) *Simeon* is satisfied by receiving Christ into his Arms, the Consolation for which he had so long waited.

Secondly, And that waiting for Christ is a Phrase describing the Believers of those Times, that preceded the Incarnation of Christ, is past doubt; they all waited for that Blessed Day: But it was *Simeon's* lot to fall just upon that happy nick of Time, wherein the Prophecies and Promises of his Incarnation were fulfilled. *Simeon* and others that waited with him, were sensible that the Time of the Promise was come, which could not but raise (as indeed it did) a general Expectation of him, *John 9. 19*. But *Simeon's* Faith was confirmed by a particular Revelation, *ver. 26*. That he should see Christ before he saw Death, which could not but greatly encourage and raise his Expectation to look out for him, whose coming would be the greatest Consolation to the whole *Israel* of God. The Consolation, *παράκλησις*. The Spirit is frequently called in Scripture, *παράκλησις*, the Comforter: But Christ in this Place is called *παράκλησις*, Comfort, or Conso-

lation it self; the Reason of both is given in *John 16. 14*. *He shall take of mine and shew it unto you*: Where Christ is said to be the matter, and the Spirit, the applier of true Comfort to the People of God. Now this Consolation is here expressed both with a singular *Emphasis* [the Consolation] intimating that there is nothing of Consolation in any thing beside him: All other Comforts compared with this, are not worth a naming. And as it is emphatically expressed, so it is also limited and bounded within the compass of Gods *Israel* (*i.e.*) true Believers stiled the *Israel* of God, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, *Gal. 6. 16*. From whence the Point of Doctrine is,

Doct. That Jesus Christ is the only Consolation of Believers, and of none besides them.

So speaks the Apostle, *Phil. 3. 3*. *For we are the Circumcision, which Worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no Confidence in the Flesh*. Those that Worship God in the Spirit are sincere Believers; to such sincere Believers Christ is Consolation, *our rejoicing is in Christ Jesus*: And they have no Consolation in any thing beside him, nothing in the World can give them Comfort without Christ, *We have no Confidence in the Flesh*. The Gospel is glad Tydings of great Joy, but that which makes it to be so, is Jesus Christ, whom it imparts and reveals to us, *Luke 2. 10, 11*. In the opening of this comfortable Point, four things must be spoken to, for the right stating the Method of our Discourse, *viz.*

1. What is meant by Consolation.
2. That Christ, and he only is Consolation to Believers.
3. That Believers only have Consolation in Christ.
4. How it comes to pass, that any Believer should be dejected; since Christ is Consolation to all Believers.

The first thing to be opened, is the Nature of Consolation, which is nothing else but the *clearness of a Man's Spirit, whereby he is upheld, and fortified against all Evils felt, or feared*. Consolation is to the Soul, what Health is to the Body after waiting Sickness, or the reviving Spring to the Earth after a long and hard Winter: And there are three sorts of Consolation, or Comfort, suitable to the Disposition and Temper of the Mind, *viz.*

Natural,
Sinful, and
Spiritual.

Natural Comfort is the Refreshment of our Natural Spirits by the good Creatures of God, *Acts 14. 17*. *Filling their Hearts with Food and Gladness*. Sinful Comfort is the Satisfaction and Pleasure Men take in the fulfilling of their Lusts,

Phrasis est
Judæis
cum tem-
poris fa-
miliaris
& natifi-
ma, qua
Messia ad-
ventum
significa-
batur. Lo-
dov. Ce-
pell

lusts, by the abuse of the Creatures of God, *James 5. 5. Ye have lived in Pleasure upon Earth, (i. e.) your Life hath been a Life of Sensuality and Sin.*

Spiritual Comfort is the Refreshment, Peace, and Joy, Gracious Souls have in Christ, by the Exercise of Faith, Hope, and other Graces, *Rom. 5. 2.* And this only deserves the Name of true solid Consolation: To which four Things are required.

First, That the Matter thereof be some *Spiritual*, eminent, and durable Good: Else our Consolation in it, will be but as the crackling of Thorns under a Pot: a sudden blaze, quickly extinct with the failing Matter: Christ only gives the Matter of solid durable Consolation: The Righteousness of Christ, the Pardon of Sin, the Favour of God, the Hopes of Glory, are the substantial Materials of a Believers Consolation, *Rom. 5. 2. Matth. 9. 2. Psal. 4. 6, 7. 2 Pet. 1. 8.* Things are as their Foundations be.

Secondly, Interest and Propriety in these comfortable things, is requisite to our Consolation by them, *Luke 1. 47. My Spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour.* 'Tis no Consolation to him that is hungry, to see a Feast; to him that is Poor, to see a Treasure; if the one may not taste, or the other partake thereof.

Thirdly, Knowledge, and Evidence of Interest in some degree is requisite to actual Consolation, though without it a Man may be in the state of Consolation: For that which appears not, is (in point of actual Comfort) as if it were not.

Fourthly, In order hereunto the Work of the Spirit upon our Hearts is requisite, both to give, and clear our Interest in Christ, and the Promises: And both these Ways he is the Comforter, *The Fruit of the Spirit is Joy, Gal. 5. 22.* And thus briefly of the Nature of Consolation.

Secondly, Next I will shew you that Christ, and he only is Matter of Consolation to Believers: Which will demonstratively appear by this Argument.

Arg. He that brings to their Souls all that is comfortable, and removes from their Souls all that is uncomfortable, must needs be the only Consolation of Believers.

But Jesus Christ brings to their Souls all that is comfortable, and removes from their Souls all that is uncomfortable.

Therefore Christ only is the Consolation of Believers.

First, Jesus Christ brings whatsoever is comfortable to the Souls of Believers. Is Pardon comfortable to a Person Condemned? Nothing can be Matter of greater Comfort in this World. Why, this Christ brings to all Believers, *Jer. 23. 6. And this is the Name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.* This cannot but give strong Consolation: Righteousness is the Foundation of Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, *Rom. 14. 17. The Work of Righteousness shall be Peace, and the effect of Righteousness, Quietness, and Assurance for ever.* *Isa. 32. 17.* Come to a dejected Soul, labouring under the burden of guilt, and say, Cheer up, I bring you good tidings; there is such

an Estate befallen you, or such a troublesome Business comfortably ended for you; alas! this will not reach the Heart. If you can bring me (saith he) good News from Heaven, that my Sins are forgiven, and God reconciled; how soon should I be comforted! And therefore (as one well observes) this was the usual receipt with which Christ cured the Souls of Men and Women, when he was here on Earth; Son, or Daughter, *be of good cheer, thy Sins be forgiven thee:* And indeed it is as easie to separate Light and Warmth from the Beams of the Sun, as Cheeriness and Comfort from the Voice of Pardon.

Are the Hopes and Expectation of Heaven and Glory comfortable? Yes sure, nothing is comfortable if this be not, *Rom. 5. 2. We rejoice in hope of the Glory of God.* Now, Christ brings to the Souls of Men all the solid grounds and foundations upon which they build their Expectations of Glory, *Col. 1. 27. Which is Christ, in you, the Hope of Glory.* Name any thing else that is solid Matter of Comfort to the Souls of Men, and the grounds thereof will be found in Christ, and in none but Christ; as might easily be demonstrated by the Enumeration of Multitudes of particular Instances, which I cannot now insist upon.

Secondly, Jesus Christ removes from Believers, whatever is uncomfortable; therein relieving them against all the Matters of their Affliction and Sorrow. As namely,

First, Is Sin a burden, and matter of trouble to Believers? Christ, and none but Christ, removes that burden, *Rom. 7. 24, 25. O wretched Man that I am (saith Sin-burdened Paul) who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* The Satisfaction of his Blood, *Eph. 5. 2.* The Sanctification of his Spirit, *John 1. 5, 6.* His perfect deliverance of his People from the very being of Sin at last, *Eph. 5. 26, 27.* This relieves at present, and removes at last the matter and ground of all their Troubles and Sorrows for Sin.

Secondly, Do the Temptations of Satan burden Believers? O yes, by Reason of Temptations, they go in trouble and heaviness of Spirit. Temptation is an Enemy under the Walls, Temptation greatly endangers, and therefore cannot but greatly afflict the Souls of Believers; but Christ brings the only matter of relief against Temptations. The intercession of Christ is a singular relief at present, *Luke 22. 32. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.* And the Promises of Christ are a full relief for the future: *The God of Peace shall shortly tread Satan under your Feet, Rom. 16. 20.*

Thirdly, Is Spiritual Desertion, and the hiding of God's Face, matter of Affliction and casting down to Believers? Yes, yes, it quails their hearts, nothing can comfort them: *Thou hiddest thy Face, and I was troubled, Psal. 30. 7.* Outward afflictions do but break the skin, this touches the quick; they like Rain fall only upon the Tiles, this soaks into the House; but Christ brings to Believers substantial Matter of Consolation against the troubles of Desertion: He himself was deserted of God for a time,

time, that they might not be deferted for ever: In him also the relieving Promises are made to Believers, that notwithstanding God may defert them for a time, yet the Union betwixt him and them shall never be dissolved, *Heb. 13. 5. Jer. 32. 40.* Though he forsake them for a Moment, in respect of evidenced Favour, yet he will return again and comfort them, *Isa. 54. 7.* Though Satan tug hard, yet he shall never be able to pluck them out of his Father's Hand, *John 10. 20.* Oh what Relief is this! What Consolation is Christ to a deferted Believer?

Fourthly, Are outward Afflictions Matter of Dejection and Trouble? Alas, who finds them not to be so? How do our Hearts fail, and our Spirits sink under the many smiting Rods of God upon us! But our Relief and Consolation under them all, is in Christ Jesus: For the Rod that afflicts us is in the Hand of Christ that loveth us, *Rev. 3. 19. Whom I Love I Rebuke and Chasten:* His Delign in Affliction is our Profit, *Heb. 12. 10.* That Delign of his for our Good shall certainly be accomplished, *Rom. 8. 24.* And after that no more Afflictions for ever, *Rev. 21. 3, 4. God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes.* So that upon the whole, two Things are most evident.

First, Nothing can comfort the Soul without Christ: He is the Soul that animates all Comforts, they would be but dead Things without him. Temporal Enjoyments, Riches, Honours, Health, Relations, yield not a drop of true Comfort without Christ. Spiritual Enjoyments, Minister, Ordinances, Promises, are Fountains sealed, and Springs shut up till Christ open them, a Man may go comfortless in the midst of them all.

Secondly, No Troubles, Sorrows, or Afflictions can deject or sink the Soul that Christ comforteth, *2 Cor. 6. 12. As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.* A Believer may walk with a Heart brim full of Comfort, amidst all the Troubles of this World. Christ makes the Darknes of Trouble, to be Light round about his People. So that the Conclusion stands firm, and never to be shaken; that Christ, and Christ only is the Consolation of Believers: Which was the thing to be proved.

In the Third place, I am to shew you, that Believers, and none but Believers can have Consolation in Christ: Which will convincingly appear from the Consideration of those things which we laid down before, as the requisites to all true Spiritual Consolation. For,

First, No Unbeliever hath the materials out of which Spiritual Comfort is made; which (as I there told you) must be some Solid, Spiritual and Eternal Good, as Christ and the Covenant are. What do unregenerate Men rejoice in, but trifles and meer Vanities, in a thing of nought? *Amos 6. 13.* See how their Mirth is described in *Job 21. 12. They take their Tambrel and Harp, and rejoice at the sound of the Org.m.* He doth not say, they take the Bible, turn to the Promises, and rejoice in Christ and the Covenant; 'tis not the Melody of a good Conscience, the Joy of the Holy Ghost: No, no, they have no acquaintance with such Muck as that: But the rejoicing of Believers

is in those things, *2 Cor. 1. 12.* And this is well-built Consolation which reaches the Heart.

Secondly, I told you, that Propriety and Interest in Christ, and the Promises is required to all Spiritual Consolation: But no Unbeliever hath any Title or Interest in Christ, and the Promises, and so they can signifie nothing to him in Point of Comfort. 'Tis not another Mans Money, but my own, that must Feed, Cloath and Comfort me; nor is it another Man's Christ, but my own Christ, that must justify, save and comfort my Soul.

Thirdly, You were told that Evidence of a Man's Peace, and Reconciliation with God, is necessary to his actual Consolation, which no Unbeliever can possibly have; he hath neither Grace within him, to make him a qualified Subject of any special Promise; nor any Witnesses, or Seal of the Spirit to confirm and clear his Propriety in Christ: For he never Seals, but where he first Sanctifies. So that it is beyond all contradiction, that Believers, and none but Believers, are Partakers of the Consolations that are in Christ Jesus.

Fourthly, and Lastly, There is one inquiry remains to be satisfied, namely, seeing Jesus Christ is Consolation to Believers, how it comes to pass that so many Believers in the World should walk so dejectedly as they do without any Spiritual Consolation.

First, This may not be wondered at, if we consider that the Consolations of Christ are of two sorts. *Seminal* and in preparation, or *actual* in present possession. Every Believer in the World hath the root and seed of comfort, planted and sown for him, *Psal. 97. 11. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.* They have Christ and the Promises, which are the seeds of Consolation, and will bring forth joy at last, though at present they have no actual Consolation; the seed of all joy is sown, and in due time they shall reap the full ripe fruit thereof.

Secondly, It must be remembered that *interest* and *evidence* are distinct Blessings, every Believer hath interest in Christ, but every Believer hath not the evidence thereof, *Isai. 50. 10. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his Servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no Light.* Every Child of God is not of sufficient age to know his Father, or take comfort in that blessed inheritance whereunto he is begotten again, *1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.*

Thirdly, Every Believer doth not walk with like strictness, and exact Holiness, all do not exercise Faith in a like degree: Among Christians some are strong in Grace, rich in Faith, strict in Obedience, tender of Sin to an eminent degree, these usually are owners of much Consolation: But others are weak in Grace, poor in Faith, comparatively careles of their Hearts and Ways; frequently grieving the good Spirit of God, and wounding their own Consciences (the Vessel into which Spiritual Consolation is poured) and these are usually denied the Joy and Comfort which others abound withal.

Fourthly, The Consolations of Christ are arbitrarily dispensed by the Spirit who is the

the Comforter, and giveth to every Man in such proportions and seasons as pleaseth him; whence it comes to pass, that he that is rich in comfort to day, may be poor to morrow, and contrarily the Heart that is brimful of sorrow one Hour, is filled with Peace and Joy in believing the next. Things that are necessary to the Being of a Christian are fixed and stable, but things belonging only to the Well-being of a Christian come and go according to the good Pleasure and Appointment of the Spirit. The use of all follows.

Inference 1.

Hence it follows, that the state of Unbelievers is the most sad and uncomfortable state in the World: Having no interest in Christ the Consolation of Israel. 'Tis true, they abound in Creature-comforts, they live in Pleasure upon Earth. Joy displays its colours in their Faces: But for all this, there is not the least drop of true Consolation in any of their Hearts: They have some Comfort in the Creature, but none in Christ: That little they gather from the Creature now, is all their Portion of Joy, Luke 6. 24. *Ye have received your Consolation*: As this is all they have, so they shall enjoy it but a little while, Job 21. 13, 17. And while they do enjoy it, it's mix'd with many gripes of Conscience, Job 14. 13. *Even in Laughter the Heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness*: Whatever Consolation any Unbeliever speaks of besides this, is but by rote; far when the Day of his Distress cometh, and the terrors of Conscience shall awake him out of his pleasant Dreams, all his sensual Joys will vanish from him, and the doors of true Consolation will be all shut against him. Let him go to Jesus Christ, knock at that door, and say, *Lord, Jesus thy Name is Consolation, my Heart is ready to burst within me, hast thou no Consolation for me? O Lord, for one drop of Spiritual Comfort now, but alas there is none, no not in Christ himself for any Unbeliever*. 'Tis Children's Bread; the Saints Privilege; Comfort and Grace are undivided: Let him return into himself, search his own Conscience for Comfort, and say, O Conscience, thou art more than a thousand Witnesses, and thousands have been comforted by Thee: Where thou speakest Comfort none can speak Trouble: Hast thou no Consolation for me in my deepest Distress? Alas, no, if God Condemn thee, wherewithal shall I Comfort thee? I can speak neither more nor less than the Scriptures put into my Mouth, and I find not one Word in all the Book of God, warranting me to be thy Comforter: Believe it as an undoubted Truth (though the Sense of the bewitched World over-rules it) that the state of Unbelievers, even at the best, is a sad and dismal state.

Inference 2.

Let all Believers fetch all their Comfort out of Christ, who is the Consolation of his People: We're-joyce (saith the Apostle) in Christ Jesus, and have no Confidence in the Flesh. That's the true temper of a believing Soul: Take heed you live not partly upon Christ, and partly upon the Creature for your Comfort; much rather beware that you forsake not Christ, the Fountain of Living Waters, and hew out Cisterns

for your selves which can hold no Water, Jer. 2. 13. If you make any Creature the Spring and Fountain of your Comfort, assuredly God will dry up that Spring: If your Souls draw their Comfort from any Creature, you know they must out-live that Creature, and what then will you do for Comfort? Besides, as your Comforts are, so are you. The Food of every Creature is suitable to its Nature. You see divers Creatures feeding upon several parts of the same Herb; the Bee upon the Flower, the Bird upon the Seed, the Sheep upon the Stalk, and the Swine upon the Root; according to their Nature, so is their Food: Sensual Men feed upon sensual things; spiritual Men upon spiritual things; as your Food is, so are you. If carnal Comforts can content thy Heart, sure thy Heart must then be a very carnal Heart: Yea, and let Christians themselves take heed, that they fetch not their Consolations out of themselves instead of Christ: Your Graces and Duties are excellent Means and Instruments, but not the Ground-work and Foundation of your Comfort: They are useful Buckets to draw, but not the Well it self in which the Springs of Consolation rise: If you put your Duties in the room of Christ, Christ will put your Comforts out of the reach of your Duties.

Inference 3.

If Christ be the Consolation of Believers, what a comfortable Life should all Believers live in this World? Certainly, if the fault be not your own, you might live the happiest and comfortablest Lives of all Men in the World. If you would not be a discomfort to Christ, he would be a Comfort to you every Day, and in every Condition, to the end of your Lives: Your Condition abounds with all the Helps and Advantages of Consolation: You have the command of Christ to warrant your Comforts, Phil. 4. 4. You have the Spirit of Christ for a Spring of Comfort, you have the Scriptures of Christ for the rules of Comfort, you have the Duties of Religion for the means of Comfort: Why is it then that you go comfortless? If your Afflictions be many in the World, yet your encouragements be more in Christ: Your Troubles in the World may be turned into Joy, but your Comforts in Christ can never be turned into Trouble. Why should Troubles obstruct your Comfort, when the Blessing of Christ upon your Troubles makes them subservient to promote your Happiness? Rom. 8. 28. Shake off dependency then, and live up to the Principles of Religion: Your dejected Life is uncomfortable to your selves, and of very ill use to others.

Inference 4.

If Christ be the Consolation of Believers, then let all that desire Comfort in this World, or in that to come, embrace Jesus Christ, and get real Union with him. The same Hour you shall be in Christ, you shall also be at the Fountain-head of all Consolations. Thy Soul shall be then a pardoned Soul, and a pardoned Soul hath all Reason in the World to be a joyful Soul: In that Day thy Conscience shall be sprinkled with the Blood of Christ, and a sprinkled Conscience bath all the Reason in the World to be a comforting

forting Confidence: In that Day you become the Children of your Father in Heaven; and he that hath a Father in Heaven, hath all Reason to be the joyfullest Man upon Earth: In that Day you are delivered from the sting and

hurt of Death; and he that is delivered from the sting of Death, hath the best reason to take in the Comfort of Life. O come to Christ, come to Christ; till you come to Christ, no true Comfort can come to you.

S E R M O N X V I.

E P H E S. I. 7.

Serm. 16.
Text. En-
forcing the
general
Exhortation
by a fe-
venth Mo-
tive drawn
from the
first Bene-
fit pur-
chased by
Christ.

In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the Remission of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace.

SIX great *Motives* have been presented already from the *Titles* of Christ, to draw the Hearts of Sinners to him: More are now to be offered from the *Benefits* redounding to Believers by Christ. Essay'ing by all means to win the Hearts of Men to Christ. To this end I shall in the first place open that glorious *Privilege* of Gospel *Remission*; freely and fully conferred upon all that come to Christ by Faith, *in whom we have Redemption by Faith, &c.*

In which Words we have, *First*, a singular Benefit, or choice Mercy bestowed, *viz. Redemption*; interpreted by way of *Apposition*, the *Remission of Sins*: This is a Privilege of the first rank, a Mercy by it self: None sweeter, none more desirable among all the Benefits that come by Christ. And therefore,

Secondly, You have the Price of this Mercy, an account what it cost, even the *Blood of Christ*, in whom we have Redemption [through his Blood] precious things are of great Price, the Blood of Christ is the *meritorious Cause* of Remission.

Thirdly, You have here also the *impulsive Cause*, moving God to grant Pardons at this rate to Sinners, and that is said to be the *Riches of his Grace*. Where by the way you see, that the *freeness* of the Grace of God, and the *fulness* of the satisfaction of Christ meet together without the least jar in the Remission of Sin; contrary to the vain Cavil of the Socinian Adversaries, *In whom we have Redemption, even the Remission of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace.*

Fourthly, You have the *qualified Subjects* of this Blessed Privilege, *viz. Believers*, in whose Name he here speaks [we] have *Remission*, (*i.e.*) we the Saints, and Faithful in Christ Jesus, *ver. 1.* We whom he hath chosen in Christ before the Foundation of the World, and predestinated unto the Adoption of Children, *ver. 4, 5.* We that are made accepted in the Beloved, *ver. 6.* 'Tis we, and we only who have Redemption through his Blood. Hence observe,

Doct. That all Believers, and none but Believers, receive the Remission of their Sins through the Riches of Grace, by the Blood of Jesus Christ.

In the Explication of this Point, three Things must be spoken to.

1. That all that are in Christ are in a pardoned State.
2. That their Pardon is the Purchase of the Blood of Christ.
3. That the Riches of Grace are manifested in Remission.

First, That all that are in Christ are in a pardoned State: Where I will first shew you what Pardon or the Remission of Sin is.

Secondly, That this is the Privilege of none but Believers.

First, Now Remission of Sin is the gracious Act of God, in and through Christ, discharging a believing Sinner from all the Guilt and Punishment of his Sin, both Temporal and Eternal.

'Tis the Act of God, he is the Author of Remission, none can forgive Sins but God only, *Mark 2. 7.* against him only (*i.e.*) principally and especially the Offence is committed, *Psal. 51. 4.* To his Judgment guilt binds over the Soul, and who can remit the Debt, but the Creditor, *Matth. 6. 12.*

'Tis an Act of God *discharging* the Sinner: It is Gods loosing of one that stood bound, the cancelling of his Bond or Obligation; called therefore Remission, or releasing in the Text; the blotting out of our Iniquities, or the removing our Sins from us, as it's called in other Scriptures. See *Psalms 103. 11. Micah. 7. 18, 19.*

It is a gracious Act of God, the effect of pure Grace, done for his own Names sake, *Isa. 43. 25.* discharging us without any satisfaction at all by us; there is much Grace in that: And providing a surety for us every way able to pay our Debt, there is much Grace in that.

'Tis the gracious Act of God in and through Christ: The satisfaction of Christ is the procuring Cause of our Remission, and so God declares himself just in the Remission of our Sin, *Rom. 3. 25.* *Gracious is the Lord and Righteous*, *Psal. 116. 5.* Justice and Mercy meet here, and embrace each other: *In whom* (saith the Text) *we have Remission*: No other price could purchase this Privilege, *Micah 6. 6, 7.* Not Rivers of Oyl, or Humane Blood.

And this gracious Act of God discharges the pardoned Soul both from Guilt and Punishment: Guilt is nothing else but the Force and Power that is in Sin, to oblige the Sinner to undergo

undergo the Penalty due to Sin. Therefore Sinners are said to be *Guilty of Hell-fire*, Matth. 5. 22. *Guilty of Eternal Judgment*, Mark 3. 29. To be under the Judgment of God, Rom. 3. 19. Remission takes away both Guilt and Punishment together, it takes away all Guilt, *Acts* 13. 38, 39. And all Punishment. And so much of the first Thing to be opened, namely what the Remission of Sin is.

Secondly, Now that this Remission of Sin is the Privilege of Believers is most apparent, for all the causes of Remission are in conjunction to procure it for them. The Love of God which is the impulsive cause of Pardon; the Blood of Christ which is the meritorious cause of Pardon; and saving Faith which is the instrumental cause of Pardon, do all co-operate for their Remission, as is plain in the Text.

Besides, all the Promises of Pardon are made to them, *Jer.* 31. 34. *Micah* 7. 18. And, lastly, all the signs of Pardon are found in them, and in them only, that Love God, *Luke* 7. 47. mercifulness to others, *Matth.* 6. 14. A blessed calmness and Peace in the Conscience, *Rom.* 5. 1. So that it is a Truth beyond controversy, that all that are in Christ are in a pardoned state.

Secondly. Next I will shew you, that the Pardon of Believers is the purchase of the Blood of Christ: Nothing but the Blood of Christ is a price equivalent to the Remission of Sin, for this Blood was innocent and untainted Blood, *1 Pet.* 1. 19. The Blood of a Lamb without spot. This Blood was precious Blood, Blood of infinite worth and value, the Blood of God, *Acts* 20. 28. It was prepared Blood for this very purpose, *Heb.* 10. 5. Prepared by God's Eternal Appointment: Prepared by Christ's miraculous and extraordinary Production, by the Operation of the Spirit: Prepared by his voluntary Sequestration, or Sanctification of himself to this very use and purpose.

The Blood of Jesus is not only innocent, precious, and prepared Blood, but it is also Blood actually shed and sacrificed to the Justice of God, for the expiation of guilt, and procurement of our discharge, *Isa.* 53. 5. To conclude, the severe Justice of God could put in no Exception against the Blood of Christ, 'tis unexceptionable Blood, being (as before was noted) untainted by Sin, and dignified above all Estimation by the Person whose Blood it was. Justice required no less, and could demand no more: And this is the price at which our Pardons are purchased: And without which no Sin could be pardoned, for *without shedding of Blood* (such Blood as this) *there is no Remission*, *Heb.* 9. 22.

Thirdly, The last thing to be opened is, That God hath manifested the Riches of his Grace in the Remission of our Sins: So speaks the Apostle, *Rom.* 5. 20. *Where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound:* And *1 Tim.* 1. 14. *The Grace of our Lord* (viz. in the Pardon of Sin) *was exceeding abundant.* Which will appear (if we bring our Thoughts close to the Matter) in several particulars:

First, From the Nature of the Mercy, which is the richest of all Mercies, except Christ, the

Purchaser of it: No Mercy sweeter than a Pardon to a condemned Sinner. No Pardon like God's Pardon, to a Man condemned at his Bar: All the goodness of God is made to pass before our Eyes in his pardoning Acts of Grace, *Exod.* 33. 19.

Secondly, The very riches of Grace must needs be in the Pardon of Sin, if we consider the Method in which Pardons are dispensed, which is (as the Text speaks) *through his Blood.* Herein God commends his Love to us, *Rom.* 5. 8. He commends it more, than if he had pardoned Sin without such a Sacrifice, for then he had only displayed his Mercy; but not caused Mercy and Justice to meet and triumph together.

Thirdly, The riches of his Grace shines forth in the Peculiarity of the Mercy. Remission is no common Favour, it was never extended to the Fallen Angels, nor to the far greater part of the Children of Men, but only to a little Flock, a small Remnant of Mankind, *Luke* 12. 32. *John* 17. 9.

Fourthly, The riches of Grace are manifested in Remission, if we consider the Subjects of this Privilege, who are not only equally plunged into Sin and Misery with others by Nature, *Eph.* 2. 3. But many of the Lord's Pardoned ones are actually guilty of deeper-dyed Abominations, than many Unpardoned ones in the civilized World are defiled with. To me (saith Paul) the greatest of Sinners, one that was before a Blasphemer, a Persecuter, &c. yet to me is this Grace given. *I obtained Mercy*, *1 Tim.* 1. 15. And such were some of you, but ye are justified *1 Cor.* 6. 11. Yea, God singles out the most base, despised, poor, and contemptible Ones among Men, to be the Subjects of this glorious Privilege, *1 Cor.* 1. 26. *You see your calling Brethren, &c.*

Fifthly, More of the riches of Grace still appears if we view the Latitude and extent of this Act of Grace. Oh how innumerable are our Transgressions! Who can understand his Errors? *Psalms* 19. 12. *Tet the Flood of Christ cleanseth us from all Sin*, *1 John* 1. 7. Small and great Sins, open and secret Sins, old and new Sins; all pardoned without Exception. Oh the riches of Grace! Oh the unfathomable goodness of God! *With the Lord there is Mercy, and with him is plenteous Redemption; and he shall redeem Israel from all his Iniquities*, *Psalms* 130. 7, 8.

Sixthly, and Lastly, The riches of Grace shine forth in the irrevocableness and perpetuity of Remission: As Grace pardons all Sins without Exception, so the Pardons it bestows are without Revocation. The pardoned Soul shall never come into Condemnation, *John* 5. 24. *As far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our Transgressions from us*, *Psalms* 103. 10. The East and West are the two opposite Points of Heaven, which can never come together; neither shall the pardoned Soul and its Sins ever meet any more. *Thou hast cast* (saith *Hieremiah*) *all my Sins behind thy back.* The penitent Believer sets his Sins before his Face, but the merciful God casts them all behind his Back, never to behold them more, so as to charge them upon his pardoned People. And thus you see, what the pardon of Sin is, what the Price that purchaseth Pardon is; and what

C c c

riches of Grace God manifesteth in the Remission of Believers Sins: Which were the things to be explained and opened in the Doctrinal Part. The Improvement of the whole you will have in the following Uses.

Inference 1.

If this be so, that all Believers, and none but Believers receive the Remission of their Sins through the riches of Grace, by the Blood of Christ: *What a happy Condition then are Believers in!* Those that never felt the load of Sin, may make Light of a Pardon, but so cannot you that have been in the deeps of Trouble and Fear about it: Those that have been upon the rack of an accusing and condemning Conscience, as *David, Heman*, and many of the Saints have been, can never sufficiently value a Pardon. *Blessed is the Man whose Transgression is forgiven, whose Sin is covered; blessed is the Man unto whom the Lord imputeth not Iniquity*, Psal. 32. 1, 2. or, O the Blessedness and Felicities of the pardoned Man! As the Hebrew sounds. Remission cannot but appear the wonder of Mercies, if we consider through what difficulties the Grace of God makes way for it to our Souls; what strong Bars the Love of God breaks asunder, to open our way to this Privilege: For there can be no Pardon without a Mediator: No other Mediator but the Son of God: The Son of God cannot discharge our Debts, but by taking them upon himself as our Surety, and making full Payment, by bearing the Wrath of God for us; and when all this is done, there can be no actual Pardon, except the Spirit of Grace open our blind Eyes, break our hard Hearts, and draw them to Christ in the way of believing. And as the Mercy of Remission comes to us through wonderful difficulties, so it is in itself a compleat and perfect Mercy. God would not be at such vast expence of the riches of his Grace, Christ would not lay out the invaluable Treasures of his precious Blood to procure a cheap and common Blessing for us. Rejoyce then ye pardoned Souls, God hath done great Things for you, for which you have Cause to be glad.

Inference 2.

Hence it follows, *That Interest in Christ by Faith brings the Conscience of a Believer into a state of Rest and Peace*, Rom. 5. 1. *Being justified by Faith we have Peace with God*. I say not, that every Believer is presently brought into actual Peace and Tranquility of Conscience, there may be many Fears, and much trouble even in a pardoned Soul: But this is an undoubted Truth, that Faith brings the pardoned Soul into that Condition and State where he may find perfect rest in his Conscience, with respect to the guilt and danger of Sin. The Blood of Christ sprinkles us from an evil (that is an accusing, condemning) Conscience. We are apt to fear, that this or that special Sin, which hath most terrified and affrighted our Consciences, is not forgiven: But if there be Riches enough in the Grace of God, and Efficacy enough in the Blood of Christ; then the Sins of Believers, all their Sins, great as well as small, one as well as another, without Limitation or Exception, are pardoned.

For let us but consider, if God remits no

Sin to any Man, but with respect to the Blood of Christ, then all Sins are pardoned as well as any one Sin; because the dignity and desert of that Blood is infinite, and as much deserves an universal pardon for all Sins, as the particular pardon of any, even the least Sin. Moreover, Remission is an Act of God's Fatherly Love in Christ, and if it be so, then certainly no Sin of any Believer can be retained or excluded from Pardon: For then the same Soul should be in the Favour of God, so far as it is pardoned, and out of the Favour of God, so far as it is unpardoned; and all this at one and the same instant of Time, which is a thing both repugnant to it self, and to the whole stream of the Gospel.

To Conclude, what is the Design and End of Remission, but the saving of the pardoned Soul? But if any Sin be retained or excluded from Pardon, the retaining of that Sin must needs irritate and void the Pardon of all other Sins; and so the Acts of God must cross and contradict each other, and the design and end of God miscarry and be lost, which can never be. So then we conclude, Faith brings the believing Soul into a state of Rest and Peace.

Inference 3.

Hence it also follows, *That no Remission is to be expected by any Soul without Interest by Faith in Jesus Christ: No Christ no Pardon, no Faith no Christ*. Yet how apt are many poor deluded Souls to expect Pardon in that way where never any Soul yet did, or ever can meet it? Some look for Pardon from the absolute Mercy of God, without any regard to the Blood of Christ, or their Interest therein: We have sinned, but God is merciful. Some expect Remission of Sin by virtue of their own Duties, not Christ's Merits. I have sinned, but I will repent, restore, reform, and God will Pardon: But little do such Men know how they therein diminish the evil of Sin, undervalue the Justice of God, slight the Blood of Christ, and put an undoing cheat upon their own Souls for ever: To expect Pardon from absolute Mercy, or our own Duties, is to knock at the wrong door, which God hath shut up to all the World, Rom. 3. 20. Whilst these two Principles abide firm, that the Price of Pardon is only in the Blood of Christ, and the Benefit of Pardon only by the Application of his Blood to us; this must remain a sure Conclusion, that no Remission is to be expected by any Soul without Interest by Faith in Jesus Christ. Repentance, Restitution, and Reformation are excellent Duties in their kind, and in their proper places; but they were never meant for Saviours or Satisfaction to God for Sin.

Inference 4.

If the riches of Grace be thus manifested in the Pardon of Sin, how vile an abuse is it of the Grace of God to take the more Liberty to Sin, because Grace abounds in the Pardon of it!

Shall we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound? God forbid, Rom. 6. 1, 2. Will no cheaper stuff than the Grace of God serve to make a Cloak for Sin? O vile abuse of the most excellent thing in the whole World! Did Christ shed his Blood to expiate our guilt, and dare we make that a Plea to extenuate our guilt? God forbid.

If it be intolerable ingratitude among Men

to

to requite good with evil, sure that Sin must want a Name bad enough to express it, which puts the greatest dishonour upon God for the greatest Mercy that ever was given by God to the World: *There is Mercy with thee* (saith the Psalmist) *that thou maist be feared*, not that thou mayst be the more abused, *Psal. 130. 4.* Nay, let me say the Devils never sinned at this rate: They cannot abuse the pardoning Grace of God, because such Grace was never offered unto them. And certainly if the abuse of the common Mercies of God, as Meat and Drink, by gluttony and drunkenness, be an heinous Sin, and highly provoking to God: Then the abuse of the riches of his Grace, and the precious Blood of his Son must be out of measure sinful; and the greatest affront we can put upon the God of Mercy.

Inference 5.

To conclude, *If this be so, as ever you expect Pardon and Mercy from God, come to Christ in the way of Faith; receive and embrace him now in the tenders of the Gospel.*

To drive home this great Exhortation, I beseech you, as in the Bowels of Christ Jesus, and by all the regard and value you have for your own Souls, let these following Considerations link down into your Hearts.

First, That all Christless Persons are actually under the Condemnation of God, *Job. 3. 18.* *He that believeth not is condemned already*: And it must needs be so, for every Soul is concluded under the Curse of the Law, till Christ make him free, *Job. 8. 36.* Till we are in Christ, we are dead by Law, and when we believe unto Justification, then we pass from Death to Life. A blind mistaken Conscience may possibly acquit you, but assure your selves God condemns you.

Secondly, Consider what a terrible thing it is to lie under the Condemnation of God, the most terrible things in Nature cannot shadow forth the Misery of such a state. Put all sicknesses, all poverty, all reproaches, the torments invented by all Tyrants into one Scale, and the Condemnation of God into the other; and they will be all found lighter than a Feather. Condemnation is the Sentence of God, the great and terrible God: 'Tis a Sentence shutting you up to Everlasting Wrath; 'tis a Sentence never to be reversed, but by the Application of Christ in the season thereof.

O Souls, you cannot bear the Wrath of God; you do not understand it if you think it tolerable: One drop of it upon your Consciences now, is enough to distract you in the midst of all the Pleasures and Comforts of this World: Yet all that are out of Christ are sentenced to the fulness of God's Wrath for ever.

Thirdly, There is yet a possibility of escaping the Wrath to come; a door of hope opened to the worst of Sinners: A Day of Grace is afforded to the Children of Men, *Heb. 3. 15.* God declares himself unwilling that any should perish, *2 Pet. 3. 9.* O what a Mercy is this! Who that is on this side Heaven or Hell fully understands the worth of it?

Fourthly, This door of Mercy will be shortly shut, *Luke 12. 42.* God hath many ways to shut it: He sometimes shuts it by withdrawing the means of Grace, and removing the Candlesticks, a Judgment at this time to be greatly feared. Sometimes he shuts it by withdrawing his Spirit and Blessing from the means, whereby all Ordinances lose their Efficacy, *1 Cor. 3. 7.* But if he shut it not by removing the means of Grace from you, certain it is, it will be shortly shut by your removal from all the Means and Opportunities of Salvation by Death.

Fifthly, When once the door of Mercy is shut, you are gone beyond all the possibilities of Pardon and Salvation for evermore: The Night is then come, in which no Man can Work, *John 9. 4.* All the golden Seasons you now enjoy will be irrevocably gone out of your reach.

Sixthly, Pardons are now daily granted to others: Some (and they once as far from Mercy as you now are) are at this Day reading their Pardons with Tears of Joy dropping upon them. The World is full of Examples and Instances of the riches of pardoning Grace. And whatever is needful for you to do in the way of Repentance and Faith to obtain your Pardon; how easily shall it be done, if once the Day of Gods Power come upon you? *Psal. 110. 3.* Oh therefore lift up your Cries to Heaven, give the Lord no rest, take no denial till he open the blind Eye, break the stony Heart, open and bow the stubborn Will, effectually draw thy Soul to Christ; and deliver thy Pardon signed in his Blood.

SERMON XVII.

EPHES. I. 6.

To the Praise of the Glory of his Grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.

IN our last Discourse we opened to you the Blessed Privilege of Remission of Sin from the following Verse; in this Verse lies another glorious Privilege, *viz.* the Acceptation that Believers have with God through Jesus Christ: Both which comprise (as the two main Branches) our Justification before God. In the Words read (to omit Vol. I.

many things that might be profitably observed from the Method and Dependence of the Apostle's Discourse) three Particulars are observable, *viz.*

1. The Privilege it self.
2. The Meritorious Cause.
3. The ultimate end thereof.

First, The Privilege it self, which is exceeding

Serm. 17.
Text. Opening
the eighth
Motive to
come to
Christ,
drawn
from the
second Benefit
purchased by
Christ for
Believers.

ceeding rich and sweet in its own Nature; he hath made us accepted; the word is *ἐξαιτῶν ἡμᾶς*, he hath ingratiated us, or brought us into the Grace, Favour, and Acceptance of God the Father; endeared us to him, so that we find Grace in his sight.

Secondly, The meritorious Cause purchasing and procuring this Benefit for us, noted in these Words, *ἐν τῇ ἀγαπῇ*, in the beloved; which Words are a *Periphrasis* of Christ, who is here emphatically called the beloved, the great Favourite of Heaven, the delight of God's Soul, the prime Object of his Love: 'Tis he that obtaineth this Benefit for Believers: He is accepted for his own sake, and we for his.

Thirdly, The ultimate end and aim of conferring this Benefit upon Believers: *To the Praise of the Glory of his Grace*: Or, to the end that his Grace might be made Glorious in Praises: There are Riches of Grace in this Act of God, and the work and business of Believers, both in this World and in that to come, is to search and admire, acknowledge, and magnify God for his abundant Grace herein. Hence the Note is,

Doct. That Jesus Christ hath purchased and procured special Favour and Acceptation with God for all that are in him.

This Point lies plain in Scripture, *Ephes. 2. 13. But now in Jesus Christ, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ, ἵνα ἐγγίστῃ, made nigh, a term of endearment*: Nothing is taken into the very Bosom and Embraces, but what is very dear, precious and acceptable: And in *Rev. 1. 5, 6. Believers are said to be made by Jesus Christ, Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father, (i.e.) dignified Favourites, upon whom the special Marks of Honour are set by God.*

In the opening of this Point, three Things must be Doctrinally discussed and opened, *viz.*

1. What the Acceptation of our Persons with God is.
2. How it appears that Believers are so accepted with God.
3. How Christ the Beloved procures this Benefit for Believers.

First, What the Acceptation of our Persons with God is? To open which, we must remember, that there is a twofold *Acceptance* of Persons noted in Scripture.

1. One is the sinful Act of a corrupt Man.
2. The other the gracious Act of a merciful God.

First, Accepting of Persons is noted in Scripture as the sinful Act of a corrupt Man: A thing which God abhors: Being the Corruption and Abuse of that Power and Authority which Men have in Judgment: Overlooking the Merit of the Cause through sinful respect to the Quality of the Person, whose Cause it is. So that the Cause doth not commend the Person, but the Person the Cause: This God every where brands in Men, as a vile perverting of Judgment, and utterly disclaims it himself, *Gal. 2. 6. God accepteth no Mans Person. Rom. 2. 11. There is no respect of Persons with God.*

Secondly, There is also an accepting of Persons, which is the gracious Act of a merciful God; whereby he receives both the Persons and Duties of Believers into special Grace and

and Favour for Christ's sake: And of this my Text speaks. In which Act of Favour three Things are supposed or included.

First, It supposes an Estate of Alienation and Enmity: Those only are accepted into Favour that were out of Favour, and indeed so stood the Case with us, *Ephes. 2. 12, 13. Ye were Aliens and Strangers, but now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ.* So the Apostle Peter, in *1 Pet. 2. 10. Which in time past were not a People, but now are the People of God; which had not obtained Mercy, but now have obtained Mercy.* The Fall made a fearful breach betwixt God and Man. Sin like a thick Cloud intercepted all the Beams of Divine Favour from us: The Satisfaction of Christ dissolves that Cloud, *Isa. 44. 22. I have blotted out as a thick Cloud thy Transgressions, and as a Cloud thy Sins*: This dark Cloud thus dissolved, the Face of God shines forth again with cheerful Beams of Favour and Love upon all, who by Faith are interested in Jesus Christ.

Secondly, It includes the removing of Guilt from the Persons of Believers, by the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness to them, *Rom. 5. 1, 2. Being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by Faith into this Grace wherein we stand*: For the Face of God cannot shine upon the Wicked: The Person must be first made Righteous before it can be made accepted.

Thirdly, It includes the Offering up, or tending of our Persons and Duties to God by Jesus Christ. Accepting implies presenting or tending: Believers indeed do present themselves to God, *Rom. 12. 1. But Christ's presenting them makes their tender of themselves acceptable to the Lord, Col. 1. 22. In the Body of his Flesh through Death to present you holy, and unblameable, and unreprouvable in his sight.* Christ leads every Believer as it were by the Hand, into the gracious presence of God; after this manner bespeaking acceptance for him. "Father, here is a poor Soul that was born in Sin, hath lived in Rebellion against thee all his Days; he hath broken all thy Laws, and deserved all thy Wrath; yet he is one of that Number which thou gavest me before the World was. I have made full payment by my Blood for all his Sins. I have opened his Eyes to see the sinfulness, and Misery of his Condition: Broken his Heart for his Rebellions against Thee: Bowed his Will in Obedience unto thy Will, united him to my self by Faith, as a living Member of my Body. And now, Lord, since he is become mine by Regeneration, let him be thine also by special Acceptation: Let the same Love with which thou lovest me, embrace him also who is now become mine. And so much for the first Particular, *viz.* What Acceptation with God is.

Secondly, In the next Place I must shew you how it appears that Believers are thus ingratiated or brought into the special Favour of God by Jesus Christ. And this will be evidenced divers Ways.

First, By the Titles of Love and endearment, with which the Lord graceth and honoureth Believers, who are sometimes called

the

the Household of God, Ephes. 2. 10. the Friends of God, James 2. 23. the dear Children of God, Ephes. 5. 1. the peculiar People of God, 1 Pet. 2. 9. A Crown of Glory, and a Royal Diadem in the Hand of their God, Isa. 62. 13. The Objects of his Delight and Pleasure, Psal. 147. 10, 11. Oh what terms of endearment doth God use towards his People! Doth not all this speak them to be in special Favour with him? Which of all these alone doth not signify a Person highly in Favour with God?

Secondly, The gracious Manner in which he treats them upon the Throne of Grace, to which he allows them to come with boldness, Heb. 4. 16. This also speaks them in the special Favour of God: He allows them to come to him in Prayer, with the Liberty, confidence and filial Boldness of Children to a Father, Gal. 4. 6. Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts, crying, Abba, Father: The familiar Voice of a dear Child: Yea, which is a wonderful Dignation and Condescension of the great God to poor Worms of the Earth, he saith, Isa. 45. 11. Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my Sons, and concerning the work of my Hands command ye me: An Expression so full of Grace and special Favour to Believers, that it needs great Caution in Reading and Understanding such an high and astonishing Expression: The meaning is, that God hath as it were subjected the Works of his Hands to the Prayers of his Saints: And it is as if he had said, If my Glory, and your Necessity shall require it, do but ask me in Prayer, and whatever my Almighty Power can do, I will do it for you: However let no Favourite of Heaven forget the infinite distance betwixt himself and God. Abraham was a great Favourite of Heaven, and was called the Friend of God, yet see with what Humility of Spirit, and reverential awe he addresseth to God, Gen. 18. 27. Behold now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but Dust and Ashes. So that you see the Titles of Favour above-mentioned are no empty Titles.

Thirdly, God's readiness to grant, as well as their Liberty to ask, speaks them the special Favourites of God. The Heart of God is so propense, and ready to grant the desires of Believers, that it is but ask and have, Matth. 7. 7. The Door of Grace is opened at the knock of Prayer: That is a Favourite indeed, to whom the King gives a blank to insert what request he will: If ye abide in me, and my Words abide in you; ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you, John 15. 7. Oh blessed Liberty of the Sons of God! David did but say, Lord now the Counsel of Assurubel into foolishness, and it was done as soon as asked, 2 Sam. 15. 31. Joshua did but say, Thou Son stand still in Gibeon: And a miraculous stop was presently put to its swift Motion in the Heavens: Nay, which is wonderful to consider, a Prayer in the Womb, yet unborn, I mean conceived in the Heart, and not yet uttered by the Lips of Believers, is often anticipated by the propenseness of Free Grace, Isa. 65. 24. And it shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and whilst they are yet speaking I will hear. The Prayers of others are rejected as an Abominable

tion, Prov. 14. 8. God casts them back into their Faces, Mal. 2. 3. But free Grace signs the Petitions of the Saints more readily, than they are presented: We have not that freedom to ask, that God hath to give: 'Tis true, the answer of a Believers Prayers may be a long time suspended from his Sense and Knowledge; but every Prayer according to the Will of God is presently granted in Heaven, though for While and Holy Ends they may be held in a doubtful suspense about them upon Earth.

Fourthly, The free Discoveries of the Secrets of Gods Heart to Believers speaks them to be his special Favourites: Men open not the Counsels and Secrets of their own Hearts to Enemies or Strangers, but to their most inward and intimate Friends: The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant, Psal. 25. 14. When God was about to destroy Sodom, he will do nothing in that Work of Judgment till he had acquainted Abraham, his Friend, with his Purpose therein, Gen. 18. 17. And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? For I know him, &c. So when a King was to be elected for Israel, and the Person whom God had chosen, was yet unknown to the People, God as it were whispered that Secret unto Samuel the Day before, 1 Sam. 9. 15. Now the Lord had told Samuel in his Ear a Day before Saul came: According to the manner of Princes with some special Favourite.

Fifthly, The Lord's receiving every small thing that comes from them with Grace and Favour, when (mean while) he rejects the greatest things offered by others, doth certainly bespeak Believers the special Favourites of God. There was but one good Word in a whole Sentence from Sarah, and that very Word is noted and commended by God, 1 Pet. 3. 6. She called him Lord. There were but some small beginnings or buddings of Grace in young Abijah, and the Lord took special notice of it, 1 Kings 14. 12. Because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the House of Jeroboam. Let this be an encouragement to young Ones, in whom there are found any breathing desires after Christ: God will not reject them if any Sincerity be found in them; a secret Groan uttered to God in Sincerity shall not be despised, Rom. 8. 26. The very bent of a Believer's Will when he hath no more to offer unto God is an acceptable Present, 2 Cor. 8. 11. The very Intent and Purpose that lies secretly in the Heart of a Believer, nor yet executed, is accepted with him, 1 Kings 8. 18. Whereas it was in thine Heart to build an House to my Name, thou didst well that it was in thine Heart. Thus small things offered to God by Believers find acceptance with him, whilst the greatest Presents, even solemn Assemblies, Sabbaths and Prayers from others are rejected: They are a trouble unto me, (saith God) I am weary to bear them, Isa. 1. 14, 15. Incense from Strangers, the Sweet Cane from a far Country are not acceptable, nor Sacrifices sweet unto God from other Hands, Jer. 6. 20. From all which it appears beyond doubt, that the Persons and Duties of Believers are accepted into the special Favour of God by Jesus Christ: Which was the second thing to be spoken

spoken to, and brings us to the Third General, viz.

Thirdly, How Christ the Beloved procures this Benefit for Believers? And this he doth four Ways.

First, By the Satisfaction of his Blood, Rom. 5. 10. When we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son. No Friendship without Reconciliation, no Reconciliation but by the Blood of Christ: Therefore the new and living way, by which Believers come unto God with Acceptance, is said to be Consecrated for us through the Veil of Christ's Flesh; and hence Believers have boldness to enter into the holiest by the Blood of Jesus, Heb. 10. 19, 20.

Secondly, The Favour of God is procured for Believers, by their mystical Union with Christ, whereby they are made Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones, Eph. 5. 30. So that look as Adam's Posterity stood upon the same Terms that He their Natural Head did; so Believers Christ's Mystical Members stand in the Favour of God, by the Favour which Christ their Spiritual Head hath, Job. 17. 33. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the World may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Thirdly, Believers are brought into Favour with God by Christ's becoming their Altar, upon which their Persons and Duties are all offered up to God: The Altar sanctifies the Gift, Heb. 13. 10. And this was typified by that Legal Rite mentioned, Luke 1. 9, 10. Christ is that Golden Altar from whence all the Prayers of the Saints ascend to the Throne of God, perfumed with the Odours and Incense of his Merits, Rev. 8. 34. And another Angel came and stood at the Altar, having a Golden Censer, and there was given unto him much Incense that he should offer it, with the Prayers of all Saints upon the Golden Altar which was before the Throne; and the Smoak of the Incense which came with the Prayers of the Saints ascended up before God, out of the Angels Hand. And thus you see how the Persons and Duties of Believers are brought into Favour and Acceptance with God by Jesus Christ. The Uses follow.

Inference 1.

If all Believers be in Favour with God, how great a Mercy is it to have the Prayers of such engaged on our behalf? Would we have our business speed in Heaven, let us get into Favour with God our selves, and engage the Prayers of his People, the Favourites of Heaven, for us: Vis unita fortior, one Believer can do much, many can do more: When Daniel designed to get the Knowledge of that Secret hinted in the obscure Dream of the King, which none but the God of Heaven could make known, it's said, Dan. 2. 17. Then Daniel went to his House, and made the thing known to Hanania, Mishael, and Azaria, his Companions; that they would desire Mercies of the God of Heaven concerning this Secret. The benefits of such Assistance in Prayer by the help of other Favourites with God, is plainly intimated by Jesus Christ unto us, Matth. 18. 19. If two of you shall agree on Earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven. God sometimes stands upon a number of

Voices, for the carrying of some Publick Mercy; because he delighteth in the harmony of many praying Souls; and also Loves to oblige and gratify many in the answer and return of the same Prayer. I know this usage is grown too formal and complemental among Professors: But certainly it is a great Advantage to be inward with them, who are so with God. St. Bernard prescribing Rules for effectual Prayer, closes them up with this with, *et cum talis fueris, memento mei*, when thy Heart is in this frame, then remember me.

Inference 2.

If Believers be such Favourites in Heaven, in what a desperate Condition is that Cause, and those Persons, against whom the generality of Believers are daily engaged in Prayers and Cries to Heaven?

Certainly Rome shall feel the dint and force of the many Millions of Prayers that are gone up to Heaven from the Saints for many Generations: The Cries of the Blood of the Martyrs of Jesus, joyed with the Cries of Thousands of Believers, will bring down Vengeance at last upon the Man of Sin. 'Tis said, Rev. 8. 4, 5, 6. That the Smoak of the Incense, which came with the Prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God out of the Angels Hand: And immediately it is added, ver. 5. And the Angel took the Censer, and filled it with Fire of the Altar, and cast it into the Earth, and there were Voices, and Thunderings, and Lightnings, and Earthquakes, and the seven Angels, which had the seven Trumpets, prepared themselves to sound. The Prayer of a single Saint is sometimes followed with wonderful Effects, Psal. 18. 6, 7. In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: He heard my Voice out of his Temple, and my cry came before him, even into his Ears: Then the Earth shook and trembled; the Foundations also of the Hills moved, and were shaken because he was wrath: What then can a thundering Legion of such praying Souls do! It was said of Luther, *ipse vir potuit cum Deo quicquid voluit*, that Ma could have of God what he would; his Enemies felt the weight of his Prayers, and the Church of God reaped the Benefits thereof. The Queen of Scots professed she was more afraid of the Prayers of Mr. Knox, than of an Army of Ten Thousand Men: These were mighty Wrestlers with God, howsoever contemned and vilified among their Enemies. Longius, There will a time come, when God will hear the Prayers of his People, who are continually crying in his Ears, *How long, Lord, how long*. Jacobus, who wrote the Lives of Luther, Knox, and Calvin, speaks as if the Devil had hired his Pen to abuse those precious Servants of Christ.

Inference 3.

Let no Believer be dejected at the Contempts and Slightings of Men, so long as they stand in the Grace and Favour of God: It is the Lot of the best of Men to have the worst usage in this World: Those of whom the World was not worthy, are not thought worthy to live in the World, Heb. 11. 38. Paul and his Companions were Men of choice and excellent Spirits, yet saith he, 1 Cor. of the 4. 13. Being despised we intreat, we are made as the filth of the World, and are the off-scouring of any thing: Erasmus, the dirt that sticks to the Shoe: Falla, the dung of the Belly as the Syriack Translates. The condemned Man that was tumbled from a steep Rock into the Sea, as a Sacrifice to Neptune, was called *ma-jana*, saith Budaeus, *Sic pro nobis perijimus*.

all things unto this Day: They are Words signifying the basest, contemptiblest and most abhorred things among Men. How is Heaven and Earth divided in their Judgments and Estimations of the Saints! Those whom Men call filth and dirt, God calls a peculiar Treasure, a Crown of Glory, a Royal Diadem. But trouble not thy self Believer for the unjust Censures of the blind World, they speak evil of the things they know not: *He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no Man,* 1 Cor. 2. 14. You can discern the earthliness and baseness of their Spirits, they want a faculty to discern the excellency and choiceness of your Spirits. He that carries a Dark-lantern in the Night, can discern him that comes against him, and yet is not discerned by him: A Courtier regards not a slight in the Country, so long as he hath the Ear and Favour of his Prince.

Inference 4.

Never let Believers fear the want of any good thing necessary for them in this World: The Favour of God is the Fountain of all Blessings, Provisions, Protections, even of all that you need. He hath promised that he will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly, *Psal. 84. 11.* He that is bountiful to his Enemies will not withhold what is good from his Friends. The Favour of God will not only supply your needs, but protect your Persons, *Psal. 5. 12.* *Thou wilt bless the Righteous, with Favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.*

Inference 5.

Hence also it follows, That the Sins of Believers are very piercing things to the Heart of God. The unkindness of those whom he hath received into his very Bosom, upon whom he hath set his special Favour and Delight, who are more obliged to him than all the People of the Earth beside, O this wounds the very Heart of God. What a melting Expostulation was that which the Lord used with David, *2 Sam. 12. 7, 8.* *I anointed thee King over all Israel, and I delivered thee out of the Hand of Saul, and I gave thee thy Masters House, and thy Masters Wives into thy Bosom, and gave thee the House of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such Things: Wherefore hast thou despised the Commandment of the Lord?* But Reader, if thou be a reconciled Person, a Favourite with God, and hast grieved him by any eminent Transgression, how should it melt thy Heart to hear the Lord thus expostulating with thee: I delivered thee out of the Hand of Satan: I gave thee into the Bosom of Christ: I have pardoned unto thee Millions of Sins: I have bestowed upon thee the riches of Mercy; my Favour hath made thee great; and as if all this were too little, I have prepared Heaven for thee: For which of all these Favours dost thou thus requite me?

Inference 6.

How precious should Jesus Christ be to Believers, by whose Blood they are ingratiated with God, and by whose Intercession they are and shall for ever be continued in his Favour? When the Apostle mentions the Believers Translation, from the

sad state of Nature to the blessed privileged state of Grace, see what a Title he bestows upon Jesus Christ, the Purchaser of that Privilege; calling him the dear Son, Col. 1. 13. Not only dear to God, but exceeding dear to Believers also; Christ is the Favourite in Heaven, to him you owe all your Preferment there: Take away Christ, and you have no ground to stand one Minute in the Favour of God. O then let Jesus Christ the Fountain of your Honour, be also the Object of your Love and Praise.

Inference 7.

Estimate by this the State and Condition of a deserted Saint, upon whom the Favour of God is eclipsed. If the Favour of God be better than Life, the hiding of it from a Gracious Soul must be more bitter than Death: Deserted Saints have Reason to take the first Place among all the Mourners in the World: The Darknes before Conversion had indeed more of danger, but this hath more of trouble. Darknes after Light is dismal Darknes. Since therefore the Case is so sad, let your preventing Care be the more: Grieve not the Good Spirit of God, you prepare but for your own Grief in so doing.

Inference 8.

Lastly, Let this persuade all Men to accept Jesus Christ, as ever they expect to be accepted with the Lord themselves. It is a fearful Case, for a Mans Persons and Duties to be rejected of God: To cry and not be heard: And much more terrible to be denied Audience in the great and terrible Day. Yet as sure as the Scriptures are the sealed and faithful Sayings of God, this is no more than what every Christless Person must expect in that Day, *Matth. 7. 22.* *Luke 13. 26.* Trace the History of all Times, even as high as Abel, and you shall find that none but Believers did ever find Acceptance with God: All Experience confirms this great Truth, that they that are in the Flesh cannot please God. Reader, if this be thy Condition, let me beg thee to ponder the Misery of it in a few sad Thoughts.

Consider how sad it is to be rejected of God, and forsaken by all Creatures at once: What a Day of Straights thy dying Day is like to be, when Heaven and Earth shall cast thee out together. Be assured whatever thy vain hopes for the present quiet thee withal, this must be thy Case, the door of Mercy will be shut against thee, no Man cometh to the Father but by Christ. Sad was the Case of Saul, when he told Samuel, *the Philistines make War against me, and God is departed from me,* 1 Sam. 28. 15. The Saints will have boldness in the Day of Judgment, 1 John 4. 17. But thou wilt be a confounded Man; there is yet, blessed be the God of Mercy, a Capacity and Opportunity of Reconciliation, 2 Cor. 5. 19. *Isa. 27. 5.* But this can be of no long Continuance. O therefore, by all the Regard and Love you have for the Everlasting Welfare of your own Souls, come to Christ, embrace Christ in the offers of the Gospel, that you may be made accepted in the Beloved.

SERMON XVIII.

JOHN VIII. 36.

If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Serm. 18.
Text. The
Liberty of
Believers
opened,
and stated.

FROM the 30th Verse of this Chapter unto my Text, you have an account of the different effects which the Words of Christ had upon the Hearts of his Hearers: Some believed, *verse 30.* these he encourageth to continue in his Word, *verse 31.* giving them this Encouragement, *Verse 32. Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free.* Hereat the unbelieving Jews take Offence, and commence a Quarrel with him, *Verse 33. We be Abraham's seed, and were never in Bondage to any Man.* We are of no slavish Extraction, the Blood of Abraham runs in our Veins: This scornful boast of the proud Jews, Christ confutes, *verse 34.* where he distinguisheth of a twofold Bondage; one to Men, another to Sin; one Civil, another Spiritual: Whosoever committeth Sin is the Servant of Sin, then tells them, *Verse 36. The Servant abideth not in the House for ever, but the Son abideth for ever.* Wherein he intimateth two great Truths, *viz.* That the Servants and Slaves of Sin may for a Time enjoy the external Privileges of the House or Church of God; but it would not be long before the Master of the House will turn them out of Door: But if they were once the adopted Children of God, then they should abide in the House for ever. And this Privilege is only to be had by their believing in, and Union with the Natural Son of God, Jesus Christ: Which brings us fairly to the Text; *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* In which Words we have two Parts.

- viz.* 1. A Supposition.
2. A Concession.

First, A Supposition. If the Son therefore shall make you free, &c. The Womb of Nature cast you forth into the World in a state of Bondage, in that state you have lived all your Days, Servants to Sin, Slaves to your Lusts, yet freedom is to be obtained: And this Freedom is the Prerogative belonging to the Son of God to bestow: *If the Son of God shall make you free.*

Secondly, Christ's Concession upon this Supposition, Then shall ye be free indeed, (i. e.) you shall have a real freedom, an excellent and Everlasting Freedom: No Conceit only, as that which you now boast of is: If ever therefore you will be free Men indeed, believe in me. Hence Note,

Doct. That Interest in Christ sets the Soul at Liberty from all that Bondage whereunto it was subjoined in its natural state.

Believers are the Children of the New Covenant, the Denizens of Jerusalem which are above, which is Free and the Mother of them all, *Gal. 4. 26.* The glorious Liberty, *viz.* that which is Spiritual and Eternal, is the Liberty of the Children of God, *Rom. 8. 21.* Christ, and none but Christ delivers his Peo-

ple out of the Hands of their Enemies, *Luke 1. 74.*

In the Doctrinal Part of this Point, I must shew you,

First, What Believers are not freed from by Jesus Christ in this World.

Secondly, What that Bondage is from which every Believer is freed by Christ.

Thirdly, What kind of Freedom that is which comes in upon believing.

Fourthly, Open the excellency of this state of spiritual Freedom.

First, What those things are from which Believers are not made free in this World: We must not think that our spiritual Liberty by Christ presently brings us into an absolute Liberty in all respects. For,

First, Christ doth not free Believers from Obedience to the Moral Law: 'Tis true we are no more under it as a Covenant for our Justification; but we are, and must still be under it as a Rule for our Direction. The Matter of the Moral Law is unchangeable as the Nature of Good and Evil is, and cannot be abolished except that Distinction could be destroyed, *Mat. 5. 17, 18.* The Precepts of the Law are still urged under the Gospel to enforce Duties upon us, *Eph. 6. 12.* 'Tis therefore a vain Distinction invented by Libertines to say it binds us as Creatures not as Christians: Or that it binds the unregenerate part, but not the regenerate: But this is a sure Truth, that they who are freed from its Penalties, are still under its Precepts. Though Believers are no more under its Curse, yet they are still under its Conduct: The Law sends us to Christ to be justified, and Christ sends us to the Law to be regulated. Let the Heart of every Christian join therefore with David's in that Holy Wish, *Psal. 119. 4, 5. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy Precepts diligently, O that my Heart were directed to keep thy Statutes.* 'Tis excellent when Christians begin to obey the Law from Life, which others obey for Life: Because they are justified, not that they may be justified. When Duties are done in the Strength and for the Honour of Christ, which is Evangelical; not in our own Strength and for our own Ends, which is servile and legal Obedience: Had Christ freed us from Obedience, such a Liberty had been to our Loss.

Secondly, Christ hath not freed Believers in this World from the Temptations and Assaults of Satan: Even those that are freed from his Dominion, are not free from his Molestation, 'Tis said indeed, *Rom. 16. 20. God shall shortly bruise Satan under your Feet:* But mean time he hath Power to bruise and buffet us by his Injections, *2 Cor. 12. 7.* He now bruise Christ's heel, *Gen. 3. 15. (i. e.)* bruise him in his tempted and afflicted Members: Therefore he cannot kill them, yet he can and doth afflict

afflict and fright them, by shooting his fiery Darts of Temptation among them, *Eph. 6. 16.* 'Tis true, when the Saints are got safe into Heaven, they are out of Gun-shot; there is perfect freedom from all Temptation. A Believer may then say, O thou Enemy, Temptations are come to a perpetual End. I am now arrived there, where none of thy fiery Darts can reach me: But this Freedom is not yet.

Thirdly, Christ hath not yet freed Believers in this World from the Motions of indwelling Sin: These are continually acting and infecting the holiest of Men, *Rom. 7. 21, 23, 24.* Corruptions like *Canaanites* are still left in the Land to be Thorns in our Eyes, and Goads in our Sides. Those that boast most of Freedom from the Motions of Sin, have most cause to suspect themselves still under the Dominion of Sin. All Christ's Freemen are troubled with the same complaint: Who among them complains not as the Apostle did, *Rom. 7. 24.* *Oh wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death?*

Fourthly, Jesus Christ doth not free Believers in this World from inward Troubles and Exercises of Soul upon the Account of Sin. God may let loose Satan and Conscience too, in the way of terrible Accusations, which may greatly distress the Soul of a Believer, and wofully Eclipse the Light of God's Countenance, and break the Peace of their Souls. *Job, Heman and David* were all made free by Christ, yet each of them hath left upon Record his bitter complaint upon this account, *Job 7. 19, 20. Psal. 88. 14, 15, 16. Psal. 38. unto verse 11.*

Fifthly, Christ hath not freed Believers in this World from the Rods of Affliction. God in giving us our Liberty doth not abridge his own Liberty, *Psal. 89. 32.* All the Children of God are made free, yet what Son is there whom the Father chasteneth not? *Heb. 12. 8.* Exemption from Affliction is so far from being the Mark of a Freeman, that the Apostle there makes it the Mark of a Slave. Ballards, not Sons want the Discipline and Blessing of the Rod: To be freed from Affliction would be no Benefit to Believers, who receive so many Benefits by Affliction.

Sixthly, No Believer is freed by Christ from the stroke of Death, though they are all freed from the sting of Death, *Rom. 8. 10.* The Bodies of Believers are under the same Law of Mortality with other Men, *Heb. 9. 27.* We must come to the Grave as well as others: Yea, we must come to it through the same Agonies, Pangs and Dolours that other Men do: The Foot of Death treads as heavy upon the Bodies of the Redeemed as of other Men. Believers indeed are distinguished by Mercy from others, but the distinguishing Mercy lies not here. Thus you see what Believers are not freed from in this World: If you shall now say, what Advantage then hath a Believer, or what Profit is there in Regeneration? I Answer.

Secondly, That Believers are freed from many great and sad Miseries and Evils by Jesus Christ, notwithstanding all that hath been said. For,

First, All Believers are freed from the Rigour and Curse of the Law: The rigorous Yoke

of the Law is broken off from their Necks, and the sweet and easy Yoke of Jesus Christ put on, *Mat. 11. 28.* The Law required perfect working under the pain of a Curse, *Gal. 3. 10.* Accepted of no short Endeavours; admitted no Repentance; gave no Strength: It is not so now, proportionable Strength is given, *Phil. 4. 13.* Sincerity is reckoned Perfection, *Job 1. 1.* Transgression brings not under Condemnation, *Rom. 8. 1.* O blessed Freedom! When Duty becomes delight, and failings hinder not Acceptance: This is one Part of the blessed Freedom of Believers.

Secondly, All Believers are freed from the Guilt of Sin, it may Trouble, but it cannot Condemn them, *Rom. 8. 33.* The Hand-writing which was against us is cancelled by Christ, nailed to his Cross, *Col. 2. 14.* When the Seal and Hand-writing is torn off from the Bond, the Debtor is made free thereby: Believers are totally freed, *Acts 13. 39.* *Justified from all things:* And finally freed, *John. 5. 24.* *They shall never come into Condemnation.* O blessed Freedom! How sweet is it to lie down in our Beds, yea in our Graves; when Guilt shall neither be our Bed-fellow, nor Grave-fellow!

Thirdly, Jesus Christ free all Believers from the Dominion as well as the guilt of Sin. *Sin shall not have Dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace, Rom. 6. 14.* The Law of the Spirit of Life which is in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death, *Rom. 8. 2.* Now who can estimate such a Liberty as this? What slavery, what an intolerable Drudgery is the service of divers Lufts, from all which Believers are freed by Christ: Not from the Residence but from the Reign of Sin. 'Tis with Sin in Believers as it was with those Beasts mentioned *Dan. 7. 12.* *They had their Dominion taken away, yet their Lives were prolonged for a Season and Time.*

Fourthly, Jesus Christ sets all Believers free from the Power of Satan; in whose right they were by Nature, *Col. 1. 13.* they are translated from the Power of Darkness into the Kingdom of Christ. Satan had the possession of them, as a Man of his own Goods; but Christ dispossesseth that strong Man armed, alters the property, and recovers them out of his hand, *Luke 11. 21, 22.* There are two ways by which Christ frees Believers out of Satan's Power and Possession, namely,

1. By Price.

2. By Power.

First, By Price, the Blood of Christ purchaseth Believers out of the hand of Justice by satisfying the Law for them, which being done, Satan's Authority over them falls of course, as the Power of a Gaoler over the Prisoner doth, when he hath a legal Discharge, *Heb. 2. 14.* *For as much then as the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood: He also himself took part of the same, that through Death he might destroy him that had the power of Death, that is the Devil.* The cruel Tyrant beats and burthens the poor Captive no more after the Ransom is once paid, and he actually freed, and therefore Christ delivers his,

Secondly, By Power. Satan is exceeding unwilling to let go his prey: He is a strong and a malicious Enemy: Every rescue and deliverance

D d d

rance out of his hand, is a glorious effect of the Almighty Power of Christ, *Ab.* 26. 18. *2 Cor.* 10. 5. How did our Lord Jesus Christ grapple with Satan at his Death, and triumphed over him, *Col.* 2. 15. O glorious Salvation, blessed Liberty of the Children of God.

Fifthly, Christ frees Believers from the poisonous Sting and hurt of Death: Kill us it can, but hurt us it cannot, *1 Cor.* 15. 55, 56. *O Death where is thy Sting? O Grave where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin, and the strength of Sin is the Law: But thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* If there be no Hurt, there should be no Horror in Death: 'Tis Guilt that arms Death both with its hurting and terrifying Power. To die in our Sins, *John* 8. 24. To have our Bones full of the Sins of our Youth, which shall lie down with us in the dust, *Job* 20. 11. To have Death, like a Dragon, pulling a poor guilty Creature as a prey into its dreadful Den, *Psal.* 49. 14. In this lies the danger and horror of Death: But from Death as a curse, and from the grave as a Prison, Christ hath set Believers at liberty, by submitting to Death in their room, by his Victorious Resurrection from the Grave, as the first-born of the dead: Death is disarmed of its hurting power: The death of Believers is but a sleep in Jesus.

Thirdly, The next thing to be briefly spoken to, is the kind and nature of that Freedom and Liberty purchased and procured by Christ for Believers.

Now liberty may be considered two ways; *viz.*

1. As Civil.
2. As Sacred.

As to civil Freedom or Liberty, it belongs not to our present business: Believers as to their civil capacity are not freed from the duties they owe to their Superiors. Servants, though Believers, are still to be subject to their Masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling, *Ephes.* 6. 5. nor from Obedience to lawful Magistrates whom we are to obey in the Lord, *Rom.* 13. 1, 4. Religion dissolves not the bonds of civil Relations: Nor is to be used as an occasion to the flesh, *1 Pet.* 2. 16. 'Tis not a carnal but a spiritual Freedom Christ hath purchased for us: And this spiritual Freedom is again to be consider, either as,

1. Inchoate.
2. Consummate.

The liberty Believers have at present is but a beginning liberty, they are freed but in part from their spiritual Enemies: But it is a growing liberty every day, and will be consummate, and compleat at last.

To conclude, Christian Liberty is either,

1. Privative, or,
2. Positive.

The liberty Believers are invested with, is of both kinds: They are not only freed from many miseries, burthens and dangers; but also invested by Jesus Christ with many royal Privileges and invaluable Immonities.

Fourthly, And this brings us to the fourth and last thing; namely the Properties of this blessed Freedom which the Saints enjoy by Jesus Christ: and if we consider it duly it will be found to be,

First, A wonderful Liberty, never enough to be admired: How could it be imagined that ever those who owed unto God more than ever they could pay by their own Eternal sufferings, those that were under that dreadful Curse and Condemnation of the Law, in the power and possession of Satan the strong Man armed; those that were bound with so many Chains in their spiritual Prison; their understanding bound with ignorance, their wills with obstinacy, their hearts with impenetrable hardness, their affections with a thousand bewitching vanities; that flight their state of slavery so much as industriously to oppose all instruments and means of deliverance: For such Persons to be set at liberty, notwithstanding all this, is the wonder of wonders, and is deservedly marvellous in the Eyes of Believers for ever.

Secondly, The freedom of Believers is a peculiar freedom: a liberty which few obtain, the generality abiding still in bondage to Satan, who from the multitude of his Subjects is stiled *the god of this World*, *2 Cor.* 4. 4. Believers in Scripture are often called a remnant, which is but a small part of the whole piece: The more cause have the people of God to admire distinguishing mercy: How many Nobles and great ones of the World are but royal Slaves to Satan and their own Lusts!

Thirdly, The liberty of Believers is a liberty dearly purchased by the Blood of Christ: What that Captain said, *Acts* 22. 28. *With a great sum obtained I this freedom*, may be much more said of the Believers freedom: 'Twas not Silver or Gold but the precious Blood of Christ that purchased it, *1 Pet.* 1. 18.

Fourthly, The freedom and liberty of Believers is a growing and encreasing liberty, they get more and more out of the power of Sin, and nearer still to their compleat Salvation every day, *Rom.* 13. 11. the body of Sin died daily in them: They are said to be crucified with Christ: The strength of Sin abates continually in them after the manner of crucified Persons: Who die a slow but sure Death: And look in what degree the power of Sin abates, proportionably their spiritual liberty encreases upon them.

Fifthly, The freedom of Believers is a comfortable freedom: The Apostle comforts Christians of the lowest Rank, poor Servants, with this Consideration, *1 Cor.* 7. 22. *He that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lords freeman, q. d.* Let not the Meanness of your outward Condition, which is a state of Subjection and Dependence, a state of Poverty and Contempt, at all trouble you: You are the Lord's Freemen, of precious Account in his Eyes. O 'tis a comfortable Liberty!

Sixthly, and *lastly*, 'Tis a perpetual and final Freedom, they that are once freed by Christ have their Manumissions and final Discharge from that state of Bondage they were in before. Sin shall never have Dominion over them any more: It may tempt them and trouble them, but shall never more rule and govern them, *Ab.* 26. 18. And thus you see what a glorious Liberty the Liberty of Believers is.

The

The improvement whereof will be in the following Inferences.

Inference 1. *How rational is the Joy of Christians, above the Joy of all others in the World?* Shall not the Captive rejoice in his recovered Liberty? The very Birds of the Air (as one observes) had rather be at liberty in the Woods, though lean and hungry, than in a golden Cage with the richest Fare: Every Creature naturally prizes it, none more than Believers, who have felt the Burthen and Bondage of Corruption: Who in the days of their first Illumination and Conviction have poured out many Groans and Tears for this Mercy. What was said of the Captive People of God in *Babylon*, excellently shadows forth the state of God's People under spiritual Bondage, with the way and manner of their Deliverance from it, *Zech. 9. 11. By the Blood of thy Covenant I have sent forth thy Prisoners out of the Pit, wherein is no Water.* Believers are delivered by the Blood of Christ out of a worse Pit than that of *Babylon*: And look as the Tribes in their return from thence were overwhelmed with joy and astonishment, *Psal. 126. 1, 2. When the Lord turned again the Captivity of Sion; we were like them that dream; then was our Mouth filled with laughter, and our Tongue with singing: They were overwhelmed with the sense of the Mercy: So should it be with the People of God.* 'Tis said, *Luke 15. 24.* when the Prodigal Son (there made the emblem of a returning converting Sinner) was returned again to his Father's House; that there was heard Mirth and Dancing, Mirth and Feasting in that House. The Angels in Heaven rejoice when a Soul is recovered out of the Power of Satan; and shall not the recovered Soul, immediately concerned in the Mercy, greatly rejoice? Yea, let them rejoice in the Lord, and let no earthly Trouble or Affliction ever have Power to interrupt their Joy for a Moment after such a deliverance as this.

Inference 2. *How unreasonable, and wholly inexcusable is the Sin of Apostasy from Jesus Christ?* What is it but for a delivered Captive to put his Feet again into the Shackles, his Hands into the Manacles, his Neck into the Iron Yoke, from which he hath been delivered? 'Tis said, *Mat. 12. 44, 45. When the unclean Spirit is gone out of a Man, he walketh through dry Places, seeking Rest and findeth none: Then he saith, I will return into mine House from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished; then goeth he, and taketh with him seven other Spirits more Wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last State of that Man is worse than the first.* Even as a Prisoner that hath escaped, and is again recovered, is loaded with double Irons. Let the People of God be content to run any hazard, endure any difficulties in the way of Religion, rather than return again into their former Bondage, to Sin and Satan. O Christian, if ever God gave thee a sight, and a sense of the Misery and Danger of thy natural State, if ever thou hast felt the Pangs and Throes of a labouring and distressed Conscience, and after all this talked the unspeakable sweetness of the Peace and Rest that is in Christ, thou wilt rather choose to Die ten thousand Deaths than

Vol. I.

to forsake Christ, and go back again into that sad Condition.

Inference 3. *How suitable and well becoming is a free Spirit in Believers to their State of Liberty and Freedom?* Christ hath made your Condition free, O let the temper and frame of your Hearts be free also, do all that you do for God with a Spirit of freedom: Not by constraint but willingly. Methinks, Christians, the new Nature that is in you should stand for a Command, and be instead of all Arguments that use to work upon the Hopes and Fears of other Men: See how all Creatures work according to the Principle of their Natures: You need not command a Mother to draw forth her Breasts to a sucking Child: Nature it self teaches and prompts to that: You need not bid the Sea ebb or flow at the stated Hours: O Christian, why should thy Heart need any other Argument than its own spiritual Inclination to keep its stated times and seasons of Communion with God? Let none of God's Commandments be grievous to you: Let not thine Heart need dragging and forcing to its own Benefit and Advantage. Whatever you do for God do it cheerfully, and whatever you suffer for God suffer it cheerfully: It was a brave Spirit which acted Holy Paul, *I am ready, saith he, not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus*, *Acts 21. 13.*

Inference 4. *Let no Man wonder at the Enmity and Opposition of Satan to the Preaching of the Gospel:* For by the Gospel it is that Souls are recovered out of his Power, *Acts 26. 18.* 'Tis the express Work of Ministers to *turn Men from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God.* Satan (as one saith) is a great and jealous Prince: He will never endure to have Liberty proclaimed by the Ministers of Christ within his Dominions: And indeed what is it less when the Gospel is preached in Power, but as it were by beat of Drum and sound of Trumpet to proclaim Liberty, Liberty, spiritual sweet and Everlasting Liberty, to every Soul that is made sensible of the Bondage of Corruption and cruel servitude of Satan, and will now come over to Jesus Christ? And oh what numbers and multitudes of Prisoners have broken loose from Satan at one Proclamation of Christ, *Acts 2. 41.* But Satan owes the Servants of Christ a spite for this, and will be sure to pay them if ever they come within his reach: Persecution is the Genius of the Gospel, and follows it as the Shadow doth the Body.

Inference 5. *How careful should Christians be to maintain their spiritual Liberty in all, and every Point thereof?* Stand fast (saith Paul) in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free; and be not again entangled in the yoke of Bondage, *Gal. 5. 1.* And again, *Ye are bought with a Price, be not ye the Servants of Men.* It's Christ's prerogative to prescribe the Rules of his own House; he hath given no Man Dominion over your Faith, *2 Cor. 1. 24.* One Man is no Rule to another, but the Word of Christ a Rule to all: Follow not the holiest of Men one step farther than they follow Christ, *1 Cor. 11. 4.* Man is an ambitious Creature, naturally affecting Dominion: And Dominion over the Mind rather than over the Body: To give

D d d 2

Law

Law to others feeds pride in himself: So far as any Man brings the Word of Christ to warrant his Injunctions, so far we are to obey, and no farther: Christ is your Lord and Law-giver.

Inference 6. Lastly, Let this encourage and persuade Sinners to come to Christ, for with him is sweet Liberty for poor Captives. Oh that you did but know what a blessed state Jesus Christ would bring you into: Come unto me (saith he) ye that labour, and are heavy laden; and what Encouragement doth he give to comers but this, my yoke is easie, and my burthen is

light? The Devil perswaded you that the ways of Obedience and strict Godliness are a perfect Bondage; but if ever God regenerate you, you will find his ways, ways of pleasantness, and all his paths peace: You will rejoice in the way of his Commandments as much as in all Riches: You will find the worst Work Christ puts you about even suffering Work, sweeter than all the Pleasures that ever you found in Sin. O therefore open your Hearts at the call of the Gospel: Come unto Christ, then shall you be free indeed.

SERMON XIX.

1 PET. III. 18.

For Christ hath once suffered for Sins, the just for the unjust; that he might bring us to God.

*Serm. 19.
Text. The
Saints
coming
home to
God by
Reconcili-
ation and
Glorifica-
tion, o-
pened and
applied.*

THE Scope of the Apostle in this Place is to prepare and fortifie Christians for a Day of Suffering. In order to their cheerful sustaining whereof he prescribeth two excellent Rules of mighty use for all suffering Christians.

First, To get a good Conscience within them, verse 16, 17. hic maris absque esto.

Secondly, To set the Example of Christ's Suffering before them, verse 18. For Christ hath once suffered for Sinners: The Sufferings of Christ for us, is the great Motive engaging Christians to suffer cheerfully for him.

In the Words before us we have,

First, The Sufficiency and Fulness of Christ's Sufferings intimated in that Particle [once] Christ needs to suffer no more, having finished and compleated that whole Work at once.

Secondly, The meritorious Cause of the Sufferings of Christ, and that is Sin, Christ once suffered for Sins: Not his own Sins, but ours: As it follows in the next Clause, which is the third thing here observable, viz.

Thirdly, The admirable Grace and unexampled Love of Christ to us Sinners, the just for the unjust, in which Words the Substitution of Christ in the room and place of Sinners, the Vice-gerence of his Death is plainly expressed. Christ died not only nostro bono, for our good, but also nostro loco in our stead.

Fourthly, Here is also the final Cause or Design and Scope of the Sufferings of Christ, which was to bring us to God.

Fifthly, Here is also the Issue of the Sufferings of Christ, which was the Death of Christ in the Flesh, and the quickning of Christ after Death by the Spirit: Many excellent Observations are lodged in the Bosom of this Scripture: All which I must pass in Silence at this Time, and confine my Discourse to the final Cause of the Sufferings of Christ, namely that he might bring us to God: Where the Observation will be plainly and briefly this.

Doct. That the end of Christ's cursed Death and bitter Sufferings was to bring all those for whom he died unto God.

In the Explication and Preparation of this Point for Use, two Things must be spoken unto. *viz.*

1. What Christ's bringing us to God imports.

2. What Influence the Death of Christ hath upon this Design of bringing us to God.

*First, What Christ's bringing us to God imports: And certainly there be many great and excellent Things carried in this Expression: More generally it Notes our State of Reconciliation and our State of Glorification: By Reconciliation we are brought nigh to God, Ephes. 2. 13. *Ye are made nigh, (i. e.) reconciled, by the Blood of Christ,* Heb. 12. 22, 23. *we are said to come to God the Judge of all.* By Reconciliation we are brought nigh unto God now; by Glorification we shall be brought home to God hereafter, 1 Thes. 4. 17. *We shall be ever with the Lord:* But more particularly this Phrase, *that he might bring us to God,* imports,*

*First, That the chief Happiness of Man consisteth in the Enjoyment of God: That the Creature hath as necessary dependance upon God for Happiness, as the Stream hath upon the Fountain, or the Image in the Glass upon the Face of him that looks into it. Look as the sum of the Creatures Misery lies in this, *departs from me;* Separation from God is the principal Part of Damnation: So on the contrary, the chief Happiness of the Creature consisteth in the Enjoyment and Blessed Vision of God, 1 John 3. 2. *Psalm 17. 15. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.**

Secondly, It implies Mans Revolt and Apostasie from God, Ephes. 2. 12. But now in Licet factus Christus Jesus, ye who were sometime afar off, are culcates made nigh by the Blood of Christ. Those whom Christ bringeth unto God were before afar off from him, both in State and Condition; and in Temper and Disposition: We were lost Creatures, and had no desire to return to God: The Prodigal was said to go into a far Country, Luke 15. 30.

factus procul eximilis Zechm. de imagine Dei.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Christ's bringing us to God implies our inability to return to God of our selves: We must be brought back by Christ, or perish for ever in a State of Separation from God: The lost Sheep is made the Emblem of the lost Sinner, *Luke 15. 5.* The Sheep returns not to the Fold or it felt, but the Shepherd seeks it, finds it, and carries it back upon his Shoulders: And the Apostle plainly tells us, *Rom. 5. 6.* That when we were without Strength (i. e.) any ability to recover, help or save our selves; in due Time Christ died for the ungodly.

Fourthly, Christ's bringing us to God evidently implies this, that God's unsatisfied Justice was once the great Bar betwixt Him and Man: Man can have no access to God but by Christ: Christ brings us to God by no other way but the way of Satisfaction by his Blood: He hath suffered for Sins, the Just for the Unjust, that he might bring us to God. Better ten thousand Worlds should perish for ever, than God should lose the Honour of his Justice. This great Obex, or Bar to our Enjoyment of God is effectually removed by the Death of Christ: Whereby it is not only fully satisfied, but highly honoured and glorified, *Rom. 3. 24.* And so the way by which we are brought to God is again opened (to the Wonder and Joy of all Believers) by the Blood and Sufferings of Christ.

Fifthly, and Lastly, It shews us the peculiar Happiness and Privilege of Believers above all People in the World. These only are they which shall be brought to God by Jesus Christ in a reconciled state: Others indeed shall be brought to God as a Judge, to be condemned by him: Believers only are brought to God in the Mediators Hand, as a reconciled Father to be made blessed for ever in the enjoyment of him: Every Believer is brought singly to God at his Death, *Luke 16. 22.* And all Believers shall be jointly and solemnly presented to God in the great Day, *Col. 1. 22.* Jude v. 24. They shall be all presented faultless before the presence of his Glory with exceeding Joy. Now the Privilege of Believers in that Day will lie in divers things.

First, That they shall be all brought to God together: This will be the general Assembly mentioned, *Heb. 12. 22.* There shall be a Collection of all Believers in all Ages of the World into one blessed Assembly: They shall come from the East, and West, and North, and South, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God, *Luke 13. 29.* O what a glorious train will be seen following the Redeemer in that Day!

Secondly, As all the Saints shall be collected into one Body: So they shall be all brought or presented unto God, faultless and without blemish, *Jude v. 24.* A glorious Church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, *Eph. 5. 27.* For this is the general Assembly of the Spirits of just Men that are made perfect, *Heb. 12. 23.* All Sin was perfectly separated from them, when Death had separated their Souls and Bodies.

Thirdly, In this lies the Privilege of Believers, that as they shall be all brought together, and that in a state of absolute Purity and Perfection, so they shall be all brought to God: They

shall see his Face, in the Vision whereof is fulness of Joy, and at whose right Hand are Pleasures for evermore, *Psal. 16. 11.* The objective blessedness of the Saints consisteth in their Fruition of God, *Psal. 73. 25.* To see God in his word and works, is the happiness of the Saints on Earth, but to see him Face to Face will be the fulness of their Blessedness in Heaven, *1 John 3. 2.* This is that intuitive, transforming and satisfying Vision of which the Scripture frequently speaks, *Psal. 17. 15. 2 Cor. 15. 28. Rev. 7. 17.*

Fourthly, To be brought unto God, must needs imply a State of perfect Joy and highest Delight: So speaks the Apostle *Jude v. 14.* Christ shall present or bring them to God with exceeding Joy: And more fully the Joy of this day is expressed, *Psal. 45. 15.* With joy and rejoicing shall they be brought, they shall enter into the Kings Palace: It will be a day of universal Joy, when all the Saints are brought home to God in a perfected State. For,

1. God the Father will rejoice when Christ brings home that precious number of his Elect, whom he Redeemed by his Blood: He rejoiceth in them now though imperfect, and under many distastful Corruptions and Weaknesses, *Zeph. 3. 17.* How much more will be rejoice in them when Christ presents them without Spot or Wrinkle to him, *Ephes. 5. 27.*

2. Jesus Christ will exceedingly rejoice, 'twill be the day of the gladness and satisfaction of his Heart: For now, and not till now he receives his mystical fulness, *Col. 1. 24.* beholds all the blessed Issues of his Death, which cannot but give him unspeakable Contentment, *Isa. 53. 11.* He shall see of the travail of his Soul, and shall be satisfied.

3. The day in which Believers are brought home to God, will be a day of unspeakable Joy to the holy Spirit of God himself. For unto this all his sanctifying Designs in this World had respect: To this Day he sealed them: After this Day he stirred up Desires and Groanings that cannot be uttered in their Hearts, *Ephes. 4. 30. Rom. 8. 26.* Thus all the great and blessed Persons, Father, Son and Spirit, will rejoice in the bringing home of the Elect to God. For as it is the greatest Joy to a Man to see the Designs which his Heart hath been long projecting and intently set upon, by an orderly Conduct at last brought to the happy Issue he first aimed at; much more will it be so here: The Counsel and Hand of each Person being deeply concerned in this blessed Design.

4. The Angels of God will rejoice at the bringing home of Believers to him: The Spirits of just Men made perfect will be united in one general Assembly with an innumerable Company of Angels, *Heb. 2. 22.* Great is the Affection and Love of Angels to Redeemed Ones: They greatly rejoiced at the Incarnation of Christ for them, *Luk. 2. 13.* They greatly delighted to pry into the Mystery of their Redemption, *1 Pet. 1. 12.* They were marvellously delighted at their Conversion which was the Day of their Espousals to Christ, *Luke 15. 10.* They have been tender and careful over them, and very serviceable to them in this World, *Heb. 1. 14.* and therefore cannot but rejoice exceedingly to see them all brought

brought home in safety to their Father's House.

5. To Conclude, Christ's bringing home of all Believers unto God, will be matter of unspeakable Joy to themselves. For whatever Knowledge and Acquaintance they had with God here, whatever lights of Faith they had of Heaven and the Glory to come in this World; yet the light of God and Christ the Redeemer will be an unspeakable surprize to them in that Day. This will be the Day of relieving all their wants; the Day of satisfaction to all their Desires: For now they are come where they would be; Arrived at the very Desires of their Souls.

Secondly, In the last place, let it be considered what influence the Death of Christ hath upon this Design, and you shall find it much every Way. In two things especially the Death of Christ hath a blessed Causality and Influence in this matter, viz.

1. It effectually removes all Obstacles to it.

2. It purchaseth (as a price) their Title to it. First, The Death of Christ removes all Obstacles out of the way of this Mercy: Such were the Bars hindring our access to God, as nothing but the Death of Christ could remove and open a Way for Believers to come to God. The Guilt of Sin barred us from his gracious Presence, *Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3. Hosea. 14. 2. The Filth of Sin excluded us from God, Hab. 1. 13. Heb. 12. 14. The Enmity of our Nature perfectly stopped up our Way to God, Col. 1. 21. Rom. 8. 7. by reason hereof fallen Man hath no Desire to come unto God, Job 21. 14. The Justice of God like a flaming Sword turning every Way; kept all Men from access to God: And Lastly, Satan that malicious and armed Adversary lay as a Lyon in the Way to God, 2 Pet. 5. 8. Oh with what strong Bars were the Gates of Heaven shut against our Souls! The way to God was chained up with such Difficulties as none but Christ was able to Remove; and he by Death hath effectually removed them all: The Way is now Open, even the new and the living Way, consecrated for us by his Blood. The Death of Christ effectually removes the Guilt of Sin, 1 Pet. 2. 24. washes off the Filth of Sin, 1 John 5. 6. takes away the Enmity of Nature, Col. 1. 20, 21. satisfied all the demands of Justice, *Rom. 3. 25, 26. hath broken all the Power of Satan, Col. 2. 15. Heb. 2. 14. and consequently the Way to God is effectually and fully opened to Believers by the Blood of Jesus, Heb. 10. 20.**

Secondly, The Blood of Christ purchased for Believers their Right and Title to this Privilege, *Gal. 4. 4, 5. But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law: To redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons, (i.e.) both the relation and Inheritance of Sons.* There was value and worth enough in the precious Blood of Christ, not only to pay all our Debts to Justice, but over and above the payment of our Debts, to purchase for us this invaluable Privilege. We must put this unspeakable Mercy of being brought to God, as my Text puts it, upon the account and score of the Death of Christ. Every believer had ever tasted the sweetness of

such a Mercy, if Christ had not tasted the bitterness of Death for him. The use of all you will have in the following Deductions of Truth.

Deduction 1. Great is the preciousness and worth of Souls that the life of Christ should be given to redeem and recover them to God: As God laid out his Thoughts and Counsel from Eternity upon them to Project the Way and Method of their Salvation: So the Lord Jesus in pursuance of that blessed Design, came from the bosom of the Father, and spilt his invaluable Blood to bring them to God. No wife Man expends vast sums to bring home trifling Commodities. How cheap soever our Souls are in our Estimation, 'tis evident by this they are of precious esteem in the Eyes of Christ.

Deduction 2. Redeemed Souls must expect no rest or satisfaction on this side Heaven, and the full Enjoyment of God: The Life of a Believer in this World is a Life of Motion and Expectation: They are now coming to God, 1 Pet. 2. 4. God, you see, is the Centre and Reil of their Souls, *Heb. 4. 9. As the Rivers cannot rest till they pour themselves into the bosom of the Sea, so neither can renewed Souls find rest till they come into the bosom of God.* There be four things which do and will break the reil and disturb the Souls of Believers in this World; Afflictions, Temptations, Corruptions, and Absence from God: if the three former Causes of disquietness were totally removed, so that a Believer were placed in such a Condition upon Earth where no Affliction should disturb him, no Temptation trouble him, no Corruption defile or grieve him: Yet his very Absence from God must still keep him restless and unsatisfied, 2 Cor. 5. 6. Whilst we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord.

Deduction 3. What sweet and pleasant though his should all Believers have of Death! When they die, and never till they die shall they be fully brought home to God. Death to the Saints is the door by which they enter into the Enjoyment of God: The dying Christian is almost at home, yet a few Pangs and Agonies more, and then he is come to God in whose presence is the fulness of Joy. I desire, saith Paul, to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better, *Phil. 1. 23. It should not scare us to be brought to Death, the King of Terrors, so long as it is the Office of Death to bring us to God. That dreaming Opinion of the Soul sleeping after Death is ungrounded as it is uncomfortable: The same day we loose from this Shore, we shall be landed upon the blessed Shore, where we shall see and enjoy God for ever. O if the Friends of dead Believers did but understand where, and with whom their Souls are, whilst they are Mourning over their Bodies: Certainly a few believing Thoughts of this would quickly dry up their Tears, and fill the House of Mourning with Voices of Praise and Thanksgiving.*

Deduction 4. How comfortable and sweet should the Converses and Communication of Christians be with one another in this World! Christ is bringing them all to God through this Vale of Tears, they are now in the Way to him, all bound for Heaven, going home to God to their Everlasting Rest in Glory: Every Day,

every

every Hour, every Duty brings them nearer and nearer to their Journeys end, *Rom. 13.*

11. *Nor, faith the Apostle, is our Salvation never lost when we believed.* O what manner of heavenly Communications and ravishing Discourses should Believers have with each other as they walk by the Way! O what pleasant and delightful stories should they tell one another about the Place and State whither Christ is bringing them, and where they shall shortly be! What ravishing, transporting, transforming Visions they shall have that Day they are brought home to God: How surprizingly glorious the sight of Jesus Christ will be to them, who died for them to bring them unto God. How should such Discourses as these shorten and sweeten their Passage through this World; strengthen and encourage the dejected and feeble minded, and exceedingly Honour and Adorn their Profession! Thus lived the Believers of Old, *Heb. 11. 9, 10.* By Faith he sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac, and Jacob, the Heirs with him of the same Promise, for he looked for a City which hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. But alas, most Christians are either entangled in the Cares and Troubles, or so ensnared by the Delights and Pleasures, which almost continually divert and take up their Thoughts by the Way, that there is but little room for any Discourses of Christ and Heaven among many of them: But certainly this would be as much your Interest as your Duty. When the Apostle had entertained the Thessalonians with a lovely Discourse of their Meeting the Lord in the Air, and being ever with the Lord, he charges it upon them as their great Duty to Comfort one another with those Words, *1 Thes. 4. 17, 18.*

Deduction 5. *How unreasonable are the Desjections of Believers upon the account of those Troubles which they meet with in this World!* 'Tis true, Afflictions of all kinds do attend Believers in their Way to God; through many Tribulations we must enter into that Kingdom: But what then? Must we despond and droop under them as other Men? Surely no, if Afflictions be the Way through which you must come to God, then never be discouraged at Affliction. Troubles and Afflictions are of excellent use under the Blessing of the Spirit to further Christ's great Design of bringing you to God. How often would you turn out of that Way which leads to God, if God did not hedge up your Way with Thorns, *Hosea 2. 6.* Doubtless when you come home to God, you shall find you have been as much beholding (it may be a great deal more) to your Troubles than to your Comforts, for bringing you thither: However the sweetness of the End will infinitely more than recompence the Sorrows and Troubles of the Way: nor are they worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in you, *Rom. 8. 18.*

Deduction 6. *How much are all Believers obliged in Point of Interest to follow Jesus Christ whi-*

thersoever he goes! Thus are the Saints described, *Rev. 14. 4.* *These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: These were redeemed from among Men being the first-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.* If it be the Design of Christ to bring us to God, then certainly it is our Duty to follow Christ in all the Paths of Active and Passive Obedience through which he now leads us, as ever we expect to be brought home to God at last: *We are made Partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our Confidence stedfast unto the end, Heb. 3. 14.* If we have followed him through many Sufferings and Troubles, and shall turn away from him at last, we lose all that we have wrought and suffered in Religion, and shall never reach home to God at last: The Crown of Life belongs only to them who are faithful to the Death.

Deduction 7. *Let all that desire or expect to come unto God hereafter, come to Christ by Faith now.* There is no other Way to the Father but by Christ: No other Way to Christ but Faith: How vain therefore are the Hopes and Expectations of all Unbelievers? Be assured of this great Truth, Death shall bring you to God as an avenging Judge, if Christ do not bring you now to God as a reconciled Father: Without Holiness no Man shall see God: The door of Hope is shut against all Christless Persons, *Joh. 14. 6.* *No Man cometh unto the Father but by me.* Oh what a sweet Voice cometh down from Heaven to your Souls this day, saying, As ever you expect or hope to come to God and enjoy the blessedness that is here, come unto Christ, obey his Calls, give up your selves to his Conduct and Government, and you shall certainly be brought to God: As sure as you shall now be brought to Jesus Christ by spiritual Union, so sure shall you be brought to God in full Fruition. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ, the new and living way to the Father.

And thus I have finished the Motives drawn from the Titles and Benefits of Christ, serving to enforce and quicken the great Gospel Exhortation of coming to, and effectually applying the Lord Jesus Christ in the way of Faith. O that the Blessings of the Spirit might follow these Calls, and fix these Considerations as Nails in sure Places. But seeing the great hindrance and obstruction of Faith is the false Opinion and Persuasion of most unregenerate Men, that they are already in Christ; my next Work therefore shall be in a second Use of Conviction to undeceive Men in that Matter; and that by shewing them the undoubted Certainty of these two Things:

First, That there is no coming ordinarily to Christ without the Applications of the Law to our Consciences in a way of effectual Conviction.

Secondly, Nor by that neither without the Teachings of God, in the way of spiritual Illumination. The first of these will be fully confirmed and opened in

SERMON

S E R M O N X X .

R O M. VII. 9.

Serm. 20.
Text. The
great usefulness of
the Law or
Word of
God, in order to
the Application
of Christ.

For I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died.

THE Scope of the Apostle in this Epistle, and more particularly in this Chapter, is to state the due Use and Excellency of the Law, which he doth

accordingly,

First, By denying to it, Power to justify us, which is the peculiar Honour of Christ.

Secondly, By ascribing to it a Power to convince us, and so prepare us for Christ.

Neither attributing to it more Honour than belongeth to it, nor yet detracting from it that Honour and Usefulness which God hath given it. It cannot make us Righteous; but it can convince us that we are Unrighteous; it cannot heal, but it can open and discover the wounds that Sin hath given us; which he proves in this Place by an Argument drawn from his own Experience, confirmed also by the general Experience of Believers, in whose Persons and Names we must here understand him to speak; *For I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died*: Wherein three Particulars are very observable.

First, The Opinion *Paul* had, and all unregenerate Men have of themselves before Conversion: *I was alive once*: By Life understand here liveliness, cheerfulness, and confidence of his good Estate and Condition: He was full of vain Hope, false Joy and presumptuous Confidence, a very brisk and jovial Man.

Secondly, The Sense and Opinion he had, and all others will have of themselves, if ever they come under the regenerating Work of the Spirit in his ordinary Method of working: *I died*. The Death he here speaks of, stands opposed to that Life before mentioned; and signifies the Sorrows, Fears and Tremblings that seized upon his Soul, when his State and Temper were upon the Change: The Apprehensions he then had of his Condition struck him home to the Heart and damped all his carnal Mirth: *I died*.

Thirdly, The Ground and Reason of this wonderful Alteration and Change of his Judgment, and Apprehension of his own Condition; *the Commandment came, and Sin revived*; the Commandment came, (i. e.) it came home to my Conscience, it was set on with a Divine and Mighty Efficacy upon my Heart: The Commandment was come before by way of Promulgation and the literal Knowledge of it: But it never came till now in the spiritual Sense and convincing Power to his Soul: Though he had often read and heard the Law before, yet he never clearly understood the meaning and extent, he never felt the mighty Efficacy thereof upon his Heart before; it so came at this Time, as it never came before. From hence the Observations are,

Doct. 1. *That unregenerate Persons are generally*

fully full of groundless Confidence and Cheerfulness, though their Condition be sad and miserable.

Doct. 2. *That there is a mighty Efficacy in the Word or Law of God to kill vain Confidence and quench carnal Mirth in the Hearts of Men, when God sets it home upon their Consciences.*

We shall take both these Points under Consideration, and improve them to the Design in Hand.

Doct. 1. *That unregenerate Persons are generally full of groundless Confidence and Cheerfulness, though their Condition be sad and miserable.* Rev. 3. 17. *Because thou sayst I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*: This is the very Life that unregenerate Men do live. In the opening whereof I will shew you,

1. What is the Life of the Unregenerate.
2. What maintains that Life.
3. How it appears that this is the Life the generality of the World do live.
4. The Danger of Living such a Life as this: And then apply it.

First, What is the Life of the unregenerate, and wherein it consists? Now there being among others Three Things in which the Life of the unregenerate doth principally consist, viz.

Carnal Security,
Presumptuous Hope, and
False Joy:

Of these briefly in their Order.

First, There is in unregenerate Men a great deal of carnal Security, they dread no danger, Luke 11. 21. *When a strong Man armed keepeth his Palace, his goods are in Peace*: There is generally a great stillness and silence in the Consciences of such Men: When others (in a better Condition) are watching and trembling, they sleep securely, so they live, and so oftentimes they die, Psalm 73. 4. *They have no Bonds in their Death*; Hebrew, no Knot, no Difficulties that puzzle them: 'Tis true, the Consciences of few Men are so perfectly stupified, but that sometime or other they twinge and gird them, but it seldom Works at that height, or continues with them so long as to give any considerable Interruption to their carnal Peace and Quietness.

Secondly, The Life of the unregenerate consisteth in presumptuous Hope: This is the very Foundation of their carnal Security. So Christ tells the Jews, John 8. 54, 55. *Of whom ye say that he is your God, and yet ye have not known him.* The World is full of Hope without a Promise, which is but as a Spiders Web when a stress comes to be laid upon it, Job 23. 8. Unregenerate Men are said indeed

to be without Hope; *Eph. 2. 12.* But the meaning is, they are without any solid well-grounded Hope: For in Scripture account, vain Hope is no Hope, Except it be a lively Hope, *1 Pet. 1. 3.* A hope flowing from Union with Christ, *Col. 1. 27.* A Hope nourished by Experience, *Rom. 5. 4.* A Hope for which a Man can give a Reason, *1 Pet. 3. 15.* A Hope that puts Men upon Heart-purifying Endeavours, *1 John 3. 3.* It is in the Account of God a Cypher, a Vanity, not deserving the Name of Hope: And yet such a groundless, dead, Christless, irrational, idle Hope is that which the unregenerate Lives upon.

Thirdly, The Life of the unregenerate consisteth in false Joy, the immediate off-spring of ungrounded Hope, *Mat. 13. 20.* The stony ground received the Word with Joy.

There are two sorts of Joy upon which the unregenerate live, *viz.*

1. A sensitive Joy in Things Carnal.

2. A delusive Joy in Things Spiritual.

They rejoice in Corn, Wine and Oyl, in their Estates and Children, in the pleasant Fruitions of the Creature: Yea, and they rejoice also in Christ and the Promises, in Heaven and Glory: With all which they have just such a kind of Communion as a Man hath in a Dream with a full Feast and curious Music, and just so their Joy will vanish when they awake. Now these Three, *Security, Hope and Joy,* make up the livelihood of the carnal World.

Secondly, Next it concerns us to enquire what are the things that maintain and support this Security, Hope and Joy in the Hearts of unregenerate Men, and if we consider duly, we shall find Church Privileges, natural Ignorance, false Evidences of the Love of God, slight Workings of the Gospel, Self-love, comparing themselves with the more prophane; and Satan's Policy managing all these in order to their eternal Ruin; are so many Springs to feed and maintain this Life of Delusion in the unregenerate.

1. *First,* Church Privileges lay the Foundation to this strong delusion: Thus the Jews deceived themselves, saying in their Hearts, *We have Abraham for our Father,* *Mat. 3. 9.* This propt up their vain Hopes that *Abraham's* Blood ran in their Veins, though *Abraham's* Faith and Obedience never wrought in their Hearts.

2. *Secondly,* Natural Ignorance, this keeps all in peace; they that see not, fear not. There are but two ways to quiet the Hearts of Men about their Spiritual and Eternal concerns, *viz. the way of Assurance and Faith, or the way of Ignorance and Self-deceit:* By the one we are put beyond Danger, by the other beyond Fear, though the danger be greater. Satan could never quiet Men if he did not first blind them.

3. *Thirdly,* False evidence of the Love of God is another Spring feeding this Security, vain Hope, and false Joy in the Hearts of Men: See the Power of it to hush and still the Conscience, *Mat. 7. 22. Many will say to me in that day; Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name, &c.* The things upon which they built their Evidence and Confidence were external things in Religion, yet they had a quieting power upon them as if they had been the best Evidences in the World.

Vol. I.

4. *Fourthly,* Slight Workings of the Gospel, such are transient Motions of the Affections under the Word, *Heb. 6. 8.* the working of their desires about spiritual Objects, *Joh. 6. 34. Mat. 15. 8.* the external Change and Reformation of their Ways, *Mat. 12. 43.* all which serve to nourish the vain Hopes of the unregenerate.

5. *Fifthly,* Self love is an apparent reason and ground of security and false Hope, *Mat. 7. 3.* It makes a Man to overlook great Evils in himself, whilst he is sharp-sight to discover and censure lesser Evils in others: Self-love takes away the sight of Sin, by bringing it too near the Eye.

6. *Sixthly,* Meas comparing themselves with those that are more Prophane and grossly Wicked than themselves, serves notably to quiet and hush the Conscience asleep; *God, I thank thee,* said the Pharisee, *I am not as other Men, or as this Publican:* O what a Satin did he seem to himself, when he stood by those that were more externally Wicked!

7. *Seventhly and Lastly,* The Policy of Satan to manage all these things to the blinding and ruining of the Souls of Men, is another great reason they live so securely and pleasantly as they do, in a State of so much Danger and Misery, *2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. The God of this World blinds the Eyes of them that believe not.*

Thirdly, You have seen what the Life of the unregenerate is, and what maintains that Life: In the next Place I shall give you Evidence that this is the Life the generality of the World do live: A Life of carnal Security, vain Hope and false Joy: This will evidently appear, if we consider,

First, The activity and liveliness of Mens Spirits in pursuit of the World. O how lively and vigorous are their Hearts in the Management of Earthly Designs, *Psal. 63. Who will shew us any good?* The World eats up their Hearts, Time and Strength. Now this could never be if their Eyes were but opened to see the Danger and Misery their Souls be in: How few Designs for the World run in the thoughts of a condemned Man? O if God had ever made the Light of Conviction to shine into their Consciences, certainly the Temptations would lie the quite contrary Way; even in too great a neglect of things of this Life: But this briskness and liveliness plainly shews the great Security which is upon most Men.

Secondly, The marvellous quietness and stillness that is in the Thoughts and Consciences of Men, about their Everlasting Concernments plainly shews this to be the life of the unregenerate: How few Scruples, Doubts or Fears shall you hear from them? How many Years may a Man live in carnal Families before he shall hear such a question as this seriously propounded, *What shall I do to be saved?* There are no questions in their Lips, because no Fear or Sense of Danger in their Hearts.

Thirdly, The general contentedness and profest willingness of carnal Men to die, gives clear Evidence that such a Life of Security and vain Hope is the life they live; *Like Sheep they are laid in the Grave,* *Psal. 49. 14.* O how quiet and still are their Consciences, when there are but a few breaths more between them and Everlasting Burnings! Had God opened their Eyes to apprehend the Consequences of Death, and what follows the pale

E e e

Horre,

Horfe, Re. 6. 8. It were impossible but that every unregenerate Man should make that Bed on which he dies shake and tremble under him.

Fourthly, and Lastly, The low esteem Men have for Christ, and the total neglect of, at least the meer trifling with those Duties in which he is to be found, plainly discovers this stupid secure Life to be the Life that the generality of the World do live: For were Men sensible of the disease of Sin, there could be no quieting them without Christ the Physician, Phil. 3. 8. All the business they have to do in this World could never keep them from their Knees, or make them strangers to their Closets: All which, and much more that might be said of like nature, gives too full and clear proof to this sad Assertion, that this is the Life the unregenerate World generally lives.

Fourthly, In the last Place I would speak a few Words to discover the Danger of such a life as hath been described, to which purpose let the following brief hints be minded seriously.

First, By these things Souls are inevitably betrayed into Hell and Eternal Ruin, this blinding is in Order to Damning, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; whose Eyes the God of this World hath blinded:* Those that are turned over into Eternal Death are thus generally mop'd and hoodwink'd in order thereto, Isa. 6. 9, 10. *And he said go and tell this People, hear ye indeed but understand not, and see ye indeed but perceive not: Make the Heart of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy, and shut their Eyes; lest they see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears and understand with their Hearts, and convert, and be healed.*

Secondly, As Damning is the event of Blinding, so nothing makes Hell a more terrible surprise to the Soul than this doth: By this means the Wrath of God is felt before its Danger be apprehended, a Man is past all Hope before he begins to have any Fear: His Eternal Ruin like a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high Wall cometh suddenly at an instant, Isa. 30. 13. And as it Damns surely and surprizingly, so,

Thirdly, Nothing more aggravates a Mans Damnation than to sink suddenly into it, from amidst so many Hopes and high Confidence of Safety: For a Man to find himself in Hell when he thought and concluded himself within a step of Heaven, O what a Hell will it be to such Men! The higher their vain Hopes lifted them up, the more dreadful must their Fall be, Mat. 7. 22. And as it Damns surely, surprizingly, and with highest Aggravations, so,

Fourthly, This Life of Security and vain Hope frustrates all the means of Recovery and Salvation in the only season, wherein they can be useful and beneficial to us: By reason of these things the Word hath no Power to convince Mens Consciences, nothing can bring them to a Sight and Sense of their Condition: Therefore Christ told the Self-confident and blind Jews, Mat. 21. 21. *That the Publicans and Harlots go into the Kingdom of God before them:* And the reason is, because their Hearts lie more open and fair to the strokes of Conviction and Compunction for Sin than those do, who are blinded by vain Hopes and Confidences.

Infer. 1. Is this the Life that the unregenerate World lives? Then it is not to be wondered at that the

Preaching of the Gospel hath so little success: Who hath believed our Report (saith the Prophet) and to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed? Mai. 53. 1. Ministers study for Truths apt to awaken and convince the Consciences, of them that hear them, but their Words return again to them: They turn to God and Mourn over the Matter, we have laboured in Vain, and spent our Strength for nought; and this is the cause of all Security, and vain Hopes bar fast the doors of Mens Hearts against all the Convictions and Persuasions of the Word: The greater cause have they to admire the grace of God, who have or shall find the convictions of the Word sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the Soul and Spirit: To whose Hearts God brings home the Commandment by an effectual Application.

Infer. 2. If this be the Life of the unregenerate World, what deadly Enemies are they that nourish and strengthen the groundless Confidences and vain Hopes of Salvation in Men! This the Scripture calls the healing of the hurt of Souls slightly, by crying Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace, Jer. 6. 14. The sowing of Pillows under their Arms holes, Ezek. 13. 18. That they may lie soft and easie under the Ministry: And this is the Doctrine which the People love, but O what will the end of these Things be! And what an account have those Men to give to God for the Blood of those Souls by them betrayed to the Everlasting Burnings! Such flattery is the greatest Cruelty: Those whom you bless upon Earth will curse you in Hell, and the Day in which they trusted their Souls to your Conduct.

Inference 3.

How great a Mercy is it to be awakened out of that general Sleep and Security which is fallen upon the World? You cannot estimate the value of that Mercy, for it is a peculiar Mercy. O that ever the Spirit of the Lord should give thy Soul a jog under the Ministry of the Word, startle, and rouse thy Conscience, whilst others are left snoring in the dead Sleep of Security round about thee: When the Lord shall deal with thy Soul much after that rate he did with Paul in the way to Damascus, who not only saw a light shining from Heaven, which those that travelled with him saw as well as he, but heard that Voice from Heaven which did the Work upon his Heart, though his Companions heard it not. Besides, it is not only a peculiar Mercy, but it is a leading introductory Mercy to all other spiritual Mercies that follow it to all Eternity: If God had not done this for thee, thou hadst never been brought to Faith, to Christ or Heaven: For from this Act of the Spirit all other saving Acts take their rise: So that you have Cause for ever to admire the Goodness of God in such a Favour as this is.

Inference 4.

Lastly, Hence it follows, that the generality of the World are in the direct Way to Eternal Ruin, and whatever their vain Confidences are, they cannot be saved: Narrow is the way, and strait is the Gate that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it. Hear me all you that live this dangerous Life of carnal Security and vain Hope, whatever your Persuasions and confidences are;

are; except you give them up and get better grounds for your Hope, you cannot be saved. For,

First, Such Hopes and Confidences as yours are directly contradictory to the established Order of the Gospel, which requires Repentance, *Acts* 5. 31. Faith, *Acts* 13. 39. And Regeneration, *Joh.* 3. 3. In all that shall be saved: And this order shall never be altered for any Man's sake.

Secondly, If such as you be saved, all the Threatnings in Scripture must be reversed, which lie in full Opposition to your vain Hopes, *Mark* 16. 16. *Joh.* 3. 16. *Rom.* 3. 8, 9. either the Truth of God in these Threatnings must fail, or your vain Hopes must fail.

Thirdly, If ever such as you be saved, new Conditions must be set to all the Promises: For there is no Condition of any special Pro-

mise found in any unregenerate Person. Compare your Hearts with these Scriptures, *Mat.* 5. 3, 4, 5, 6. *Psal.* 24. 4. *Psal.* 84. 11. *Gen.* 17. 1, 2.

Fourthly, If ever such a Hope as yours bring you to Heaven, then the saving Hope of God's Elect is not rightly described to us in the Scriptures. Scripture Hope is the effect of Regeneration, *1 Pet.* 1. 3. And Purity of Heart is the Effect of that Hope, *1 Joh.* 3. 13. Nay,

Fifthly, The very Nature of Heaven is mistaken in Scripture, if such as you be Subjects qualified for its Enjoyment: For Assimilation, or the Conformity of the Soul to God in Holiness, is in the Scripture account a principal ingredient of that Blessedness: By all which it manifestly appears that the Hopes of most Men are vain, and will never bring them to Heaven.

SERMON XXI.

Serm. 21.

DOCT. II.

That there is a mighty Efficacy in the Word or Law of God, to kill vain Confidence, and quench carnal Mirth in the Hearts of Men, when God sets it home upon their Consciences.

1 Cor. 10.
45.

THE Weapons of the Word are not carnal but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down Imaginations and every high thing that exalteth it self against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every thought to the Obedience of Christ.

In the opening of this Point I shall,

1. Demonstrate the Efficacy of the Word or Law of God.
2. Shew wherein the Efficacy thereof lies.
3. From whence it hath all this mighty Power and Efficacy.

First, I shall give you some Demonstrations of the mighty Power and Efficacy that there is in the Word or Law of God: Which will appear with fullest Evidence,

First, From the various Subjects upon whom it Works: The Hearts and Consciences of Men of all Orders and Qualities, have been reached and wounded to the quick by the two-edged Sword of God's Law. Some among the great and honourable of the Earth, (though indeed the fewest of that rank) have been made to stoop and tremble under the Word, *Acts* 24. 16. *Mark* 6. 20. *1 Sam.* 15. 24. The Wife and Learned of the World have felt its Power, and been brought over to embrace the humbling and self-denying Ways of Christ, *Acts* 17. 34. Thus *Origen*, *Hierom*, *Tertullian*, *Bradenardine*, and many more, came into Canaan laden with Egyptian Gold, as one speaks, (i. e.) they came into the Church of God abundantly enriched and furnished with the Learned Arts and Sciences; devoting them all to the Service of Christ: Yea, and which is as strange, the most simple, weak, and illiterate have been wonderfully changed and wrought upon by the Power of the Word: The Testimonies of the Lord make wise the simple. Men of

Vol. I.

weak Understandings in all other Matters have been made wise to Salvation by the Power of the Word, *Matth.* 11. 25. *1 Cor.* 1. 27. Nay, the most malicious and obstinate Enemies of Christ have been wounded and converted by the Word, *1 Tim.* 1. 13. *Acts* 16. 24. Those that have been under the Prejudice of the worst, and most *id. Astrous Education*, have been the Subjects of its mighty Power, *Acts* 19. 26. To conclude, Men of the most profligate and debauched Lives have been wonderfully changed, and altered by the Power of the Word, *1 Cor.* 6. 10, 11.

Secondly, The mighty Efficacy of the Law of God appears in the manner of its Operation which Works suddenly, strikes like a Dart through the Hearts and Consciences of Men, *Acts* 2. 37. A wonderful change is made in a short Time: And as it works quickly and suddenly, so it works irresistibly, with an uncontrouled Power, upon the Spirits of Men, *1 Thes.* 1. 5. *Rom.* 1. 16. Let the Soul be armed against Conviction with the thickest Ignorance, strongest Prejudice, or most obstinate Resolution, the Word of God will wound the Braut even of such a Man; when God sends it forth in his Authority and Power.

Thirdly, The wonderful Power of the Law or Word of God is evidently seen in the strange Effects which are produced by it in the Hearts and Lives of Men. For,

First, It changes and alters the Frame and Temper of the Mind: It moulds a Man into a quite contrary Temper, *Gal.* 1. 23. *He which persecuted us in times past, now Preacheth the Faith, which once he destroyed*: Thus a Tyger is transformed into a Lamb, by the Power of the Word of God.

Secondly, It makes the Soul, upon which it

E c c a

Works

Works to forgo and quit the dearest Interest it hath in this World for Jesus Christ, *Phil.* 3. 7, 8, 9. Riches, Honours, Self-righteousness, dearest Relations are denied and forsaken: Reproach, Poverty and Death it self are willingly embraced for Christ's sake; when once the Efficacy of the Word hath been upon the Hearts of Men, *1 Thes.* 1. 6. Those that were their Companions in Sin are declined, renounced and cast off with abhorrence, *1 Pet.* 4. 3, 4. In such things as these the mighty Power of the Word discovers it self.

Secondly, Next let us see wherein the Efficacy of the Word upon the Souls of Men principally consisteth: And we find in Scripture it exerceth its Power in five distinct Acts upon the Soul; by all which it strikes at the Life, and kills the very Heart of vain Hopes. For,

First, It hath an awakening Efficacy upon secure and sleepy Sinners: It rouses the Conscience, and brings a Man to a sense and feeling Apprehension, *Eph.* 5. 13, 14. The first effectual jog or touch of the Word startles the drowsie Conscience. A poor Sinner lies in his Sins, as Peter did in his Chains, fast asleep, though a Warrant were signed for his Execution the next Day: But the Spirit in the Word awakens him, as the Angel did Peter: And this awakening Power of the Word is in order both of Time and Nature antecedent to all its other Operations and Effects.

Secondly, The Law of God hath an enlightning Efficacy upon the Minds of Men: 'Tis Eye-salve to the blinded Eye, *Rev.* 3. 18. A light shining in a dark Place, *2 Pet.* 1. 19. A Light shining into the very Heart of Man, *2 Cor.* 4. 6. When the Word comes in Power, all things appear with another Face: The Sins that were hid from our Eyes, and the danger which was concealed by the Policy of Satan from our Souls, now lie clear and open before us, *Eph.* 5. 8.

Thirdly, The Word of God hath a convincing Efficacy: It sets Sin in order before the Soul, *Psal.* 50. 21. As an Army is drawn up in exact order, so are the sins of Nature and Practice, the sins of Youth and Age, even a great and terrible Army, is drawn up before the Eye of the Conscience; the Convictions of the Word are clear and full, *1 Cor.* 14. 24, 25. The very secrets of a Sinner's Heart are made manifest; his Mouth is stopt; his Pleas are silenced; his Conscience yields to the Charge of Guilt, and Equity of the Sentence of the Law. So that the Soul stands mute, and self-condemned at the Bar of Conscience: It hath nothing to say why the Wrath of God should not come upon it to the uttermost, *Rom.* 3. 19.

Fourthly, The Law of God hath a Soul-wounding, an Heart-cutting Efficacy: It pierces into the very Soul and Spirit of Man, *Acts* 2. 37. *When they heard this, they were pricked at their Hearts, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles; Men and Brethren what shall we do?* A dreadful sound is in the Sinner's Ears, his Soul is in deep Distress, he knows not which way to turn for ease; no Plaster but the Blood of Christ can heal these wounds which the Word makes: No outward Trouble, Affliction, disgrace or loss ever touched the quick as the Word of God doth.

Fifthly, The Word hath a Heart-turning, a Soul-converting Efficacy in it: 'Tis a regenerating as well as a convincing Word, *1 Pet.* 1. 23. *1 Thes.* 1. 9. The Law wounds, the Gospel cures, the Law discovers the evil that is in Sin, and the Misery that follows Sin: And the Spirit of God working in fellowship with the Word effectually turns the Heart from Sin. And thus we see in what Glorious Acts, the Efficacy of the Word discovers it self upon the Hearts of Men, and all these Acts lie in order to each other: For until the Soul be awakened it cannot be enlightened, *Eph.* 5. 14. Till it be enlightened it cannot be convinced, *Eph.* 5. 13. Conviction being nothing else, but the Application of the Light that shines in the Mind to the Conscience of a Sinner; till it be convinced it cannot be wounded for sin, *Acts* 2. 37. And until it be wounded for sin, it will never be converted from sin, and brought effectually to Jesus Christ: And thus you see what the Power of the Word is.

Thirdly, In the last Place, it will concern us to enquire whence the Word of God hath all this Power; and it is most certain that it is not a Power inherent in it self, nor derived from the Instrument by which it is managed; but from the Spirit of the Lord who communicates to it all that Power and Efficacy which it hath upon our Souls.

First, Its Power is not in or from it self: It Works not in a Physical Way as Natural Agents do; for then the effect would always follow, except it were miraculously hindered. But this spiritual Efficacy is in the Word, as the healing Virtue was in the Waters of Bethesda, *Joh.* 5. 4. *An Angel went down at a certain season into the Pool, and troubled the Water: Whosoever then first after the troubling of the Water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.* It is not a Power naturally inherent in it at all Times, but communicated to it at some special Seasons: How often is the Word Preached, and no Man awaked or convinced by it!

Secondly, The Power of the Word is not communicated to it by the Instrument that manageth it, *1 Cor.* 3. 7. *Neither is he that planteth any thing; neither he that watereth. Ministers are nothing to such an Effect and Purpose as this is: He doth not mean that they are useless and altogether unnecessary, but insufficient of themselves to produce such mighty Effects: It Works not as it is the Word of Man, 1 Thes.* 2. 13. Ministers may say of the ordinary, as Peter said of the extraordinary Effects of the Spirit, *Acts* 3. 12. *Ye Men of Israel why marvel ye at this, or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own Power or Holiness we had made this Man to walk? If the Effects of the Word were in the Power, and at the Command of him that Preacheth it, then the Blood of all the Souls that perish under our Ministry must lie at our door, as was formerly noted.*

Thirdly, If you say, whence then hath the Word all this Power? Our Answer is, it de- *Literat* rives it all from the Spirit of God, *1 Thes.* 2. *subetur,* 13. *For this cause thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the Word of Men, 157. Aug. Ep.* but (as it is in Truth) the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. 'Tis a successful Instrument only when it is in the Hand

Hand of the Spirit, without whose influence it never did, nor can convince, convert, or save any Soul. Now, the Spirit of God hath a Sovereignty over three Things in order to the Conversion of the Sinner, viz.

1. Over the Word which Works.

2. Over the Soul wrought upon.

3. Over the Time and Season of working.

First, The Spirit hath a glorious sovereignty over the Word it self, whose Instrument it is, to make it successful or not; as it pleaseth him, *Isa. 55. 10, 11. For as the Rain cometh down, and the Snow from Heaven, &c. So shall my Word be that goeth out of my Mouth: As the Clouds, so the Word is carried and directed by Divine Pleasure? 'Tis the Lord that makes them both give down their Blessings, or to pass away Fruitless and Empty: Yea, 'tis from the Spirit that this Part of the Word works and not another: Those things upon which Ministers bestow greatest labour in their Preparation, and from which accordingly they have the greatest Expectation; these do nothing, when mean time something that dropt occasionally from them, like a chosen Shaft, strikes the Mark and doth the Work.*

Secondly, The Spirit of the Lord hath a glorious sovereignty over the Souls wrought upon; 'tis his peculiar Work to take away the stony Heart out of our Flesh, and to give us an Heart of Flesh, *Ezek. 36. 26. We may Reason, Exhort and Reprove, but nothing will stick till the Lord set it on. The Lord opened the Heart of Lydia under Paul's Ministry: He opens every Heart that is effectually opened to receive Christ in the Word: If the Word can get no entrance, if your Hearts remain dead under it still, we may say concerning such Souls, as Martha did concerning her Brother Lazarus; Lord, if thou hadst been here, my Brother had not died. So, Lord, if thou hadst been in this Sermon, in this Prayer, or in that Counsel, these Souls had not remained dead under them.*

Thirdly, The Spirit hath Dominion over the Times and Seasons of Conviction and Conversion: Therefore the Day in which Souls are wrought upon is called the Day of his Power, *Psal. 110. 3. That shall work at one Time, which had no Efficacy at all at another Time: Because this, and not that was the Time appointed: And thus you see whence the Word derives that mighty Power it hath.*

Now this Word of God when it is set home by the Spirit is mighty to convince, humble, and break the Hearts of Sinners, *John 16. 8. The Spirit when it cometh shall convince the World of Sin: The Word signifies Conviction by such clear Demonstration as compelleth Assent: It not only convinces Men in general that they are Sinners, but it convinceth Men particularly of their own Sins, and the Aggravations of them. So in the Text, Sin revived, that is, the Lord revived his Sins, the very Circumstances and Aggravations with which they were committed: And so it will be with us when the Commandment comes: Sins that we had forgotten, committed so far back as our Youth or Childhood: Sins that lay slighted in our Consciences, shall now be row'd up as so many sleepy Lions to affright and terrify us: For now the Soul hears the Voice of God in the Word, as Adam heard it in the voice of*

the Day and was afraid, and hides it self; but all will not do: For the Lord is come in the Word: Sin is held up before the Eyes of the Conscience in its dreadful Aggravations and fearful Consequences as committed against the Holy Law, clear Light, warnings of Conscience, manifold Mercies, God's long-suffering, Christ's precious Blood, many warnings of Judgments, the Wages and Demerit whereof by the Verdict of a Man's own Conscience, is Death, Eternal Death, Rom. 6. 23. Rom. 1. 32. Rom. 2. 9. Thus the Commandment comes, Sin revives, and vain Hopes give up the Ghost.

Inference 1.

Is there such a mighty Power in the Word, that certainly the Word is of Divine Authority: There cannot be a more clear, and satisfying Proof, that it is no Humane Invention, than the common sense that all Believers have of the Almighty Power in which it works upon their Hearts: So speaks the Apostle, 1 Thes. 2. 13. When ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the Word of Man, but (as it is in Truth) the Word of God; which effectually worketh also in you that believe. Can the Power of any Creature, the Word of a meer Man, so convince the Conscience, so terrify the Heart, so discover the very secret Thoughts of the Soul, put a Man into such Tremblings? No, no, a greater than Man must needs be here: None but a God can so open the Eyes of the Blind, so open the Graves of the Dead, so quicken and enliven the Conscience that was sear'd, so bind over the Soul of a Sinner to the Judgment to come, so change and alter the frame and temper of a Man's Spirit, so powerfully raise, refresh and comfort a drooping dying Soul. Certainly the Power of God is in all this; and, if there were no more, yet this alone were sufficient to make full Proof of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures.

Inference 2.

Judge from hence what an invaluable Mercy the Preaching of the Word is to the World: 'Tis a Blessing far above our Estimation of it; little do we know what a Treasure God committeth to us in the Ordinances, Acts 13. 25. To you is the Word of this Salvation sent: 'Tis the very Power of God to Salvation, Rom. 1. 16. And Salvation is ordinarily denied to whom the Preaching of the Word is denied, Rom. 10. 14. It's called the Word of Life, Phil. 2. 16. And deserves to be valued by every one of us as our Life: The Eternal Decree of God's Election is executed by it upon our Souls: As many as be ordained to Eternal Life shall believe by the Preaching of it. Great is the ingratitude of this Generation which so slight and undervalues this invaluable Treasure: Which is a sad Prefige of the most terrible Judgment, even in the removing our Candlestick out of its Place, except we Repent.

Inference 3.

How sore and terrible a Judgment lies upon the Souls of those Men to whom no Word of God is made powerful enough to convince and awaken them! Yet so stands the Case with Thonfands who constantly sit under the Preaching of the Word: Many Arrows are shot at their Consciences, but none goes home to the mark, all fall short of the end: The Commandment hath

hath come unto them many thousand times, by way of *Promulgation* and *Ministerial Inculcation*, but never yet came home to their Souls by the Spirits effectual *Application*. Oh Friends, you have often heard the Voice of Man, but you never yet heard the Voice of God: Your understandings have been *instructed*, but your Consciences to this day were never thoroughly convinced: *We have mourned unto you, but ye have not lamented*, Matth. 11. 17. *Who hath believed our Report, and unto whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Alas, we have laboured in Vain, we have spent our strength for Nought, our Word returns unto us empty; but O what a stupendious Judgment is here! Heb. 6. 7, 8. *The Earth which drinketh in the Rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth Herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth Blessing from God; but that which beareth Thorns and Briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.* What a fore Judgment and Sign of God's displeasure would you account it, if your Fields were cursed; if you should Manure, Dress, Plough and Sow them; but never reap the Fruit of your Labour, the Increase being still blasted? And yet this were nothing compared with the Blasting of the Word to your Souls: That which is a favour of Life unto Life unto some, becomes the *favour of Death unto Death*, to others, 2 Cor. 2. 16. The Lord affect our Hearts with the terrible strokes of God upon the Souls of Men.

2. *Use of Exhortation.* I shall conclude this Point with a few Words of Exhortation to three sorts of Men, *viz.*

1. To those that never felt the Power of the Word.
2. To those that have only felt some slight and common Effects thereof.
3. To those unto whose very Hearts the Commandment is come in its effectual and saving Power.

First, You that never felt any Power in the Word at all, I beg you in the Name of him that made you, and by all the regard and value you have for those precious Souls within you; that now at last such Considerations as these may find place in your Souls; and that you will bethink your selves,

Consideration 1. Whose Word that is that cannot gain entrance into your Hearts, is it not the Word of God which you despise and slight? *Thou castest my Word behind thy back*, Psal. 50. 17. O what an Affront and Provocation to God is this! You despise not Man but God; the great and terrible God, in whose Hand your Breath and Soul is: This Contempt runs higher than you imagine.

Confid. 2. Consider that however the Word hath no Power upon you, the Commandment cannot come home to your Hearts; yet it doth work, and comes home with Power to the Hearts of others: Whilst you are hardened, others are melted under it: Whilst you sleep, others tremble; whilst your Hearts are fast locked up, others are opened: How can you choose but reflect with Fear and Trembling upon these contrary Effects of the Word? Especially when you consider that the Eternal Decrees both of Election and Reprobation are now executed upon the Souls of Men by the Preaching of the Word. Some believe, and others are hardened.

Confid. 3. That no Judgment of God on this side Hell is greater than a hard Heart, and stupid Conscience under the Word: It were much better that the Providence of God should blast thy Estate, take away thy Children, or destroy thy Health, than harden thy Heart, and scare thy Conscience under the Word: So much as thy Soul is better than thy Body, so much as Eternity is more valuable than Time, so much is this spiritual Judgment more dreadful than all temporal Ones: God doth not afflict a more terrible stroke than this upon any Man in this World.

O therefore as you Love your own Souls, and are loth to Ruin them to all Eternity, attend upon every opportunity that God affords you, for you know not in which of them the Lord may Work upon your Hearts: Lay aside your prejudices against the Word, or the Weaknesses and Infirmities of them that Preach it: For the Word Works not as it is the Word of Man, as it is thus Neat, and Elegant, but as it is the Word of God: pray for the Blessing of God upon the Word, for except his word of Blessing go forth with it, it can never come home to thy Soul: Meditate upon what you hear; for without Meditation it is not like to have any effectual operation upon you. Search your Souls by it, and consider whether that be not your very Case and State which it describes, your very danger whereof it gives warning; take heed lest after you have heard it, the cares of the World choke not what you have heard, and cause those budding Convictions which begin to put forth, to Blast and Withers: Carefully attend to all those *Items* and *Memorandums* your Consciences give you under the Word, and conclude that the Lord is then come nigh unto you.

Secondly, Let this be matter of serious Consideration and Caution to all such as have only felt some slight, transient, and ineffectual Operations of the Gospel upon their Souls: the Lord hath come nigh some of our Souls, we have left a strange Power in the Ordinances, sometimes terrifying, and sometimes transporting our Hearts; but alas, it proves but a Morning Dew, or an early Cloud, Hos. 6. 4. We rejoyce in the Word, but it is for a season, John. 3. 25. Gal. 4. 14, 15. They are vanishing Motions, and come to nothing. Look as in Nature there are many *Abortives* as well as perfect Children, so it is in Religion: Yea, where the new Creature is perfectly formed in one soul, there be many *Abortives* and *Miscariages*: And there may be three Reasons assigned for it, *viz.*

First, The Subtlety and deep Policy of Satan, who never more effectually deceives and destroys the Souls of Men, than in such a Method, and by such an Artifice as this: For when Men have once felt their Consciences terrified under the Word, and their Hearts at other times ravished with the Joys and Comforts of it, they now seem to have attained all that is necessary to Conversion and constitutive of the new Creature: these things look so well like the regenerating Effects of the Spirit, that many are easily deceived by them. The Devil beguiles the Hearts of the unwary by such false Appearances: for it is not every Man that can distinguish

guish between the Natural and Spiritual Motions of the Affections under the Word: It is very frequently seen that even carnal and unrenewed Hearts have their meltings and transports as well as Spiritual Hearts. The subject-matter upon which the Word treats are the weighty things of the World to come: Heaven and Hell are very awful and affecting things, and an unrenewed Heart is apt to thaw and melt at them; now here is the cheat of Satan, to persuade a Man that these must needs be spiritual affections, because the Objects about which they are conversant are Spiritual. Whereas it is certain, the Object of the Affections may be very spiritual and heavenly, and yet the workings of a Man's Affections about them, may be in a meer natural way.

Secondly, The dampening Efficacy of the Word is a true and proper cause of these Abominations and Misdemeanors under the Word, Luke 8. 12, 13, 14. There are hopeful and promising beginnings and buddings of Affections in some Persons, especially in their Youth; but when once they come to be engaged in the World, now soon are they damped and quenched: as the Cares of a Family grow on, so does the Care of Salvation wear on: 'Tis not as it was wont to be, What shall I do to be saved? How shall I get interest in Christ? But what shall I eat and drink, and wherewith shall I and mine be maintained? Thus Earth jostles out Heaven, and the present World drowns all thoughts of that to come. Good had it been for many Men, they had never been engaged so deep in the World as they are; their Life is but a constant hurry of business, and a perpetual diversion from Christ, and things that are Eternal.

Thirdly, Lastly, The deceitfulness and treachery of the Heart, which too easily gives way to the designs of Satan, and suffers it self to be imposed upon by him, is not the least cause why so many hopeful beginnings come to nothing, and the effects of the Word vanish. Pride and Self-love are very apt to over-value every little good, and slight or undervalue every evil that is in us: And so quickly chokes those convictions that begin to work in our Souls.

But oh that such Men would consider that the dying away of their convictions, is that which threatens the Life of their Souls for ever: Now is the Bud withered, the Blossom blasted: And what expectation is there of Fruit after this, except the Lord revive them again? The Lord open Men's Eyes, to discern the danger of such things as these are, *Jude ver. 12. Heb. 10. 38.* Yet I deny not, but there are many Stands and Passes in the work of Conversion; it seems to die away, and then revives again; and revive it must, or we are lost: But how many are there who never recover it more! This is a sore Judgment of a most terrible consequence to the Souls of Men.

3. Thirdly, In the last place, Let it be a word of Counsel and Advice to them upon whom the Word works effectually and powerfully; to whose Hearts the Commandment is come home, to revive sin, and kill their vain hopes; and these are of Two sorts.

1. Embryos, under the first Workings of the Spirit.

2. Complete Births of the Spirit, Regenerated Souls.

First Embryos, that are under the first Workings of the Spirit in the Word. O let it not seem a misery or unhappiness to you that the Commandment is come, and revived, and your former hopes overthrown. It must be thus if ever God intend Mercy for you. Had you gone on in that dangerous security you were in before, you had certainly been lost for ever: God hath kept you in that path that leads down to Hell, and now that go in there do ever return again, or take hold of the paths of Life. O 'tis better to weep, tremble, and be distressed now, than to Mourn without hope for ever: Let it not trouble you that Sin hath found you out; you could never have found out the Remedy in Christ, if you had not found out the Disease and Danger, by the coming of the Commandment. And I beseech you carefully to observe whether the effects and operations of the Word upon your Hearts be deeper and more powerful than they are found to be in such Souls as miscarry under it: The Commandment comes to them, and shews them this or that more gross and rattling Sin: Doth it come to you, and shew you not only this or that particular Sin, but all the Evils of your Heart and Life? The corruption of your Natures, as well as the transgressions of your Lives? If so, it promises well, and looks hopefully and comfortably to you. The Commandment comes to others, and startles them with the fears of Damnation for their sin: It puts them into a grievous fright at Hell, and the Everlasting Burnings; but doth it come to thee and discover the infinite evil that is in thy sin, as it is committed against the great, holy, righteous, and good God; and so melts thy Heart into tears for the wrong that thou hast done him, as well as the danger into which thou hast brought thy self? This is a hopeful work, and may encourage thee. It comes to others, and greatly shakes, but never destroys and razes the foundation of their vain hopes; if it so revive sin, as to kill all vain hopes in thee, and shut thee up to Christ, as thy only door of hope, fear not; these Troubles will prove the greatest Mercies that ever befell thee in this World, if thus they work, and continue to work upon thy Soul.

Secondly, Others there are upon whom the Word hath had its full effect as to Conversion. O bless God for ever for this Mercy, you cannot sufficiently value it. God hath not only made it a convincing and wounding, but a converting and healing word to your Souls; he hath not only revived your sins, and killed your vain hopes, but begotten you again to a lively hope; see that you be thankful for this Mercy. How many have sate under the same Word, but never felt such effects of it? As Christ said in another case, There were many Widows in Israel in the time of *Elijah*, but unto none of them was the Prophet sent save unto *Sarepta*, a City of *Sidon*, to a certain Widow there, *Luke 4. 46.* So I may say in this case, there were many Souls in the same Congregation, at the same time; but unto none of them was the Word sent with a Commission to convince

vince and save; but such a one as thy self; one as improbable to be wrought upon as any Soul there. O let this beget thankfulness in your Souls: and let it make you love the Word as long as you live. *I will never forget thy Frecepts, for by them thou hast quickened me,* Psal. 119. 93.

But above all, I beseech you make it appear that the Commandment hath come home to your Hearts with power to convince you of the evil of Sin, by your tenderness and care to shun it as long as you live. If ever you have seen the Face of Sin in the Glass of the Law of God, if your Hearts have been humbled and broken for it in the days of your trouble and

distress; certainly you will choose the worst affliction rather than sin; it would be the greatest folly in the World to return again to iniquity, *Psal. 89. 8.* You that have seen so much of the evil that is in it, and the danger that follows it; you that have had such inward terrors and fears of Spirit about it, when that terrible representation was made you; will be loth to feel those gripes and distresses of Conscience again, for the best enjoyment in this World.

Blessed be God if any word have been brought home to our Hearts which hath been instrumental to bring us to Christ.

SERMON XXII.

John VI. 45.

*Serm. 22.
Text. The
teachings
of God opened,
in their Nature
and Necessity.*

It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God, every Man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me.

HOW necessary to our Union with Jesus Christ the application of the Law, or coming home of the Commandment to the Heart of a Sinner is, we have heard in the last Discourse; and how impossible it is, either for the Commandment to come to us, or for us to come to Christ, without illumination and instruction from above, you shall hear in this.

This Scripture hath much of the mind of God in it, and he that is to open it had need himself to be taught of God: In the foregoing verses, Christ offers himself as the Bread of Life unto the Souls of Men; against this Doctrine they oppose their carnal Reason, *ver. 41, 42.* Christ strikes at the root of all their Cavils and Objections in his reply, *ver. 43, 44.* *Murmur not among your selves, no Man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him, 4. d.* you slight me because you do not know me, you do not know me, because you are not taught of God; of these Divine Teachings, the Prophets of old have spoken, and what they foretold is at this day fulfilled in our sight: So many as are taught of God, and no more, come unto me in the way of Faith: 'Tis impossible to come without the Teachings of God, *ver. 44.* 'Tis as impossible not to come, or to miscarry in their coming unto me, under the influence of these Divine Teachings, *ver. 45.*

The Words read consist of two parts, *viz.*

1. An allegation out of the Prophets.

First, The application thereof made by Christ.

First, An allegation out of the Prophets: *it is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God:* The places in the Prophets to which Christ seems here to refer, are, *Isa. 54. 13.* and all thy Children shall be taught of the Lord; and *Jer. 31. 34.* and they shall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: These Promises contain the great Blessings of the New Covenant, *viz.* Di-

vine Instruction, and Heavenly Illumination, without which no Man can be brought up to the Terms of the New Covenant.

Secondly, We have here the application of these Testimonies, out of the Prophets, made by Christ himself, *every Man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*

In which words we have both the necessity and the efficacy of these Divine Teachings; without them no Man can come, and under them no Man can miscarry. The words being fitly rendered, and the sense obvious.

The Notes are,

Doct. 1. That the teachings of God are absolutely necessary to every Man that cometh unto Christ in the way of Faith.

Doct. 1.

Doct. 2. No Man can miscarry of Christ, or miscarry in the way of Faith, that is under the special instructions and teachings of the Father.

Doct. 2.

Doct. 1. That the teachings of God are absolutely necessary to every Man that cometh unto Christ in the way of Faith.

Of the necessity of Divine teaching, in order to believing, the Apostle speaks in *Eph. 4.*

20, 21. But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that you have heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, (i.e.) Your Faith must needs be effectual, both to the Reformation of your Lives, and your Perseverance in the ways of Holiness, if it be such a Faith as is begotten and introduced into your Hearts, by Divine teachings. Now in the Explication of this point, I shall speak distinctly to the following Enquiries.

Qui credunt predicatore forsescunt insonante, inquit a patre audiamus, atque discunt: qui autem non credunt, forsescunt, inquit non audiamus. Aug. de Prædest. cap. 8.

1. How doth God teach Men, or what is imported in our being taught of God?

2. What those special Lessons are, which all Believers do hear, and are taught of God?

3. In what manner doth God teach these things to Men, in the day of their Conversion to Christ.
4. What Influence God's teaching hath upon our believing?
5. Why it is impossible for any Man to believe, or come to Christ, without the Father's teachings.

1. First, How doth God teach Men, or what is imported in our being taught of God? To this I will speak both *negatively* and *positively*, for your clearer apprehension of the sense and meaning of the Spirit of God in this phrase.

First, The teaching of God, and our hearing and learning of him, is not to be understood of any extraordinary visional Appearances, or *Oraculous* and immediate Voice of God to Men: God indeed hath so appeared unto some, *Numb. 12. 8.* Such Voices have been heard from Heaven; but now these extraordinary ways are ceased, *Heb. 1. 1, 2.* and we are no more to expect them; we may sooner meet with Satanical Delusions, than Divine Illuminations, in this way. I remember the Learned *Gerfon* tells us, that the Devil once appeared to an Holy Man in Prayer, personating Christ, and saying, I am come in Person to visit thee, for thou art worthy: But he with both hands shut his Eyes, saying, *Nolo hic Christum videre, satis est ipsum in gloria videre, (i. e.)* I will not see Christ here, it is enough for me to see him in Glory. We are now to attend only to the Voice of the Spirit in the Scriptures; this is a more sure Word than any Voice from Heaven. *2 Pet. 1. 19.*

Secondly, The teachings of God are not to be understood as opposite unto, or exclusive of the teachings of Men. Divine teachings do not render Ministerial teachings vain or useless. *Paul* was taught of God, *Gal. 1. 12.* and his Conversion had something extraordinary in it, yet the Ministry of *Ananias* was used, and honoured in that work, *Acts 9. 4, 17.* compared. Divine teachings do indeed excel, but not exclude Humane teachings. I know that Scripture, *Jer. 31. 24.* to which Christ here refers, is objected against the necessity of a standing Ministry in the Church, *they shall teach no more every Man his Neighbour and every Man his Brother, &c.* But if those words should be understood absolutely, they would not only overthrow all publick Ordinances of God's own institution, *1 Cor. 12. 28.* and deprive us of a principal Fruit of Christ's Ascension, *Eph. 4. 11, 12.* but for the same reason would destroy all private instructions, and fraternal admonitions also. Such a sense would make the Prophet to contradict the Apostle; and spoil the consent and Harmony of the Scriptures: The sense therefore cannot be *negative* but *comparative*: It shews the excellency of Divine, but doth not destroy the usefulness of Humane teachings. *Subordinatæ non pugnant*: The teachings of Men are made effectual by the teachings of the Spirit, and the Spirit in his teachings will use and honour the Ministry of Man.

Thirdly, But to speak positively, the teachings of God are nothing else, but that spiritual and heavenly Light, by which the Spirit of God shineth into the Hearts of Men to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of

Vol. I.

God in the Face of Jesus Christ, as the Apostle speaks, *2 Cor. 4. 6.* and though this be the proper work of the Spirit, yet it is called the teachings of the Father, because the Spirit who enlightens us is commissioned, and sent by the Father so to do, *Joh. 14. 26.* Now these teachings of the Spirit of God, consist in two things, *viz.* in his

1. Sanctifying Impressions.
2. Gracious Assistances.

First, In his Sanctifying impressions, or regenerating works upon the Soul, by virtue whereof it receives marvellous light and insight in Spiritual things; and that not only as illumination is the first act of the Spirit in our conversion, *Col. 3. 10.* but as his whole work of Sanctification is illuminative and instructive to the converted Soul, *1 Joh. 2. 27.* the anointing which you have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any Man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you: The meaning is, that Sanctification gives the Soul experience of those Mysterious things, which are contained in the Scriptures, and that experience is the most excellent Key to unlock and open those deep Scripture-Mysteries; no knowledge is so distinct, so clear, so sweet, as that which the Heart communicates to the Head, *Joh. 7. 17.* If any Man do his will, he shall know the Doctrine: A Man that never read the Nature of Love in Books of Philosophy, nor the Transports and Ecstasies thereof in History, may yet truly describe and express it by the sensible Motions of that Passion in his own Soul; yea, he that hath felt, much better understands, than he that hath only read or heard. O what a light doth spiritual sense and experience cast upon a great part of the Scriptures! For indeed Sanctification is the very Copy or Transcript of the Word of God upon the Heart of Man, *Jer. 31. 33.* I will write my Law in their hearts: So that the Scriptures, and the experiences of Believers by this means answer to each other, as the Lines and Letters in the Press, answer to the Impressions made upon the Paper; or the Figures in the Wax to the engravings in the Seal. When a Sanctified Man reads *David's Psalms*, or *Paul's Epistles*, how is he surprized with wonder to find the very workings of his own Heart so exactly decyphered, and fully expressed there! Oh, faith he, this is my very case; these Holy Men speak what my very Heart hath felt.

Secondly, The Spirit of God teacheth us, as by his sanctifying impressions; so by his gracious assistances which he gives us *pro re nata*, as our need requires, *Matt. 10. 19.* It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak: *Joh. 14. 26.* He shall bring all things to your remembrance: He assisteth both the Understanding in due apprehensions of Truth, and the Heart in the spiritual improvements of Truth: And so much briefly of the first particular.

Secondly, In the next place, we are to enquire what those special Truths are which Believers hear and learn of the Father, when they come to Christ.

And there are divers great and necessary Truths, wherein the Spirit enlightens Men in that day. I cannot say they are all taught every Believer in the same degree and order: but it is certain they are taught of God such

F f f

Lessons

Lessons as these are, which they never so understood before.

Lesson 1. First, They are taught of God, that there is abundantly more evil in their sinful natures and actions, than ever they discerned or understood before: the Spirit when he cometh shall convince the world of sin, John 16. 8, 9. Men have a general notion of sin before; so had Paul when a Pharisee: But how vastly different were his apprehensions of sin, from all that ever he had in his Natural state, when God brought home the Commandment to his very Heart! There is a threefold knowledge of Sin, viz. *Traditional, Discursive, and Intuitive.* The First is in the more rude and illiterate Multitude. The Second in more rational and knowing Men. The Third is only found in those that are enlightened, and taught of God: And there is as great a difference betwixt this intuitive knowledge of sin, whereby God makes a Soul to discern the nature and evil of it in a spiritual light, and the two former; as there is betwixt the light of a painted Lyon upon the wall, and the light of a living Lyon that meets us roaring in the way. The intuitive sight of sin is another thing than Men imagine it to be; 'tis such a sight as wounds a Man to the very Heart, Acts 2. 37. for God doth not only show a Man this or that particular sin, but in the day of Conviction he sets all his sins in order before him, Psal. 50. 21. yea, the Lord sheweth him the sinfulness of his Nature, as well as Practice. Conviction digs to the Root, shews and lays open that Original Corruption, from whence the innumerable evils of the Life do spring, Jam. 1. 14, 15. and which is yet more, the Lord shews the Man, whom he is bringing to Christ, the sinful and miserable Estate which he is in by reason of both, Job. 16. 9. And now all Excuses, Pleas, and Defences of Sin are gone; he shews them how their Iniquities have exceeded, Job 36. 8, 9. exceeded in number, and in aggravation of sinfulness; exceeding many, and exceeding vile; no such Sinner in the World as I: Can such sins as mine be pardon'd? The Greatness of God greiveth my Sin, the Holiness of God makes it beyond measure vile; the Goodness of God puts unconceivable weight into my Guilt. O can there be Mercy with God for such a Wretch as I? If there be, then there will not be a greater Example of the Riches of Free Grace in all the World than I am: Thus God teacheth the evil of Sin.

Lesson 2. Secondly, God teacheth the Soul whom he is bringing to Christ, what that wrath and misery is which hangs over it in the threatnings because of sin. Scripture-threatnings were formerly lighted, now the Soul trembles at them: they once apprehended themselves safe enough, Isa. 28. 15. Psal. 50. 21. they thought, because they heard no more of their sins, after the Commission of them, that therefore they should never hear more, that the effect had been as transient a thing as the act of Sin was, or if trouble must follow Sin, they should speed no worse than others; the generality of the World being in the same case; and besides, they hoped to find God more merciful, than sower and precise Preachers represented him; but when a light from God enters into the Soul, to discover the Nature of God and of

Sin; then it sees, that whatever Wrath is treasured up for Sinners, in the dreadful threatnings of the Law, is but the just demerit of Sin, the recompence that is meet: *The wages of sin is death*, Rom. 6. ult. The Penal evil of Damnation is but equal to the Moral evil of Sin: So that in the whole Ocean of God's Eternal Wrath there is not one drop of Injustice: Yea, the Soul doth not only see the Justice of God in its Eternal Damnation, but the wonderful Mercy of God in the suspension thereof so long. O what is it that hath withheld God from Damning me all this while! How is it that I am not in Hell! Now do the fears and awful apprehensions of Eternity seize the Soul, and the worst of sensitive Creatures is supposed to be in a better condition than such a Soul: Never do Men tremble at the Threatnings of God, nor rightly apprehend the danger of their condition, until Sin and Wrath, and the Wages of Sin be discovered to them by a Light from Heaven.

Lesson 3. Thirdly, God teaches the Soul whom he brings to Christ, that deliverance from sin and wrath to come, is the greatest and most important business it hath to do in this World, Acts 16. 30. *What must I do to be saved?* q. d. O direct me to some effectual way (if there be any) to secure my poor wretched Soul from the Wrath of God. Sin, and the Wrath that follows it, are things that swallow up the Souls, and drink up the very Spirit of Men: Their thoughts never conversed with things of more confessed Truth, and awful Solemnity: These things float not upon their fancies as matters of meer speculation, but settle upon their Hearts day and night, as the deepest concernment in all the World: They now know much better than any meer Scholar, the deep fence of that Text, Matth. 16. 26. *What is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?*

Five things shew how weighty the thoughts and cares of Salvation are upon their Hearts.

First, Their continual thoughtfulness and solicitude about these things; if earthly Affairs divert them for a while, yet they are still returning again to this solemn Business.

Secondly, Their careful redeeming of time, and saving the very-moments thereof to employ about this Work: Those that were prodigal of Hours and Days before, look upon every Moment of Time as a precious and valuable thing now.

Thirdly, Their fears and tremblings lest they should miscarry, and come short at last, shew how much their Hearts are set upon this Work.

Fourthly, Their inquisitiveness, and readiness to embrace all the help and assistance, that they can get from others, evidently discovers this to be their great design.

Fifthly, and Lastly, The little notice they take of all other troubles and afflictions, tells you, their Hearts are taken up about greater things. This is the Third Lesson, they are taught of God.

Lesson 4. Fourthly, The Lord teaches the Soul that is coming to Christ, that though it be their duty to strive to the uttermost for Salvation; yet

all strivings in their own strength are insufficient to obtain it. This work is quite above the power of Nature: 'Tis not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy: The Soul is brought to a full Conviction of this, by the discovery of the heinous Nature of Sin, and of the rigour and severity of the Law of God: No Repentance, nor Reformation, can possibly amount unto a just Satisfaction, nor are they within the compass and power of our Will. It was a saying that Dr. Hill often used to his Friends, speaking about the Power of Man's Will, he would lay his Hand upon his Breast, and say, *Every Man hath something here to confute the Arminian Doctrine*: This fully takes off the Soul from all expectations of Deliverance that way; it cannot but strive, that is its duty; but to expect Deliverance, as the Purchase of its own Strivings, that would be its Sin.

Lesson 5. Fifthly, The Soul that is coming to Christ by Faith, is taught of God, that though the case it is in be sad, yet it is not desperate and remediless: There is a Door of Hope, a way of escape for poor Sinners, how black and fearful soever their own thoughts and apprehensions are. There is usually, at this time, a dawning Light of Hope in the Soul that is under the Father's Teachings, and this commonly arises from the general and indefinite Incouragements and Promises of the Gospel; which though they do not presently secure the Soul from danger, yet they prop and mightily support it against Despair; for though they be not certain that Deliverance shall be the event of their Trouble; yet the possibilities, and much more the probabilities of Deliverance are a great stay to the sinking Soul: The troubled Soul cannot but acknowledge it self to be in a far better case than the Damned are, whose hopes are perished from the Lord, and a Death-pang of Despair hath seized their Consciences: And herein the Merciful and Compassionate Nature of God, is eminently discovered, in hasting to open the Door of Hope, almost as soon as the Evil of Sin is opened: It was not long, after Adam's Eyes were opened to see his Misery, that God opened Christ his Remedy in that first Promise, *Gen. 3. 15.* and the same Method of Grace is still continued to his Elect Off-spring, *Gal. 3. 21, 22. Rom. 3. 21, 22.* These supporting hopes, the Lord sees necessary to encourage Industry in the use of Means: 'Tis hope that sets all the World awork; if all Hope were cut off, every Soul would sit down in a fullen despair, yielding it self for Hell.

Lesson 6. Sixthly, The Lord teaches those that come to Christ, that there is a fulness of saving power in him, whereby any Soul, that duly receives him, may be perfectly delivered from all its sin and misery, *Heb. 7. 25. Col. 1. 19. Matth. 28. 18.* This is a great and necessary point for every Believer to learn and hear from the Father; for unless the Soul be satisfied of the fulness of Christ's saving Power, it will never move forward towards him: And herein also the Goodness of God is most sweetly and seasonably manifested; for at this time 'tis the great design of Satan to fill the Soul with

despairing thoughts of a Pardon; but all those black and heart-sinking thoughts vanish before the discovery of Christ's all-sufficiency. Now the Sin-sick Soul faith with that Woman, *Mat. 9. 21. If I may but touch the hem of his Garment, I shall be healed*: How deep soever the guilt and stain of Sin be, yet the Soul which acknowledges the infinite dignity of the Blood of Christ, the offering of it up to God in our room, and God's declared satisfaction in it; must needs be satisfied that Christ is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, which is the sixth Lesson Believers are taught of God.

Lesson 7. Seventhly, Every Man that cometh to Christ is taught of God, that it can never reap any benefit by the Blood of Christ, except he have Union with the Person of Christ, *1 Joh. 5. 12. Eph. 4. 16.* Time was when Men fondly thought nothing was necessary to their Salvation but the Death of Christ; but now the Lord shews them that their Union with Christ by Faith is as necessary in the place of an applying cause, as the death of Christ is in the place of a meritorious cause: The purchase of Salvation is an Act of Christ without us whilst we are yet Sinners: The application thereof is by a work wrought within us, when we are Believers, *Col. 1. 27.* In the Purchase, all the Elect are redeemed together by way of price. In the application they are actually redeemed, Man by Man, by way of power. Look, as the Sin of the first Adam could never hurt us, unless he had been our Head by way of Generation; so the Righteousness of Christ can never benefit us, unless he be our Head by way of Regeneration. In teaching this Lesson the Lord in Mercy unteaches and blots out that dangerous principle, by which the greatest part of the Christianized World do perish, viz. that the Death of Christ is in it self effectual to Salvation, though a Man be never regenerated or united unto him by saving Faith.

Lesson 8. Eighthly, God teaches the Soul whom he is bringing to Christ, that whatsoever is necessary to be wrought in us, or done by us in order to our Union with Christ, is to be obtained from him in the way of Prayer, *Ezek. 36. 37.* And it is observable that the Soul no sooner comes under the effectual teachings of God, but the Spirit of Prayer begins to breath in it, *Acts 9. 8. Behold he prayeth*: Those that were taught to pray by Men before, are now taught of the Lord to pray; to pray did I say? yea, and to pray fervently too, as Men concerned for their Eternal Happiness; to pray not only with others, but to pour out their Souls before the Lord in secret; for their Hearts are as Bottles full of new Wine, which must vent or break: Now the Soul returns upon its God often in the same day; now it can express its burdens and wants in words and groans which the Spirit teacheth; they pray and will not give over praying till Christ come with compleat Salvation.

Lesson 9. Ninthly, All that come to Christ are taught of God to abandon their former ways and companions in sin as ever they expect to be received unto mercy, *1sa. 55. 7. 2 Cor. 5. 17.* Sins that were profitable and pleasant, as the right Hand, and right Eye, must now be cut off. Companions in sin, who were once the delight

of their Lives, must now be cast off. Christ faith to the Soul concerning these, as he said in another case, *Job. 18. 8. if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: And the Soul faith unto Christ, as it is, Psal. 119. 115. depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God:* And now pleasant sins, and Companions in sin, become the very burden and shame of a Man's Soul: Objects of delight are become Objects of Pity and compassion: No endearments, no union of Blood, no earthly intercessors whatsoever, are found strong enough to hold the Soul any longer from Christ: Nothing but the effectual teachings of God is found sufficient to dissolve such bonds of iniquity as these.

Lesson 10. Tenthly, *All that come unto Christ are taught of God, that there is such a beauty and excellency in the ways and people of God, as is not to be matched in the whole World, Psal. 16. 3.* When the Eyes of Strangers to Christ begin to be opened and enlightened in his knowledge, you may see what a change of judgment is wrought in them, with respect to the People of God, and towards them especially, whom God hath any way made instrumental for the good of their Souls, *Cant. 5. 9.* they then called the Spouse of Christ, *the fairest among women:* The convincing Holiness of the Bride then began to enamour and affect them with a desire of nearer conjunction and communion: *We will seek him with thee; with thee, that hast so charged us; that hast taken so much pains for the good of our Souls:* Now, and never before, the Righteous appeareth more excellent than his Neighbour. Change of Heart is always accompanied with change of judgment, with respect to the People of God: Thus the Gaoler, *Acts 16. 33.* washed the Apostles Stripes, to whom he had been so cruel before: The Godly now seem to be the Glory of the Places where they live: And the Glory of any place seems to be darkened by their removal; as one said of holy Mr. Barrington, *Metbinks the Town is not at home, when Mr. Barrington is out of Town:* They esteem it a choice Mercy to be in their company and acquaintance, *Zech. 8. 23. We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you:* No People like the People of God now: As one said, when he heard of two Faithful Friends, *Vivam tertius essem,* O that I might make the Third! Whatever vile or low thoughts they had of the People of God before, to be sure now they are the Excellent of the Earth, in whom is all their delight: The Holiness of the Saints might have some interest in their Consciences before, but they never had such an interest in their estimations and affections, till this Lesson was taught them by the Father.

Lesson 11. Eleventhly, *All that come to Christ are taught of God, that whatever difficulties they apprehend in Religion, yet they must not upon pain of damnation be discouraged thereby, or return back again to sin. Luke 9. 62. No Man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God:* Plowing work is hard work; a strong and steady hand is required for it; he that plows, must keep on, and make no barks of the hardest and toughest ground he meets with. Religion also is the running of a Race, *1 Cor. 9. 24.* there is no standing still,

much less turning back, if ever we hope to win the Prize.

The Devil indeed labours every way to discourage and daunt the Soul, by representing the insuperable difficulties of Religion to it; and young Beginners are but too apt to be discouraged, and fall under despondency; but the teachings of the Father, are encouraging teachings; they are carried on from strength to strength against all the oppositions they meet from without them, and the many discouragements they find within them: To this conclusion they are brought by the teaching of God, *We must have Christ, we must get a Pardon, we must strive for Salvation, let the difficulties, troubles, and sufferings in the way be never so great or many.* As he said, *Necessesse est ut vinam, non ut vivam:* 'Tis necessary that I go on, 'tis not necessary that I live; so faith the Soul that is taught of God; 'tis easier for me to dispense with Ease, Honour, Relations; yea, with Life it self, than to part with Christ and the Hopes of Eternal Life.

Lesson 12. Twelfthly, *They that come to Christ are taught of God, that whatever guilt and unworthiness they discover in themselves, and whatever fears and doubts bang upon their Hearts, as to pardon and acceptance; yet, as the case stands, it is their wisdom and great interest to venture themselves, in the way of Faith, upon Jesus Christ, whatever the issue thereof be.*

Three great discouragements are usually found upon the Hearts of those that come to Christ in the way of Faith.

First, The sensible greatness of guilt and sin, How can I go to Christ that am in such a case, that have been so vile a Wretch? And here measuring the Grace and Mercy of Christ, by what it finds in it self, or in other Creatures, *1 Sam. 24. 19.* the Soul is ready to sink under the weight of its own discouraging and mis-giving thoughts.

Secondly, The sense they have of their own weakness, and inability to do what God requires, and must of necessity be done, if ever they be saved: My Heart is harder than an Adamant, How can I break it? My Will is stubborn and exceeding obstinate, I am no way able to bow it; the frame and temper of my Spirit is altogether carnal and earthly; and it is not in the power of my hand to alter and change it: Alas, I cannot subdue any one corruption, nor perform one spiritual duty, nor bear one of those sufferings and burdens, which Religion lays upon all that follow Christ: This also proves a great discouragement in the way of Faith.

Thirdly, And, which is more than all, the Soul that is coming to Jesus Christ, hath no assurance of acceptance with him, if it should adventure it self upon him; 'tis a great hazard, a great adventure; 'tis much more probable (if I look to my self) that Christ will shut the door of Mercy against me.

But under all these discouragements, the Soul learns this Lesson from God, That, as ungodly as it is, as weak and impotent as it is, as full of fears and doubts as it is, nevertheless it is every way its great duty and concernment to go on in the way of Faith, and make that great adventure of it self upon Jesus Christ: And of this the Lord convinceth the Soul by two things, viz.

1. From

1. From the absolute necessity of coming.
2. From the encouraging probabilities of speeding.

First, The Soul seeth an absolute necessity of coming; necessity is laid upon it, there is no other way, *Act. 4. 12.* God hath shut it up, by a blessed necessity, to this only Door of escape, *Gal. 3. 23.* Damnation lies in the neglect of Christ, *Heb. 2. 3.* The Soul hath no choice in this case, Angels, Ministers, Duties, Repentance, Reformation cannot save me; Christ, and none but Christ, can deliver me from present Guilt, and the Wrath to come: Why do I dispute, demur, delay, when certain ruin must inevitably follow the neglect or refusal of Gospel offers?

Secondly, The Lord sheweth those that are under his teaching the probabilities of Mercy for their encouragement in the way of believing; and these probabilities the Soul is enabled to gather from the general and free invitations of the Gospel, *Isai. 55. 1, 7. Rev. 22. 17.* from the conditional Promises of the Gospel, *Joh. 6. 37. Matth. 11. 28. Isai. 1. 18.* from the vast extent of Grace, beyond all the thoughts and hopes of Creatures, *Isai. 55. 8, 9. Heb. 7. 25.* from the encouraging Examples of other sinners, who have found Mercy in as bad condi-

tion as they, *1 Tim. 1. 13. 2 Clem. 33. 13. 1 Cor. 6. 10, 11.* from the Command of God which warrants the action, and answers all the objections of unworthiness and presumption in them that come to Christ, *1 Joh. 3. 23.* And lastly, from the sensible Changes already made upon the temper and frame of the Heart. Time was, when I had no sense of sin, nor sorrow for sin; no desires after Christ, nor heart to Duties; but it is not so with me now. I now see the evil of sin, so as I never saw it before; my heart is now broken in the sense of that evil; my desires begin to be inflamed after Jesus Christ. I am not at rest, nor where I would be, till I am in secret Mourning after the Lord Jesus. Surely these are the dawns of the day of Mercy; let me go on in this way; let faith, as the Lepers at the Siege of Samaria, *2 King. 7. 3, 4.* If I stay here, I perish; if I go to Christ, I can but perish. Hence Believers bear up against all objected discouragements, *Certum exitum commutamus incerto*, 'tis the dictate of Wisdom, the vote of Reason; to exchange a certain for an uncertain ruine. And thus you have heard what those excellent Lessons are, which all that come to Christ are taught by the Father.

SERMON XXIII.

Serm. 23.

John VI. 45.

It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God, every Man therefore that hath heard, and learned of the Father cometh unto me. Text.

IN the former Sermon, you have been Taught this great Truth.

Doct. That the teachings of God are absolutely necessary to every Soul that cometh unto Christ in the way of Faith.

What the teachings of God import, hath been formerly opened; and what those special Lessons are, which all Believers hear and learn of the Father, was the last thing discoursed; that which remains to be farther cleared about this Subject, before I come to the application of the whole, will be to shew you,

1. What are the Properties of Divine Teachings.
2. What Influence they have in bringing Souls to Christ.
3. Why it is impossible for any Man to come to Christ, without these Teachings of the Father.

First, What are the Properties of Divine Teachings. Concerning the Teachings of God we affirm in general, that tho' they exclude not, yet they vastly differ from all Humane Teachings: as the power of God in effecting transcends all Humane power, so the Wisdom of God in Teaching transcends all Humane wisdom. For,

First, God Teacheth powerfully: he speaketh to the Soul with a strong hand; when the Word comes accompanied with the Spirit, 'tis mighty through God, to cast down all imaginations, *2 Cor. 10. 4.* Now the Gospel

comes not in word only (as it was wont to do) but in power, *1 Thes. 1. 4, 5.* A power that makes the Soul fall flat before it, and acknowledge, that God is in that Word, *1 Cor. 14. 25.*

Secondly, The Teachings of God are *sweet Teachings*. Men never relish the sweetness of a Truth, till they learn it from God, *Cant. 1. 3.* His name is as an Ointment poured forth, *Cant. 5. 16.* His Mouth is most sweet. O how powerfully, and how sweetly doth the voice of God slide into the heart of a poor melting Sinner? how jejune, dry, and tasteless are all the Discourses of Men, compared with the Teachings of the Father!

Thirdly, God Teacheth *plainly and clearly*, he not only opens Truths to the understanding, but he openeth the understanding also to perceive them, *2 Cor. 3. 16.* In that day the Veil is taken away from the Heart; a Light shineth into the Soul; a clear Beam from Heaven is darted into the Mind, *Luke 24. 45.* Divine Teachings are fully satisfying; the Soul doubts no more, it staggers and hesitates no more, but acquiesces in that which God teaches; 'tis so satisfied, that it can venture all upon the truth of what it hath learnt from God, as that Martyr said, *I cannot Dispute, but I can Die for Christ.* See *Prov. 8. 8, 9.*

Fourthly, The Teachings of God are *infallible teachings*, the wisest and holiest of Men may mistake, and lead others into the same mistakes with themselves; but it is not so in the

the teachings of God. If we can be sure that God teacheth us, we may be as sure of the Truth of what he teacheth; for his Spirit guideth us into all Truth, Joh. 16. 13. and into nothing but Truth.

Fifthly, The Teachings of God are *abiding teachings*, they make everlasting Impressions upon the Soul, *Psal. 119. 98. they are ever with it*; the Words of Men vanish from us; but the words of God stick by us; what God teacheth he writeth upon the Heart, *Jer. 31. 33. and that will abide; littera scripta manet*. 'Tis usual with Souls, whose understandings have been opened by the Lord, many years afterward to say, I shall never forget such a Scripture that once convinced me, such a Promise that once encouraged me.

Sixthly, The Teachings of God are *saving teachings*, they make the Soul wise unto Salvation, *2 Tim. 3. 15*. There is a great deal of other knowledge that goes to Hell with Men: The Pavement of Hell (as one speaks) is pitched with the Skulls of many great *Schoolars*, but Eternal Life is in the teachings of God, *Joh. 17. 3. This is Eternal Life, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*. This is deservedly styled the Light of Life, *Joh. 8. 12. In this light we shall see light*, *Psal. 36. 9*.

Seventhly, The Teachings of God make their own way into the dullest and weakest capacities, *Isa. 32. 4. The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly*: Upon this account Christ said, *Matth. 11. 25. I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes*: 'Tis admirable to see what clear illuminations some poor illiterate Christians have in the Mysteries of Christ and Salvation, which others, of great abilities, deep and searching heads, can never discover with all their Learning and Study.

Eighthly, To conclude, The Teachings of God are *transforming teachings*, *2 Cor. 3. 18*. they change the Soul into the same Image: God casts them, whom he teacheth, into the very mould of those Truths which they learn from him, *Rom. 6. 17*. These are the Teachings of God, and thus he instructeth those that come to Christ.

Secondly, Next let us see what influences Divine Teachings have upon Souls in bringing them to Christ; and we shall find a three-fold influence in them.

1. They have an influence upon the external *Means* by which they come to Christ.
2. They have an influence upon the Mind, to remove what hindered it from Christ.
3. They have an influence upon the Will, to allure and draw it to Christ.

First, They have influence upon the *Means* by which we come to Christ: The best Ordinances are but a dead Letter, except the Spirit, the teaching and quickening Spirit of God, work in fellowship with them, *2 Cor. 3. 6*. The best Ministers, like the Disciples, cast forth the Net, but take nothing, win not one Soul to God, till God teach as well as they. *Paul*

is nothing, and *Apelles* nothing, but God that giveth the increase, *1 Cor. 3. 7*. Let the most learned, eloquent, and powerful Orator be in the Pulpit, yet no Man's Heart is perswaded, till it hears the Voice of God; *Cathedran in caelis habet qui corda docet*.

Secondly, They have influence upon the *Mind*, to remove what hindered it from Christ; except the Minds of Men be first untaught those Errors, by which they are prejudiced against Christ, they will never be perswaded to come unto him: And nothing but the Fathers teachings can unteach those Errors, and cure those Evils of the Mind: The natural Mind of Man flights the Truths of God, until God teach them; and then they tremble with an awful reverence of them. Sin is but a trifle, till God shews us the Face of it in the glass of the Law, and then it appears exceeding *sinful*, *Rom. 7. 12*. We think God to be such a one as our selves, *Psal. 50. 21. until he discover himself unto us in his infinite Greatness, awful Holiness, and severe Justice*; and then we cry, who can stand before this great and dreadful God! We thought it was time enough hereafter to mind the concerns of another World, until the Lord open our Eyes, to see in what danger we stand upon the very brink of Eternity; and then nothing scares us more, than the fears that our time will be finished, before the great Work of Salvation be finished. We thought our selves in a converted State before, till God make us to see the necessity of another manner of Conversation, upon pain of Eternal Damnation. We readily caught hold upon the Promises before, when we had no right to them; but the teachings of God make the presumptuous Sinner let go his hold, that he may take a better and surer hold of them in Christ. We once thought that the Death of Christ, in it self, had been enough to secure our Salvation; but under the teachings of God, we discern plainly the necessity of a change of Heart and State; or else the Blood of Christ can never profit us. Thus the Teachings of God remove the Errors of the Mind, by which Men are withheld from Christ.

Thirdly, The teachings of God powerfully attract and allure the will of a Sinner to Christ, *Hos. 2. 14*. But of these drawings of the Father I have largely spoken before, and therefore shall say no more of it in this place, but hasten to the last thing propounded, *viz.*

Thirdly, Why it is impossible for any Man to come to Christ, without the Father's teachings; and the impossibilities hereof will appear three ways.

1. From the Power of Sin.
2. From the Indisposition of Man.
3. From the Nature of Faith.

By all which the Last Point designed to be spoken to from this Scripture will be fully cleared, and the whole prepared for application.

First, The impossibility of coming to Christ, without the Teachings of the Father, will appear from the Power of Sin, which hath so strong an holdfast upon the Hearts and Affections of all unregenerate Men, that no Humane Arguments or Perswasions whatsoever can divorce or separate them; for,

First, Sin is connatural with the Soul, 'tis born

born and bred with a Man; *Psal. 51. 5. Jst.* 48. 8. It is as natural for fallen Man to sin as it is to breathe.

Secondly, The power of Sin hath been strengthening it self from the beginning, by a long continued Custom, which gives it the force of a second Nature; and makes Regeneration and Mortification naturally impossible, *Jer. 15. 23. Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? Then may be also do good that is accustomed to do evil.*

Thirdly, Sin is the delight of the sinner: *It is a sport to a Fool to do mischief, Prov. 10. 23.* Carnal Men have no other pleasure in this World, but what arises from their Lusts; to cut off their Corruptions by Mortification, were at once to deprive them of all the pleasure of their lives.

Fourthly, Sin being connatural, customary, and delightful, doth therefore bewitch their Affections, and enchant their Hearts, to that degree of madness and fascination; that they rather chuse damnation by God, than separation from him: *Their hearts are fully set in them to do evil, Eccles. 8. 11. they rush into sin, as the horse rusheth into the battle, Jer. 8. 6.* And now, what think you can separate a Man from his beloved Lust, except the powerful and effectual Teachings of God? Nothing but a light from Heaven can rectify and reduce the enchanted Mind; no Power but that of God can change and alter the sinful bent and inclination of the Will, 'tis a task above all Creature-power.

Secondly, The impossibility of coming to Christ, without the Father's Teachings, evidently appears from the *indisposedness* of Man, the subject of this change; *the natural Man receives not the things which are of God, 1 Cor. 2. 14.* Three things must be wrought upon Man, before ever he can come to Christ; his blind Understanding must be enlightened; his hard and rocky Heart must be broken, and melted; his stiff, fixed, and obstinate Will must be conquered and subdued: But all these are the effects of a supernatural Power. The illumination of the Mind is the peculiar work of God, *2 Cor. 4. 6. Rev. 3. 17. Eph. 5. 8.* The breaking and melting of the Heart is the Lord's own work; 'tis he that giveth repentance, *Acts 5. 31.* 'Tis the Lord that *takes away the heart of stone, and giveth an heart of flesh, Ezek. 36. 26.* 'tis he that poureth out the Spirit of contrition upon Man, *Zech. 12. 10.* The changing of the natural bent and inclination of the Will is the Lord's sole Prerogative, *Phil. 2. 13.* all these things are effectually done in the Soul of Man, when God teacheth it, and never till then.

Thirdly, The Nature of Faith, by which we come to Christ, plainly shews the impossibility of coming without the Father's teaching. Every thing in Faith is supernatural; the implantation of the *habit* of Faith is so, *Eph. 2. 8.* 'tis not of our selves, but the Gift of God; 'tis not an habit acquired by industry, but infused by Grace, *Phil. 1. 29.* The light of Faith, by which spiritual things are discerned, is supernatural, *Heb. 11. 1, 27.* It seeth things that are invisible. The adventures of Faith are supernatural; for *against hope, a Man believeth in hope, giving Glory to God, Rom. 4. 18.* By

Faith a Man goeth unto Christ, against all the dictates and discouragements of Natural Sense and Reason. The *Self-denial* of Faith is supernatural; the cutting off of the Right Hand, and plucking out of Right Eye Sins must needs be so, *Matth. 5. 29.* The *Victories* and *Conquests* of Faith do all speak it to be supernatural; it overcomes the strongest oppositions from without, *Heb. 11. 33, 34.* it subdueth and purgeth the most obstinate and deep rooted corruptions within, *Acts 15. 9.* it overcometh all the blandishments and charming allurements of the bewitching World, *1 Job. 5. 4.* all which considered, how evident is the conclusion, that none can come to Christ without the Father's Teachings? The uses follow.

I. Use for Information.

Inference 1.

How notoriously false and absurd is that Doctrine which asserteth the possibility of believing without the efficacy of supernatural Grace? The desire of self-sufficiency was the ruine of Adam, and the conceit of self-sufficiency is the ruine of multitudes of his Posterity. This Doctrine is not only contradictory to the current stream of Scriptures, *Phil. 2. 13. 1 Job. 1. 13.* with many other Scriptures; but it is also contradictory to the common sense and experience of Believers; yet the pride of Nature will strive to maintain, what Scripture and Experience plainly contradict and overthrow.

Inference 2.

Hence we may also inform our selves, how it cometh to pass, that many rational, wise, and learned Men miss Christ, whilst mean time the simple and illiterate, even Babes in Natural Knowledge, obtain interest in him and Salvation by him. The reason hereof is plainly given us by Christ in *Matth. 13. 11.* To you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given: 'Tis the droppings and dews of Divine teaching upon one, and not upon another, that dryeth up the green tree, and maketh the dry Tree to flourish. Many natural Men have very fine Brains, searching Wits, solid Judgments, nimble Fancies, tenacious Memories; they can search out the Mysteries of Nature, solve the *Iphenomena*, satisfy the Enquiries of the most Curious; they can measure the Earth, discover the Motions of the Heavens; but after all take up their place in Hell: When, in the mean time, the *Statutes of the Lord* (by the help of his teachings) make wise the simple, *Psal. 19. 17.* 'Tis no matter how dull and incapable the Scholar be, if God undertake to be the Teacher. I remember *Austin* speaks of one, who was commonly reputed a Fool, and yet he could not but judge him to be truly godly; and that by two signs of Grace which appeared in him: one was his seriousness when he heard any discourses of Christ; the other was his indignation manifested against Sin. It was truly said by those two Cardinals, (who riding to the Council of Constance, over-heard a poor Shepherd in the Fields, with Tears bewailing his sin) *surgunt indocti & rapient cunctum:* The unlearned will rise and take Heaven, whilst we with all our Learning shall descend into Hell.

Inference 3.

This also informs us of the true reason of the strange

Use 1.
Infer. 1.

Infer. 2.

Infer. 3.

strange and various successes of the Gospel upon the Souls of Men: Here we see why the Ministry of one Man becomes fruitful, and another's barren; yea, why the labours of the same Man prosper exceedingly at one time, and not at another: These things are according as the teachings of God do accompany our teachings: We often see a weaker and plainer discourse blessed with success, whilst that which is more artificial, neat, and laboured, comes to nothing. St. Austin hath a pretty similitude to illustrate this: Suppose (saith he) two Conduits, the one very plain, the other curiously carved and adorned with Images of Lyons, Eagles, &c. the Water doth not refresh and nourish, as it cometh from such a curious Conduit, but as it is Water. Where we find most of Man, we frequently find least of God. I speak not this to encourage carelessness and laziness, but to provoke the Dispensers of the Gospel to more earnestness, and fervent Prayer for the assistance and blessing of the Spirit upon their Labours; and to make Men less fond of their own Gifts and Abilities: Blear-eyed *Leah* may bear Children, when beautiful *Rachel* proves barren.

Inference 4.

Infer. 4. Learn hence the transcendent excellency of saving spiritual Knowledge, above that which is merely literal and natural. One drop of Knowledge taught by God, is more excellent, than the whole Ocean of Humane Knowledge and acquired Gifts, *Phil. 3. 8. Job. 17. 3. 1 Cor. 2. 2.* Let no Man therefore be dejected at the want of those Gifts, with which unsanctified Men are adorned. If God have taught thee the evil of Sin, the worth of Christ, the necessity of Regeneration, the mystery of Faith, the way of communion with God in Duties; trouble not thy self because of thine ignorance in natural or moral things; thou hast that, Reader, which will bring thee to Heaven; and he is a truly wise Man that knows the way of Salvation, though he be ignorant and unskillful in other things: Thou knowest that, which all the learned *Doctors* and *Liberaries* in the World could never teach thee, but God hath revealed them to thee: Others have more science, thou hast more favour and sweetness: Bless God and be not discouraged.

2. Use for Examination.

Use 2. If there be no coming to Christ without the teachings of the Father; then it greatly concerns us to examine our own Hearts, whether ever we have been under the saving teachings of God, during the many years we have sat under the preaching of the Gospel. Let not the question be mistaken, I do not ask what Books you have read, what Ministers you have heard, what stock of natural or speculative knowledge you have acquired; but the question is, whether ever God spake to your Hearts, and hath effectually taught you such Lessons, as were mentioned in our last Discourse? O there is a vast difference betwixt that notional, speculative, and traditional knowledge which Man learneth from Man, and that spiritual, operative, and transforming knowledge which a Man learneth from God. If you ask how the teachings of God may be discerned from all other meer humane teachings, I answer, it may be discerned and distinguished by these six Signs.

Sign 1.

The teachings of God are very humbling to the Soul that is taught. Humane knowledge puffeth up, *1 Cor. 8. 1.* but the teachings of God do greatly abase the Soul, *Job 42. 5. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in dust and ashes:* The same light which discovers to us the Holiness, Justice, Greatness, and Goodness of God, discovereth also the villainy, baseness, emptiness, and total unworthiness of Man; yea, of the best and holiest of Men, *Isa. 6. 5.*

Sign 2.

The teachings of God are deeply affecting, and impressive teachings: they fully reach the Heart of Man, *Hos. 2. 14. I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her:* or, as it is in the Hebrew, I will speak to her Heart. When God sheweth unto Man the evil of Sin, he so convinceth the Soul that no Creature-comforts have any pleasure or sweetness in them; and when he sheweth unto Man his Righteousness, Pardon, and Peace in Christ, he so comforteth and refresheth the Heart, that no outward afflictions have any weight or bitterness in them; one drop of consolation from Heaven, sweetens a Sea of trouble upon Earth, *Psal. 94. 19. In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my Soul.*

Sign 3.

The teachings of God are sanctifying and renewing teachings: they reform and change the Heart, *Eph. 4. 21, 22, 23. If so be that you have heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, &c.* See here what holiness and purity is the effect of divine teaching: Holiness both external and internal, negative and positive: Holiness of every kind follows the Father's teachings: All the discoveries God makes to us of himself in Christ have an assimilating quality, and change the Soul into their own likeness, *2 Cor. 3. 18.*

Sign 4.

All God's teachings are practical, running into obedience. Idle notions and useless speculations are not learn'd from God. As God's creating words, so his teaching words are with effect: As when he said *let there be light*, and there was light; so when he saith to the Soul, be comforted, be humbled; it is effectually comforted, *Isa. 66. 13. it is humbled, Job 40. 4, 5.* As God hath in Nature made no Creature in vain, so he speaks no word in vain: Every thing which Men hear, or learn from the Father, is for use, practice, and benefit to the Soul.

Sign 5.

All the teachings of God are agreeable with the written word: The Spirit of God, and the word of God do never jar, *Job. 14. 26. He shall take of mine and shew it unto you:* When God speaketh unto the Heart of Man, whether in a way of conviction, consolation, or instruction in duty, he always either maketh use of the express words of God in Scripture, or speaks to the Heart in Language every way consistent and agreeable to Scripture: So that the

the written word becomes the *Standard* to weigh, and try all divine teachings, *Isa.* 8. 20. *To the Law, and to the Testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light (or morning) in them:* Whatever is discrepant and jarring with the Scripture, must not pass for an inspiration of God, but a deluding Sophism and insinuation of Satan.

Sign 6.

The teachings of God are very satisfying teachings to the Soul of Man; the understanding Faculty, like a *Dial*, is enlightned with the Beams of Divine Truth shining upon it; this no Man's teachings can do; Men can only teach *objectively*, by propounding Truth to the Understanding; but they cannot enlighten the Faculty it self, as God doth, *1 Joh.* 5. 20. he giveth Man understanding, as well as instructions to be understood; he opens the Eyes of the understanding, as well as propoundeth the Object, *Eph.* 1. 18. And thus we may discern and distinguish the teachings of God, from all other teachings.

Use 3.

3. Use of Exhortation.

The last Use I shall make of this Point, shall be a word of *Exhortation*, both to them that never were yet effectually taught of God, and to them also that have heard his voice, and are come to Christ.

First, To those that never yet heard the Voice of God speaking to their Hearts; and truly this is the general case of most Men and Women in the professing World; they have heard the sound of the Gospel, but it hath been a confused, empty, and ineffectual sound in their Ears: We have heard the voice of Man, but have never yet heard the voice of God: The Gifts and Abilities of Preachers have in a notional and meer humane way improved their Understandings, and sometimes slightly touched their Affections: All this is but the effect of Man upon Man. O that you would look for something which is beyond all this: Satisfie not your selves with what is meerly natural, and humane in Ordinances: Come to the Word with higher Ends and more spiritual Designs, than to get some Notions of Truth which you had not before, or to judge the Gifts and Abilities of the Speaker: If God speak not to your Hearts, all the Ordinances in the World can do you no good, *1 Cor.* 3. 7. O remember what a solemn and awful thing it is to come to those Ordinances, and attend upon that Ministration, in and by which the Eternal Decrees of Heaven are to be executed upon your Souls, which must be to you the *favour of Life unto Life, or of Death unto Death*: Wrestle with God, by Prayer, for a Blessing upon the Ordinances. Say, Lord, speak thy self to my Heart, let me hear thy voice, and feel thy power in this Prayer, or

in this Sermon: Others have heard thy voice, cause me to hear it: It had been much better for me if I had never heard the voice of Preachers, except I hear thy voice in them.

Secondly, Let all those that have heard the voice of God, and are come to Christ in the vertue of his Teachings, admire the wonderful condescension of God to them. O that God should speak to thy Soul, and be silent to others! there be many thousands living at this day under Ordinances, to whom the Lord hath not given an Ear to hear, or an Heart to obey, *Deut.* 29. 4. *To you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given,* *Matth.* 13. 11. And I beseech you walk as Men and Women that have been Taught of God. When *Satan* and your Corruptions tempt you to sin, and to walk in the ways of the carnal and careless World: Remember then that Scripture, *Eph.* 4. 20, 21. *But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that you have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus.* To conclude, see that you be exceeding humble and lowly in Spirit; humility qualifies you for Divine Teachings, *Psal.* 25. 9. *The humble he will teach: and the more ye are taught of God, the more humble you will still be.*

And thus you see, that no Man can come to Christ without the application of the Law, and the teachings of the Father; which being considered, may be very useful to convince us, (which indeed is the design of it) that among the multitudes of Men and Women, living under the Ordinances of God, and the general profession of Religion; there are but few, very few to be found, who have effectually received the Lord Jesus Christ by saving Faith.

And now, Reader, I suppose by this time thou art desirous to know by what signs and evidences thy Union with Christ by Faith may be cleared up, and made evident to thee: And how that great Question, Whether thou hast yet effectually applied Christ to thy Soul, or no, may be clearly decided; which brings me to the Third General Use of the whole, viz.

The Examination of our Interest in Christ, by

1. The Donation of the Spirit, from *1 Joh.* 3. 24.
2. The New Creation, from *2 Cor.* 5. 17.
3. The Mortification of Sin, from *Gal.* 5. 24.
4. The Imitation of Christ, from *1 Joh.* 2. 6.

Of each of these Trials of our Interest in Christ I shall speak in their Order: And, first, of the Donation of the Spirit.

SERMON XXIV.

1 JOHN III. 24.

Serm. 24.
Of the
Manner and Im-
portance
of the Spi-
rits In-
dwelling

— And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

THE Apostle in this Chapter is engaged in a very trying Discourse; his scope is to discriminate the spirits and states of sincere Believers, from merely nominal and pretended Christians; which he attempts not to do by any thing that is external, but by the internal effects and operations of the Spirit of God upon their hearts. His enquiry is not into those things which Men profess, or about the duties which they perform, but about the frames and tempers of their hearts, and the Principles by which they are acted in Religion. According to this Test he puts Believers upon the search and study of their own hearts: calls them to reflect upon the effects and operations of the Spirit of God wrought within their own Souls: assuring them that those gracious effects and fruits of the Spirit in their hearts will be a solid evidence unto them of their union with Jesus Christ; amounting to much more than a general conjectural ground of hope, under which it is impossible there may *subesse falsum*, lurk a dangerous and fatal mistake: but the gracious effects of the Spirit of God within them, are a foundation upon which they may build the certainty and assurance of their Union with Christ: *Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.* In which words we have Three things to consider, *viz.*

1. The thing to be tried, our Union with Christ.
2. The trial of it, by the giving of his Spirit to us.
3. The certainty of the trial this way: *hereby we know.*

First. The thing to be tried, which is indeed the greatest and weightiest matter that can be brought to trial in this World, or in that to come, namely our union with Christ, expressed here by *his abiding in us*, a phrase clearly expressing the difference betwixt those that by profession and common estimation pass for Christians among Men, though they have no other union with Christ, but by an *external adhesion* to him in the outside duties of Religion: and those whose union with Christ is real, vital and permanent, by the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ in their Souls, *Joh. 15. 5. 6.* Opens the force and importance of this phrase, *I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him; the same bringeth forth much fruit: if a Man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered:* the thing then to be tried, is, whether we stand in Christ as dead branches in a living stock, which are only bound to it by external ligatures, or bonds, that hold them for a while together: or whether our Souls have a vital union and coalition with Christ, by the participation of the living sap of that blessed root.

Secondly. The trial of this union, which is by the *giving of the Spirit to us*: the Spirit of Christ is the very bond of Union betwixt him and our Souls. I mean not that the very Person of the Spirit dwelleth in us, imparting his *essential properties* to us: it were a rude Blasphemy so to speak, but his saving influences are communicated to us in the way of sanctifying operations: as the Sun is said to come into the House, when his beams and comforting influences come there. Nor yet must we think that the Graces or Influences of the Spirit abide in us in the self-same measure and manner as they do in Christ; *for God giveth not the Spirit to him by measure*; in him all fullness dwells. He is anointed with the Spirit above his Fellows; but there are measures and proportions of Grace differently communicated to Believers by the same Spirit; and these communicated Graces and real Operations of the Spirit of Grace in our hearts, do undoubtedly prove the reality of our Union with Christ; as the communication of the self-same vital juice, or sap of the stock to the branch whereby it lives, and brings forth fruit of the same kind, certainly proves it to be a real part or member of the same Tree.

Thirdly. Which brings us to the third thing; namely the certainty of the trial this way, *as tunc prout scitur* in this, or *by this we know*: we so know, that we cannot be deceived. To clear this, let us consider Two things in Grace. *viz.*

1. Somewhat *Constitutive*.
2. Somewhat *Manifestative*.

} of its being.

There is something in Grace which is *essential and constitutive* of its being; and somewhat that flows from Grace, and is *manifestative* of such a Being: we cannot immediately and intuitively discern the essence of Grace, as it is in its simple nature. So God only discerns it, who is the Author of it: but we may discern it *mediately and secondarily* by the effects and operations of it. Could we see the simple essence of grace, or intuitively discern our union with Christ, our knowledge would be *demonstrative, à priori ad posterius*, by seeing effects, as they are lodged in their cause: but we come to know the being of Grace, and the reality of our union with Christ, *à posteriori*, by ascending in our knowledge from the effects and operations, to their true cause and being.

And accordingly God hath furnished us with a power of self-intuition and reflection: whereby we are able to turn in upon our own hearts, and make a judgment upon our selves, and upon our own Acts. The Soul hath not only a power to *project*, but a power also to *reflect* upon its own actions, not only to put forth a *direct act* of Faith upon Jesus Christ, but to judge and discern that act also, *2 Tim.*

1. 12. *I know whom I have believed:* and this

is

is the way in which Believers attain their certainty and knowledge of their Union with Christ: from hence the Observation will be,

Doctr.

Doctr. *This interest in Christ may be certainly gathered, and concluded from the gift of the Spirit to us: no Man (saith the Apostle) hath seen God at any time; if we love one another, God dwelleth in us; and his love is perfected in us: hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit,* 1 John 4. 12, 13. The being of God is invisible, but the operations of his Spirit in Believers are sensible and discernable. The Souls union with Christ is a supernatural Mystery, yet is it discoverable by the effects thereof, which are very perceptible in and by Believers. Two things require Explication, and Confirmation in the Doctrinal part of this Point.

1. What the giving of the Spirit imports and signifies.

2. How it evidences the Souls interest in Jesus Christ.

First. As to the importance of this phrase, we are to enquire what is meant by the Spirit, and what by the giving of the Spirit.

Now the Spirit is taken in Scripture two ways. viz. Essentially: Or Personally.

In the first sense it is put for the God-head, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Justified in the Spirit,* (i. e.) by the power of his Divine Nature, which raised him from the Dead. In the second sense it denotes the third Person, or subsistence in the glorious and blessed Trinity, and to him this word Spirit is attributed, sometimes properly in the sense before-mention'd, as denoting his personality; at other times metonymically, and then it is put for the effects, fruits, graces and gifts of the Spirit, Communicated by him unto Men, Eph. 5. 11. *Be ye filled with the Spirit.* Now the fruits or gifts of the Spirit are either,

1. Common, and assisting Gifts: Or,

2. Special, and Sanctifying Gifts.

In the last sense and signification, it must be taken in this place: for as to the common, assisting and ministring gifts of the Spirit, they are bestowed promiscuously upon one as well as another. Such gifts in an excellent degree, and large measure are found in the unregenerate, and therefore can never amount to a solid evidence of the Souls union with Christ: but his special sanctifying gifts, being the proper effect and consequent of that Union, must needs strongly prove and confirm it. In this sense therefore we are to understand the Spirit in this place: and by giving the Spirit to us, we are to understand more than the coming of the Spirit upon us: the Spirit of God is said to come upon Men in a transient way, for their present assistance in some particular service, though in themselves they be unsanctified Persons: thus the Spirit of God came upon Balaam, Numb. 24. 2. Enabling him to Prophesie of things to come; and although those extraordinary gifts of the Spirit be now ceased, yet the Spirit ceaseth not to give his ordinary assistances unto Men, both regenerate and unregenerate, 1 Cor. 12. 8, 9, 10, 31. Compared: but whatever gifts he gives to others, he is said to be given, to dwell and to abide only in Believers, 1 Cor. 3. 16. *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* An expression denoting

Vol. I.

both his special propriety in them, and gracious familiarity with them: there is a great difference betwixt the *dwelling* and the *indwelling* of the Spirit: the one is *transient*, the other *permanent*. That is a good rule the School-men give us, *illa tantum dicitur inesse, qua insunt per medium quiescis*: those things are only said to be in a Man, which are in him by way of rest, and permanency, and so the Spirit is in Believers: therefore they are said to *live in the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 25. *To be led by the Spirit*, ver. 18. *To be in the Spirit*, and the Spirit to dwell in them, Rom. 8. 9. And so much of the first thing to be opened, viz. what we are to understand by the giving of the Spirit.

Secondly. In the next place we are to enquire and satisfy our selves, how this giving of the Spirit evidently proves, and strongly concludes, that Souls interest in Christ unto whom he is given: and this will evidently appear by the consideration of these Five particulars.

First. The Spirit of God in Believers is the very bond by which they are united unto Christ: if therefore we find in our selves the bond of union, we may warrantably conclude that we have union with Jesus Christ: this is evidently held forth in those words of Jesus Christ, John 17. 22, 23. *The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me:* 'Tis the glory of Christ's humane nature to be united to the God-head: this glory (said Christ) thou gavest me, and the glory thou gavest me I have given them (i. e.) by me they are united unto thee: and how this is done he sheweth us more particularly, *I in them*; there is Christ in us, viz. *mystically*; and *thou in me*, there is God in Christ, viz. *Hypostatically*; so that in Christ God and Believers meet in a blessed union. 'Tis Christ's glory to be one with God; 'tis our glory to be one with Christ, and with God by him; But how is this done? certainly no other way but by the giving of his Spirit unto us; for so much that phrase *I in them* must needs import; Christ is in us by the sanctifying Spirit, which is the bond of our union with him.

Secondly. The Scripture every where makes this giving or indwelling of the Spirit the great mark and tryal of our interest in Christ; concluding from the presence of it in us positively, as in the Text; and from the absence of it, negatively, as in Rom. 8. 9. *Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, the same is none of his*, Jude ver. 19. *sensual, not having the Spirit*; this mark therefore agreeing to all believers, and to none but Believers; and that always, and at all times; it must needs clearly infer the Souls union with Christ in whomsoever it is found.

Thirdly. That which is a certain mark of our freedom, from the Covenant of Works, and our Title to the Privileges of the Covenant of Grace, must needs also infer our Union with Christ, and special interest in him; but the giving or indwelling of the sanctifying Spirit in us, is a certain mark of our freedom from the first Covenant; under which all Christless persons still stand; and our Title to the special Privileges of the second Covenant in which none but the

G g g 2

the Members of Christ are interested: and consequently it fully proves our Union with the Lord Jesus. This is plain from the *Apostles* reasoning, Gal. 4. 6, 7. *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father; wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.* The Spirit of the first Covenant was a servile Spirit, a Spirit of fear and bondage, and they that were under that Covenant were not *Sons* but *Servants*; but the Spirit of the New Covenant is a free, ingenuous Spirit, acting in the strength of God, and those that do so are the Children of God: and Children inherit the blessed privileges, and royal immunities contained in that great Charter, the Covenant of Grace; they are *heirs of God*, and the evidence of this their inheritance by virtue of the second Covenant, and of their freedom from the servitude and bondage of the first Covenant, is the Spirit of Christ in their hearts crying *Abba Father*: So Gal. 5. 18. *If ye be led by the Spirit ye are not under the Law.*

Fourthly, If the eternal decree of God's electing love be executed, and the virtues and benefits of the death of Christ applied by the Spirit, unto every Soul in whom he dwelleth as a Spirit of Sanctification; then such a giving of the Spirit unto us must needs be a certain mark and proof of our special interest in Christ: but the decree of God's electing love is executed, and the benefits of the blood of Christ are applied unto every Soul in whom he dwelleth as a Spirit of Sanctification. This is plain from 1 Pet. 1. 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through Sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ: where you see both God's election executed, and the Blood of Jesus sprinkled or applied unto us by the Spirit, which is given to us as a Spirit of sanctification.* There is a blessed order of working observed as proper to each person in the God-head: the Father electeth, the Son redeemeth, the Spirit sanctifieth. The Spirit is the last efficient in the work of our salvation: what the Father decreed and the Son purchased, that the Spirit applyeth; and so puts the last hand to the compleat Salvation of believers. And this some *Drivins* give as the reason why the sin against the Spirit is unpardonable, because he being the last agent in order of working, if the heart of a Man be filled with enmity against the Spirit, here can be no remedy for such a sin; there is no looking back to the death of Christ, or to the love of God for remedy; this sin against the Spirit is that *obex infernalis* the deadly stop and bar to the whole work of Salvation; oppositely, where the Spirit is received, obeyed, and dwelleth in the way of Sanctification; into that Soul the eternal love of God, the ineffable benefits of the Blood of Christ run freely without stop or interruption; and consequently the interest of such a Soul in Jesus Christ is beyond all dispute.

Fifthly, The giving of the Spirit to us, or his residing in us as a sanctifying Spirit, is every where in Scripture made the pledge and earnest of eternal Salvation, and consequently must abundantly confirm and prove the Soul's interest in Christ; Eph. 1. 13, 14. *In*

whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise; which is the earnest of our Inheritance, &c. So 2 Cor. 1. 22. *who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* And thus you have the point opened and confirmed. The Use of all followeth.

Use. Now the only Use I shall make of this point shall be that which lyeth directly both in the eye of the Text, and of the design for which it was chosen; namely, by it to try and examine the truth of our interest, and the validity of our claim to Jesus Christ. In pursuance of which design I shall first lay down some general rules, and then propose some particular tryals.

First, I shall lay down some general rules for the due information of our minds in this point upon which so great a weight hangs.

Rule 1. *Though the Spirit of God be given to us and worketh in us, yet he worketh not as a natural and necessary, but as a free and arbitrary agent: he neither assits nor sanctifies as the fire burneth, ad ultimum sui posse, as much as he can assit or sanctifie, but as much as he pleaseth: Dividing to every man severally as he will,* 1 Cor. 12. 11. Bestowing greater measures of gifts and graces upon some, than upon others; and assitting the same person, more at one Season than another: and all this variety of operation floweth from his own good pleasure: his grace is his own, he may give it as he pleaseth.

Rule 2. *There is a great difference in the manner of the Spirits working before, and after the work of regeneration: whilest we are unregenerate, he works upon us as upon dead Creatures that work not at all with him; and what motion there is in our Souls, is a counter-motion to the Spirit: but after regeneration it is not so, he then works upon a complying and willing mind: we work and he assits, Rom. 8. 26. Our Conscience witnesseth, and he beareth witness with it, Rom. 8. 16. It is therefore an Error of dangerous consequence to think that sanctified persons are not bound to stir or strive in the way of duty without a sensible impulse or preventing motion of the Spirit, Isa. 64. 7.*

Rule 3. *Though the Spirit of God be given to believers, and worketh in them, yet believers themselves may do, or omit such things as may obstruct the working, and obscure the very being of the Spirit of God in them; ita nos trahat, ut a nobis trahatur: he dealeth with us in his evidencing, and comforting work, as we deal with him in point of tenderness and obedience to his dictates: there is a grieving, yea, there is a quenching of the Spirit by the lusts and corruptions of those hearts in which he dwelleth: and though he will not forsake his habitation as a Spirit of sanctification, yet he may for a time desert it as a Spirit of consolation, Psal. 51. 11.*

Rule 4. *Those things which discover the indwelling of the Spirit in believers are not so much the matter of their duties, or substance of their actions; as the more secret springs, holy aims, and Spiritual manner of their doing, or performing of them; 'tis not so much the matter of a prayer, the neat and orderly expressions in which it is uttered; as the inward sense, and Spiritual design of the Soul: 'tis not the choice of elegant words whereby our conceptions are clothed, or the copiousness of the matter with which*

26.

we are furnished; for even a poor stammering tongue, and broken language may have more of the Spirit of God in it. This made *Luther* say, he saw more excellency in the duty of a plain rustick Christian, than in all the Triumphs of *Cæsar*, and *Alexander*: the beauty and excellency of Spiritual duties is an inward hidden thing.

Rule 5. *All the motions and operations of the Spirit are always harmonical and suitable to the written word: Isa. 8. 20. To the Law, and to the Testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* The Scriptures are by the inspiration of the Spirit, therefore his inspirations into the hearts of believers must either substantially agree with the Scriptures, or the inspirations of the Spirit be self repugnant, and contradictory to one another. It is very observable that the works of grace wrought by the Spirit in the hearts of believers are represented to us in Scripture as a transcript or copy of the written word: *Jer. 31. 33. I will write my Law in their hearts.* Now as a true copy answers the original, word for word, letter for letter, point for point; so do the works of the Spirit in our Souls harmonize with the dictates of the Spirit in the Scriptures: whatsoever motion therefore shall be found repugnant thereunto, must not be fathered upon the Spirit of God, but laid at the door of its proper parents, the Spirit of error, and corrupt nature.

Rule 6. *Although the works of the Spirit in all sanctified persons do substantially agree, both with the written word, and with one another (as ten thousand copies penned from one original must needs agree within themselves) yet as to the manner of infusion, and operation, there are found many circumstantial differences: the Spirit of God doth not hold one and the same method of working upon all hearts: the work of grace is introduced into some Souls with more terror and trouble for sin than it is in others. He wrought upon *Paul* one way; upon *Lydia* in another way: he holds some much longer under terrors and troubles than he doth others: inveterate and more prophane sinners find stronger troubles for sin, and are held longer under them, than those are into whose hearts grace is more early and insensibly infused by the Spirits blessing upon religious education: but as those have less trouble than the others at first, so commonly they have less clearness, and more doubts and fears about the work of the Spirit afterwards.*

Rule 7. *There is a great difference found betwixt the sanctifying, and the comforting influences of the Spirit upon believers in respect of constancy, and permanency: his sanctifying influences abide for ever in the Soul: they never depart; but his comforting influences come and go, and abide not long upon the hearts of believers. Sanctification belongs to the being of a Christian, Consolation only to his well-being: the first therefore is fixed and abiding, the latter various and inconstant. Sanctification brings us to Heaven hereafter, consolation brings Heaven into us here: our safety lies in the former, our cheerfulness in the latter. There are times and seasons in the lives of believers wherein the Spirit of God doth more signally and eminently seal their Spirits and*

ravish their hearts with Joy unspeakable: but what *Bernard* speaketh, is certainly true in the experience of Christians: It is a sweet hour, and it is but an hour: a thing of short continuance: the relish of it is exceeding sweet, but it is not often that Christians taste it. And so much may suffice for the general rules about the in-being, and workings of the Spirit in believers, for the better information of our understandings, and prevention of mistakes in this matter, I shall next, according to promise, lay down the particular marks and tryals by which we may discern whether God hath given us his Spirit or no: by which grown Christians when they are in a due composed frame, may, by the assistance of the Spirit of God, (for which therefore they are bound to pray) discern his indwelling, and working in themselves.

Evidence 1. *In whomsoever the Spirit of Christ is a Spirit of sanctification, to that man or woman he hath been more or less a Spirit of conviction and humiliation: this is the order which the Spirit constantly observes in adult, or grown converts. John 16. 8. 9. And when he is come he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of Judgment: of sin because they believed not on me.* This you see is the method he observes all the World over: he shall reprove or convince the World of sin. Conviction of sin hath the same respect unto sanctification, as the blossoms of trees have to the fruits that follow them; a blossom is but *fructus imperfectus, & ordinabilis*; an imperfect fruit in it self, and in order to a more perfect and noble fruit; where there are no blossoms, we can expect no fruit, and were we see no convictions of sin, we can expect no conversion to Christ. Hath then the Spirit of God been a Spirit of conviction to thee? hath he more particularly convinced thee of sin *because thou hast not believed on him?* (i. e.) hath he shewn thee thy sin and misery, as an Unbeliever? not only terrified and affrighted thy Conscience with this or that more notorious act of sin, but fully convinced thee of the state of sin that thou art in by reason of thy unbelief; which holding thee from Christ, must needs also hold thee under the guilt of all thy other sins. This gives at least a strong probability that God hath given thee his Spirit, especially, when this conviction remains day and night upon thy Soul, so that nothing but Christ can give it rest, and consequently the great inquisition of thy Soul is after Christ, and none but Christ.

Evidence 2. *As the Spirit of God hath been a convincing, so he is a quickening Spirit to all those to whom he is given; Rom. 8. 2. The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the Law of sin and death; he is the Spirit of life, (i. e.) the principle of spiritual life in the Souls whom he inhabiteth; for uniting them to Christ, he uniteth them to the fountain of life; and this spiritual life in believers manifests it self as the natural life doth in vital actions and operations. When the Spirit of God comes into the Soul of a Man that was dead, and senseless under sin, O (saith he) now I begin to feel the weight and load of sin, Rom. 7. 24. now I begin to hunger, and thirst after Christ and his Ordinances, 1 Pet. 2. 2. now I begin to breathe after God in spiritual prayer, Acts 9. 17. Spiritual life hath its*

Rara ho-
ra, brevis
moras (api-
quidem
suavissime,
sed gustatur
raris-
sime. Bern.

spiritual senses, and suitable operations. O think upon this you that cannot feel any burthen in sin, you that have no hungerings or thirstings after Christ; how can the Spirit of God be in you? I do not deny but there may at some times be much deadness and senselessness upon the hearts of Christians, but this is their disease, not their nature; it is but at some times not always, and when it is so with them they are burthened with it, and complain of it as their greatest affliction in this world; their Spirits are not ease and at rest in such a condition as yours are, their Spirit is as a bone out of joint, an Arm dislocated which cannot move any way without pain.

Evidence 3. *Those to whom God giveth his Spirit have a tender sympathy with all the interest and concerns of Christ; this must needs be so, if the same Spirit which is in Christ dwelleth also in thy heart: if thou be a partaker of his Spirit, then what he loves, thou lovest; and what he hateth, thou hatest: this is a very plain case; even in nature it self we find that the many members of the same natural body being animated by one and the same Spirit of life: whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it: now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular, 1 Cor. 12. 26, 27. For look as Christ the head of that body is touched with a tender sense and feeling of the miseries and troubles of his people: he is persecuted, when they are persecuted, *Al 19. 4.* so they that have the Spirit of Christ in them, can not be with out a deep and tender sense of the reproach and dishonours that are done to Christ: this is as it were a sword in their bones, *Psal. 42. 3.* If his publick worship cease, the assemblies of his people scattered, it cannot but go to the hearts of all in whom the Spirit of Christ is: they will be sorrowful for the solemn assemblies: the reproach of them will be a burthen, *Zeph. 3. 18.* Those that have the Spirit of Christ do not more earnestly long after any one thing in this world, than the advancement of Christs interest by conversion and reformation in the Kingdoms of the earth, *Psal. 45. 3, 4.* Paul could rejoice that Christ was Preached, though his own afflictions were increased, *Phil. 1. 16, 18.* and John could rejoice that Christ encreased, though he himself decreased; yet therein was his joy fulfilled, *Job. 3. 29.* so certainly the concerns of Christ must, and will touch that heart which is the habitation of his Spirit. I cannot deny but even a good Baruch may be under a temptation to seek great things for himself, and be too much swallowed up in his own concerns, when God is plucking up, and breaking down, *Jer. 45. 4, 5.* But this is only the influence of a temptation: the true temper and Spirit of a believer inclines him to sorrow and mourning when things are in this sad posture. *Ezech. 9. 4. Go through the midst of the City, through the midst of Jerusalem; and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.**

O Reader, lay thine hand upon thine heart: is it thus with thee? dost thou sympathize with the affairs and concerns of Christ in the world? or carest thou not which way things go with the people of God, and Gospel of Christ; so long as thine own affairs

prosper, and all things are well with thee?

Evidence 4. *Where-ever the Spirit of God dwelleth, be doth in some degree mortifie and subdue the evils and corruptions of the soul in which he resides: this Spirit lusteth against the flesh, Gal. 5. 17. and believers through the Spirit, do mortifie the deeds of the body, Rom. 8. 13.* this is one special part of his sanctifying work. I do not say he so kills and subdues sin in believers, as that it shall never trouble or defile them any more: no, no, that freedom belongs to the perfect state in Heaven, but its dominion is taken away, though its life be prolonged for a season: it lives in believers still, but not upon the provision they willingly make to fulfil the Lust of it, *Rom. 13. ult.* The design of every true believer is co-incident with the design of the Spirit to destroy, and mortifie corruption: they long after the extirpation of it; and are daily in the use of all sanctified means, and instruments, to subdue and destroy it; the workings of their corruptions are the afflictions of their Souls, *Rom. 7. 24. O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* and there is no one thing that sweetens the thoughts of death to believers (except the light and full enjoyment of God) more than their expected deliverance from sin doth.

Evidence 5. *Where-ever the Spirit of God dwelleth in the way of sanctification, in all such he is the Spirit of prayer and supplication: Rom. 8. 26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered: Where-ever he is poured out as the Spirit of grace, he is also poured out as the Spirit of supplication: Zech. 12. 10. his praying, and his sanctifying influences are undivided.* There is a threefold assistance that the Spirit gives unto sanctified persons in prayer: he helps them before they pray, by setting an edge upon their desires, and affections: he helps them in prayer by supplying matters of request to them, teaching them what they should ask of God: he assisteth them in the manner of Prayer, supplying to them suitable affections, and helping them to be sincere in all their desires to God: 'tis he that humbles the Pride of their hearts, dissolves and breaks the hardness of their hearts: out of deadness makes them lively; out of weakness makes them strong: he assisteth the Spirits of Believers after Prayer, helping them to Faith and Patience, to believe and wait for the returns, and answers of their Prayers. O Reader, reflect upon thy Duties, consider what Spirituality, sincerity, Humility, Broken-heartedness, and Melting Affections after God are to be found in thy Duties: Is it so with thee? or dost thou shuffle over thy Duties as an interruption to thy business and pleasures? Are they an ungrateful task imposed upon thee by God, and thy own Conscience? Are there no Hungerings and Thirstings after God in thy Soul? or if there be any pleasure arising to thee out of Prayer, is it not from the ostentation of thy Gifts? if it be so, reflect sadly upon the carnal state of thy heart, these things do not speak the Spirit of Grace, and supplication to be given thee.

Evidence

✕ Evidence 6. *Where ever the Spirit of Grace inhabits, there is an heavenly spiritual frame of Atind, accompanying and evidencing the Indwelling of the Spirit, Rom. 8. 5, 6. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit: for to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace: by the Mind, understand the musings, reasonings, yea and the cares, fears, delights, and pleasures of the Soul, which follow the workings and meditations of the Mind; as these are, so are we; if these be ordinarily, and habitually taken up, and exercised about earthly things, then is the frame and state of the Man carnal, and earthly: the workings of every creature follow the being, and nature of it: If God, Christ, Heaven and the World to come engage the thoughts, and affections of the Soul, the temper of such a Soul is spiritual; and the Spirit of God dwelleth there; this is the life of the regenerate, Phil. 3. 20. Our conversation is in Heaven; and such a frame of heart is life and Peace: a serene, placid, and most comfortable life: no pleasure upon earth; no gratifications of the senses do relish, and savour as spiritual things do. Consider therefore which way they heart ordinarily works, especially in thy Solitudes, and hours of retirement: these things will be a great evidence for, or against thy Soul. David could say, How precious are thy thoughts unto me O God! How great is the sum of them! if I should count them, they are more in number than the sand; when I awake I am still with thee, Psal. 139. 17, 18. Yet it must be acknowledged for the relief of weaker Christians, that there is great odds, and variety found in this matter among the People of God: for the strength, steadiness, and constancy of a spiritual mind results from the depth and improvement of Sanctification: the more Grace, still the more evenness, spirituality, and constancy there is in the motions of the heart after God. The Minds of weak Christians are more easily entangled in earthly vanities, and more frequently diverted by inward corruptions; yet still there is a spiritual pondus, inclination and bent of their Hearts towards God, and the vanity and corruption which hinders their communion with him, is their greatest grief and burthen under which they groan in this World.*

✕ Evidence 7. *Those to whom the Spirit of Grace is given, are led by the Spirit, Rom. 8. 14. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God: Sanctified Souls give themselves up to the government, and conduct of the Spirit; they obey his voice, beg his direction, follow his motions, deny the solicitations of the flesh and blood, in obedience to him, Gal. 1. 16. And they that do so, they are the Sons of God. 'Tis the Office of the Spirit to guide us into all truth; and 'tis our great duty to follow his guidance. Hence it is that in all enterprizes, and undertakements, the People of God do earnestly beg direction and counsel from him; Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness, (saith David) make thy way straight before my face, Psal. 8. 5. They dare not, in doubtful cases, lean to their own understandings; yea, in points of duty, and in points of sin, they dare not neglect the one, or com-*

mit the other, against the convictions and persuasions of their own Consciences; though troubles and sufferings be unavoidable in that path of duty; when they have balanced duties with sufferings in their most serious thoughts, the conclusion and result will still be, it is better to obey God than Man, the dictates of the Spirit rather than the Counsels of flesh and blood.

But before I leave this Point, I reckon myself a debtor unto weak Christians, and shall endeavour to give satisfaction to some special doubts and fears with which their Minds are ordinarily entangled in this matter; for it is a very plain case, that many Souls have the presence and Sanctification of the spirit without the evidence and comfort thereof. Divers things are found in Believers, which are as so many Fountains of Fears, and doubts to them. And,

First, I greatly doubt the Spirit of God is not in me (saith a poor Christian) because of the great darkness and ignorance which clouds my Soul; for I read, 1 Job. 2. 27, that he enlighteneth the Soul which he inhabiteth; *The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any Man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, &c.* but alas, my understanding is weak and cloudy, I have need to learn of the meekest of God's People; this only I know, that I know nothing as I ought to know.

Two things are to be respected in spiritual knowledge; viz. the quantity and the efficacy thereof: your condition doth not so much depend upon the measures of knowledge, for haply, you are under many natural disadvantages, and want those helps and means of increasing knowledge, which others plentifully enjoy: it may be you have wanted the helps of education, or have been encumbered by the necessities and cares of the World; which have allowed you but little leisure for the improvement of your Minds; but if that which you do know be turned into practice and obedience, Col. 1. 9, 10. If it have influence upon your hearts, and transform your affections into a spiritual frame and temper, 2 Cor. 3. 17, 18. If your ignorance humble you, and drive you to God daily for the increase of knowledge: one drop of such knowledge of Christ and your selves as this, is more worth than a Sea of Humane, Moral, Unsanctified, and Speculative knowledge: though you know but little, yet that little being sanctified is of great value: though you know but little, time was when ye knew nothing of Jesus Christ, or the state of your own Souls. In a word, though you know but little, that little you do know will be still encreasing, like the morning light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day, Prov. 4. 18. If thou knowest so much as brings thee to Christ, thou shalt shortly be where they knowledge shall be as the light at noon day.

I sometime find my heart raised, and my affections melted in duties, but I doubt it is in a natural way, and not from the Spirit of God: could I be assured those motions of my heart were from the Spirit of grace, and not merely a natural thing, it would be singular comfort and satisfaction to me.

First, Consider, whether this be not the

ground of your fear and doubting, because you are fain to take pains in the way of meditation, prayer, and other duties to bring your hearts to sense and favour the things of God: whereas, it may be you expect your Spiritual enlargements and comforts should flow in upon you spontaneously, and drop from heaven immediately of their own accord, without any pains or industry of yours: here may be, (and probably is) a great mistake in this matter; for the Spirit of God works in the natural method, wherein affections use to be raised, and makes use of such duties as Meditation and Prayer, as instruments to do that work by, *Ezech. 36. 37.* So *David* was forced to reason with, and chide his own heart, *Psal. 42. 5.* Thy comfort and enlargement may nevertheless be the fruit of the Spirit, because God makes it spring up, and grow upon thy Duties.

Secondly. Take this as a sure rule, whatsoever rises from self, always aims at, and terminates in self; this stream cannot be carried higher than the fountain, if therefore thy aim and end in striving for affections and enlargements in duty, be only to win applause from Men, and appear to be what in reality thou art not, this indeed is the Fruit of nature, and a very corrupt and hypocritical nature; but if thy heart be melted, or desire to be melted in the sense of the evil of sin, in order to the farther mortification of it; and under the apprehensions of the Free Grace and Mercy of God in the pardon of Sin, in order to the engaging of thy Soul more firmly to him: If these or such like be thy ends and designs, or be promoted and furthered by thine enlargements and Spiritual comforts, never reject them as the meer fruits of nature; a carnal root cannot bring forth such fruits as these.

Obj. 3. Upon the Contrary, Spiritual deadness, and indisposedness to duties, and to those especially which are more secret, Spiritual, and self-denying than others, is the ground upon which many thousand Souls who are yet truly gracious, do doubt the indwelling of the Spirit in them. O faith such a Soul, if the Spirit of God be in me, Why is it thus? Could my heart be so dead, so backward, and averse to Spiritual duties? no, no, these things would be my meat, and my drink; the delights and pleasures of my life.

Sol.

First. These things indeed are very sad, and argue thy heart to be out of frame, as the Body is when it cannot relish the most desirable Meats, or Drinks: but the question will be, how thy Soul behaves its self in such a condition as this is, whether this be easie or burthen some to be born by thee: and if thou complain under it as a burthen; then what pains thou takest to ease thy self, and get rid of it.

Qui bonum vult, & malum non vult, in studium retinet placendi deo: quoniam illius concupiscentia mala, non nunquam ex infirmitate illud committat quod deo displicet. Davenant.

Secondly. Know also, that there is a great difference betwixt Spiritual death, and Spiritual deadness: the former is the state of the Unregenerate: the latter is the disease and complaint of many thousand Regenerate Souls: if *David* had not felt it as well as thee, he would never have cried out nine times in the compass of one Psalm, *Quicken me, quicken me.* Besides,

Thirdly. Though it be often, it is not so always with thee: there are seasons wherein the Lord breaks in upon thy heart, enlarges thy affections: and lets thy Soul at liberty: to which times thou wilt do well to have an eye, in these dark and cloudy days.

But the Spirit of God is a Comforter as well as a Sanctifier: he doth not only enable Men to believe, but after they believe he also seals them, *Eph. 1. 13.* but I walk in darkness, and am a stranger to the sealing, and comforting work of the Spirit: How therefore can I imagine the Spirit of God should dwell in me, who go from day to day in the bitterness of my Soul, mourning as without the Sun?

There is a two-fold sealing, and a two-fold comfort: the Spirit sealeth both objectively in the work of Sanctification, and formally in giving clear evidence of that work: thou mayest be sealed in the first, whilst thou art not yet sealed in the second sense: if so, thy condition is safe, although it be at present uncomfortable. And as to comfort, that also is of two sorts, viz. *formal*, or *actual*: in the root, or in the fruit: *Light is sown for the righteous*, *Psal. 97. 11.* though the harvest to reap and gather in that Joy and Comfort be not yet come; and there are many other ways besides that of joy and comfort, whereby the indwelling of the Spirit may evidence it self in thy Soul: if he do not enable thee to rejoice, yet if he enable thee sincerely to mourn for sin; if he do not enlarge thy heart in Comfort, yet if he humble and purge thy heart by sorrows; if he deny thee the assurance of Faith, and yet give thee the dependence of Faith, thou hast no reason to call in question, or deny the in-dwelling of the Spirit in thee for that cause.

But the Apostle saith, *They that walk in the Spirit do not fulfil the Lusts of the flesh*, *Gal. 5. 16.* But I find my self entangled, and frequently overcome by them, therefore I doubt the Spirit of God is not in me.

'Tis possible the ground of your doubting may be your mistake of the true sense and meaning of that Scripture: it is not the Apostles meaning in that place, that Sin in Believers, doth not work, tempt, and oftentimes overcome, and captivate them: for then he would contradict himself in *Rom. 7. 23.* where he thus complains, *but I see another Law in my members warring against the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of sin which is in my members*: but two things are meant by that expression, *you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh*.

First. That the Principle of Grace will give cheque to sin in its first motions, and cause it to miscarry in the Womb like an untimely Birth, before it comes to its full Maturity: it shall never be able to gain the full consent of the will as it doth in the Unregenerate.

Secondly. If notwithstanding all the opposition Grace makes to hinder the Birth, or commission of it, it do yet prevail, and break forth into act; yet such acts of sin as they are not committed without regret, so they are followed with shame, sorrow, and true repentance: and those very surprizals, and captivities of sin at one time, are made cautions, and warnings to prevent it at another time, if it be so with thee, thou dost not fulfill the Lusts of the flesh.

And

And now, Reader, upon the whole; if upon examination of thy heart by these rules, the Lord shall help thee to discern the saving work of the Spirit upon thy Soul, and thereby thine Interest in Christ. What a happy Man or Woman art thou! What pleasure will accrue to thy Soul, from such a discovery! Look upon the frame of thine heart *absolutely* as it is in itself at present, or *comparatively* with what once it was, and others still are, and thou wilt find enough to transport and melt thy heart within thee: certainly this is the most glorious piece of Workmanship that ever God wrought in the World upon any Man, *Eph. 2. 10.* The Spirit of God is come down from Heaven, and hath hallowed thy Soul to be a Temple for himself to dwell in; as he hath said, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People, 2 Cor. 7. 16.* Moreover this gift of the Spirit is a sure pledge, and earnest of thy future Glory: time was when there was no such work upon thy Soul, and considering the frame and temper of it, the total aversion, strong opposition, and rooted enmity that was in it; it is the wonder of wonders that ever such a

work as this should be wrought upon such an heart as thine; that ever the Spirit of God, whose nature is pure, and perfect holiness, should chuse such an unclean, polluted, abominable heart, to frame an habitation for himself there to dwell in; to say of thy Soul (now his Spiritual Temple) as he once said of the material Temple at Jerusalem, *Psal. 132. 13, 14. The Lord hath chosen it, he hath desired it for his habitation; this is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it.* O what hath God done for thy Soul!

Think, Reader, and think again; Are there not many thousands in the World of more ingenuous, sweeter, and amiable dispositions than thy self, whom yet the Spirit of God passeth by, and leaveth them as Tabernacles for Satan to dwell in? such a one thou lately wast, and hadst still remained, if God had not wrought for thee, beyond all the expectation, and desires of thine own heart. O blest God that you have received not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that ye might know the things which are freely given unto you of God.

S E R M O N X X V.

2 C O R. V. 17.

Serm. 25.
Text.
Of the nature and necessity of the New Creature.

Therefore if any Man be in Christ, he is a New Creature: old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new.

YOU have seen one tryal of an interest in Christ in our last Discourse, namely, by the Donation of the Spirit: we have here another Tryal of the same matter, from one of the greatest, and most noble effects of the Spirit upon our Souls; namely, his work of renovation, or *new creation: if any man be in Christ, he is a new Creature.* The Apostles scope in the immediate context, is to dissuade Christians from a carnal, sinful partiality, in their respects to Men: not to dispense them after the manner of the World, according to the external differences, but the real internal worth and excellency that is in Men. This the Apostle presses by two Arguments; one drawn from the end of Christs death, *verse 15.* which was to take off from those selfish designs, and carnal ends by which the world is swayed. Secondly, from the *new Spirit* by which believers are acted: they that are in Christ, are to judge and measure all things by a new rule: *if any man be in Christ, he is a new Creature: old things are passed away;* q. d. we have done with that low selfish Spirit of the World which was wholly governed by Carnal interest; we are now to judge by a new rule, to be acted from a new principle, aim at a new, and more noble end; *behold all things are become new.* In these words we have three general parts to be distinctly considered. *viz.*

1. The great question to be determined, *if any man be in Christ.*

Vol. I.

2. The Rule by which it may be determined, *viz. he is a new Creature.*

3. This general rule more particularly explained, *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.*

First, We have here the great question to be determined, Whether a Man be in Christ? a question upon the determination whereof we must stand or fall for ever; by [*being in Christ*] the Apostle doth not here mean the general profession of Christianity which gives a Man the reputation of an interest in him; but by being in Christ he means an interest in him by *vital union* with his person, and real participation of his benefits; now this is the question to be determined, the matter to be tried; than which nothing can be more solemn, and important in the whole World.

Secondly, The rule by which this great question may be determined, *viz. The new Creation; if any man be in Christ he is a new Creature;* by this rule all the titles and claims made to Christ in the professing world are to be examined: [*if any man*] be he what he will, high, or low; great, or small; learned, or illiterate; young, or old; if he pretend interest in Christ; this is the standard by which he must be tried; if he be in Christ, he is a *new Creature*; and if he be not a *new Creature*, he is not in Christ; let his endowments, gifts, confidence, and reputation be what it will be: [*a new Creature*] not new *Physically*, he is the same Person he was, but a new Creature, that

H h h

is, a creature renewed by gracious principles newly infused into him from above, which sway him and guide him in another manner, and to another end than ever he acted before: and these gracious principles not being educed out of any thing which was pre-existent in Man, but infused *de novo*, from above are therefore called in this place, a new creature: this is the rule by which our claim to Christ must be determined.

3. Thirdly, This general rule is here more particularly explained, *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*: he satisfies not himself to lay down this rule *concisely*, or express it in general terms by telling us the Man in Christ must be a new Creature, but more particularly, he shews us what this new Creature is, and what the parts thereof are, *viz.*

1. Privative part, *old things are passed away.*
2. Positive part thereof, *all things are become new.*

By old things he means all those carnal principles, self ends, fleshly lusts belonging to the carnal state, or the old Man: all these are *passed away*; not simply, and perfectly, but only in part at present, and wholly in hope, and expectation hereafter. So much briefly of the privative part of the new Creature: *old things are passed away*. A word or two must be spoken of the positive part, *all things are become new*. He means not that the old faculties of the Soul are abolished, and new ones created in their room: but as our bodies may be said to be new bodies by reason of their new endowments, and qualities super-induced and bestowed upon them in their resurrection; so our Souls are now renewed by the infusion of new gracious principles into them in the work of regeneration. These two parts, *viz.* the *privative* part, the passing away of old things; and the *positive* part, the renewing of all things, do betwixt them comprize the whole nature of sanctification, which in other Scriptures is expressed by equivalent phrases: sometimes by putting off the old, and putting on the new Man, *Eph. 4. 24*. Sometimes by dying unto sin, and living unto righteousness, *Rom. 6. 11*. which is the self-same thing the Apostle here intends by the passing away of old things, and making all things new; and because this is the most excellent, glorious, and admirable work of the Spirit which is or can be wrought upon Man in this World; therefore the Apostle asserts it with an *Ecce*, a note of special remembrance and observation, *behold all things are become new*, *q. d.* behold and admire this surprising, marvellous change which God hath made upon Men: they are come out of darkness into his marvellous light, *1 Pet. 2. 9*. out of the old, as it were, into a new World, *behold all things are become new*.

Hence Note,

Doct. That God's creating of a new supernatural work of grace in the Soul of any Man, is that Man's sure and infallible evidence of a saving interest in Jesus Christ.

Notable hereunto are those words of the Apostle, *Eph. 4. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24*. But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old Man which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts: and be renewed in

the Spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new Man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness: where we have in other words of the same importance, the very self-same description of the Man that is in Christ, which the Apostle gives us in this Text. Now for the opening and stating of this point, it will be necessary that I shew you,

1. Why the regenerating work of the Spirit is called a new Creation.
2. In what respects every Soul that is in Christ is renewed or made anew Creature.
3. What are the remarkable properties, and qualities of this new Creature.
4. The necessity of this new Creation to all that are in Christ.
5. How this new Creation evidences our interest in Christ.
6. And then Apply the whole in the proper uses of it.

First, Why the regenerating work of the Spirit is called a new Creation: this must be our first enquiry: and doubtless the reason of this appellation is the *Analogy*, proportion, and similitude which is found betwixt the work of regeneration, and God's work in the first Creation: and their agreement, and proportion will be found in the following particulars.

First, The same Almighty Author who created the World, createth also this work of grace in the Soul of Man, *2 Cor. 4. 6*. *God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ*: the same powerful word which created the Natural, createth also the Spiritual light; it is equally absurd for any Man to say, I make my self to repent, or to believe, as it is to say, I made my self to exist and be.

Secondly, The first thing that God created in the natural World was light, *Gen. 1. 3*. and the first thing which God createth in the new Creation is the light of Spiritual knowledge, *Col. 3. 10*. *And have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him*.

Thirdly, Creation is out of nothing; it requires no pre-existent matter; it doth not bring one thing out of another, but something out of nothing; it gives a being to that which before had no being. So it is also in the new Creation; *1 Pet. 2. 9, 10*. *Who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy*; the work of grace is not educed out of the power, and principles of nature; but is a pure work of creation. The heathen Philosophers could neither understand, nor acknowledge the creation of the World, because that notion was repugnant to this maxime of reason, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, out of nothing, nothing can be made; thus did they *insanire cum ratione*, besoot themselves with their own reasonings; and after the same manner some great pretenders to reason among us, voting it an absurdity to affirm, that the work of grace is not virtually, and potentially contained in nature; the new Creation in the old.

Fourthly, It was the vertue, and efficacy of

Non
simplici-
ter, & per-
fecte, sed
partim re,
partim
spe. Efficus
in loc.

Minus est,
et fecisse
hominem,
sanctum.

of the Spirit of God which gave the natural World its being by Creation, *Gen. 1. 2.* the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the Waters; it hovered over the *chaos*, as the wings of a Bird do over her eggs, as the same word is rendered, *Deut. 32. 11.* cherishing as it were by incubation, that rude mass by a secret quickening influence, by which it drew all the Creatures into their several forms, and particular Natures. So it is in the new Creation: a quickening influence must come from the Spirit of God, or else the new creation can never be formed in us, *John 3. 8.* *So is every one that is born of the Spirit:* and ver. 6. *That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.*

Fifthly, The word of God was the instrument of the first creation, *Psal. 33. 6, 9.* *By the word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth; for he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast;* the word of God is also the instrument of the new Creation or work of Grace in Man, *1 Pet. 1. 23.* *Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; by the word of God which liveth, and abideth for ever.* So *James 1. 18.* *Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth: of his own will, that was the impulsive cause; with the word of truth, that is the instrumental cause, great respect and honour, love and delight is due to the word upon this account, that it is the instrument of our regeneration, or new Creation.*

Sixthly, The same power which created the World, still under-props and supports it in its being: the World owes its conservation, as well as its existence to the power of God, without which it could not subsist one moment. Just so it is with the new Creation, which entirely depends upon the preserving power which first formed it, *Jude ver. 1* *Persevered in Christ Jesus;* and *1 Pet. 1. 5.* *Who were kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation:* as in a natural way we live, move, and have our being in God, *Acts 17. 28.* so in a Spiritual way, we continue believing, repenting, loving, and delighting in God; without whose continued influence upon our Souls we could do neither.

Seventhly, In a word, God surveyed the first Creation with complacency and great delight: he beheld the works of his hands and approved them as very good, *Gen. 1. 31.* so is it also in the second creation; nothing pleases, and delights God more than the works of grace in the Souls of his People: it is not any outward privilege of Nature, or gift of Providence which commends any Man to God: *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but a new creature,* *Gal. 6. 15.* And thus you see, upon what grounds the work of regeneration in Man is styled a new Creature, which was the first thing to be opened.

Secondly, Next we must enquire in what respects every Soul that is in Christ is renewed; or made a new Creature: and here we shall find a threefold renovation of every man that is in Christ, *viz.*

1. In his state and Condition.
2. In his frame and Constitution.
3. In his practice and Conversation.

First, He is renewed in his state and condition, for he passeth from death to life, in his

Justification, *1 Job. 3. 14.* he was condemned by the Law, he is now justified freely by grace through the redemption which is in Christ: he was under the curse of the first Covenant; he is under the blessing of the new Covenant: he was as far off, but is now made nigh unto God: an alien, a stranger once, now of the household of God, *Eph. 2. 12, 13.* O blessed change from a sad, to a sweet and comfortable condition! *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,* *Rom. 8. 1.*

Secondly, Every Man in Christ is renewed in his frame, and constitution; all the faculties and affections of his Soul are renewed by regeneration; his understanding was dark, but now is light in the Lord, *Eph. 5. 8.* his conscience was dead and secure, or full of guilt and horror; but is now become tender, watchful, and full of peace, *Heb. 9. 14.* his will was rebellious, stubborn, and inflexible; but is now made obedient, and complying with the will of God, *Psal. 110. 2.* his desires did once pant, and spend themselves in the pursuit of vanities, now they are set upon God, *Isa. 26. 8.* his Love did fondly dote upon enslaving earthly objects, now it is swallowed up in the infinite excellencies of God, and Christ, *Psal. 119. 97.* his joy was once in trifles, and things of nought; now his rejoicing is in Christ Jesus, *Phil. 3. 3.* his fears once were versant about noxious creatures, now God is the object of the fear of reverence, *Act. 9. 31.* and in the object of the fear of caution, *2 Cor. 7. 11.* his hopes and expectations were only from the World present, but now, from that to come, *Heb. 6. 19.* Thus the Soul in its faculties, and affections is renewed; which being done, the members and senses of the body must needs be destituted, and employed by it in new services; no more to be the weapons of unrighteousness, but instruments of service to Jesus Christ, *Rom. 6. 19.* and thus all that are in Christ are renewed in their frame and constitution.

Thirdly, The Man in Christ is renewed in his practice and Conversation: the manner of operation always follows the nature of beings: now the regenerate not being what they were, cannot walk and act, as once they did: *Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3.* *And you hath he quickened, who were once dead in trespasses and sins; wherein ye walked according to the course of this World, &c.* They were carried away like water by the strength of the tyde, by the influence of their own corrupt natures, and the customs and examples of the World: but the cause is now altered. So in *1 Cor. 6. 11.* the Apostle shews believers their old companions in sin, and tells them *such were some of you, but ye are sanctified,* &c. *q. d.* the World is now well altered with you, thanks be to the grace of God for it. This wonderful change of practice which is so universal, and remarkable in all the regenerate, and immediately consequent to their conversion, sets the World a wondering at them: *1 Pet. 4. 4.* *Wherein they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: they think Obstupescite, in strange, the word signifies to stand at gaze, sent ut as the Hen doth which hath brooded, and ad rei inspicat ad spectaculum. B. 2. Il se étonnent tous nouveaux & comme en un autre monde.*

hatched *Partridge Eggs*, when she seeth the *Chickens* which she hath brought forth, take the wing and fly away from her : thus do the Men of the World stand amazed to see their old companions in sin, whose language once was vain, and earthly ; it may be prophane, and filthy ; now to be praying, speaking of God, Heaven, and things Spiritual ; having no more to do with them as to sin, except by way of reprehension and admonition : this amazes the World, and makes them look with a strange admiring eye upon the people of God.

3. Thirdly. In the next place let us enquire into the properties, and qualities of this new Creature, and shew you, as we are able, what they are : yet Reader, expect not here an exact and accurate account of that which is so great a mystery : for if questions may be moved about a silly fly, which may puzzle the greatest *Philosopher* to resolve them ; how much more may we conceive this great and marvellous work of God, the most mysterious, and admirable of all his works, to surmount the understandings of the most illuminated Christians ? O how little do we know of the nature, properties, and operations of this new Creature ! so far as God hath revealed it to our weak understandings, we may speak of it. And

First. The Scripture speaks of it as a thing of great difficulty to be conceived by Man ; *Joh. 3. 8. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou bearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit.* The original of winds is a question of great difficulty in *Philosophy* : we hear the voice of the wind, feel its mighty force, and behold its strange effects ; but neither know whence it comes, or whither it goes : ask a Man, Do you hear the wind blow ? yes : do you feel it blow ? yes, very sensibly : do you see the effects of it rending and overturning the trees ? yes, very plainly ; but can you describe its nature, or declare its, original ? no, that is a mystery which I do not understand ; who so, just so it is with him that is born of the Spirit ; the holy Spirit of God, whose nature and operations we understand but little of, comes from Heaven, quickens, and influences our Souls, beats down and mortifies our lusts by his almighty power ; these effects of the Spirit in us we experimentally feel, and sensibly discern ; but how the Spirit of God first entred into, and quickned our Souls, and produced this new creature in them, we understand little more of it, than how the bones do grow in the Womb of her that is with Child, *Eccles. 11. 5.* Therefore is the life of the new creature called a hidden life, *Col. 3. 3.* the nature of that life is not only hidden totally from all carnal Men, but in a very great measure it is an hidden and unknown Life unto Spiritual Men, though themselves be the subjects of it.

Secondly. But though this life of the New Creature be a great Mystery and Secret in some respects, yet so far as it is known, and appears unto us, the New Creature is the most beautiful, and lovely Creature that ever God made : for the beauty of the Lord himself is upon it : *the new Man is created after God,* *Eph. 4. 24.* as the Picture is drawn after the

Man : it is a draught of God himself, delineated by the Spirit, that admirable *Artist*, upon the Soul of Man : Holiness is the beauty and glory of God : and in holiness the New Creature is created after God's own Image, *Col. 3. 10.* the Regenerate Soul hereby becomes holy, *1 Joh. 3. 3.* not essentially holy as God is, nor yet efficiently holy : for the Regenerate Soul can neither make it self, nor others holy ; but the Life of the New Creature may be said to resemble the Life of God in this, that as God lives to himself, so the New Creature wholly lives to God : as God loves holiness, and hates the contrary, so doth the New Creature : 'tis in these things formed after the image of God that created it : when God creates this creature in the Soul of Man, we are said then to be *partakers of the Divine Nature*, *2 Pet. 1. 4.* so that there can be nothing communicated unto Men, which beautifies and adorns their Souls as this new creation doth : Men do not resemble God as they are noble, and as they are rich, but as they are holy : no gift, no endowment of nature imbellishes the Soul, as this New Creature doth : an awful Majesty sits upon the brow of the New Creature, commanding the greatest, and worst of Men to do homage to it, *Mark 6. 20.* yea, such is the beauty of the New Creature, that Christ, its Author, is also its Admirer, *Cant. 4. 9. Thou hast ravished mine heart with one of thine eyes.*

Thirdly. This New Creature is created in Man upon the highest design that ever any work of God was wrought : the end of its creation and infusion is high and noble : Salvation to the Soul in which it is wrought ; this is both the *finis operis*, and the *finis operantis* : it is the design both of the work and of the workman that wrought it. When we receive the end of our Faith, we receive the salvation of our Souls. Salvation is the end of Faith, as death is the end of Sin, so life eternal is the end of Grace. The New Creature doth, by the instant and steady direction of its own nature, take its course as directly to God, and to Heaven, the place of his full enjoyment, as the Rivers do to the Ocean ; it declares it self to be made for God, by its restless workings after him. And as salvation is the end of the New Creature, so it is the express design and end of him that created it, *2 Cor. 5. 5. Now he that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God ;* by this workmanship of his upon our Souls he is now polishing, preparing, and making them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light, *Col. 1. 12.*

Fourthly. The New Creation is the most necessary work that ever God wrought upon the Soul of Man ; the eternal well-being of his Soul depends upon it ; and without it no Man shall see God, *Heb. 12. 14.* and *Joh. 1. 3, 5. Except ye be regenerate, and born again, ye cannot see the Kingdom of God ;* Can ye be saved without Christ ? you know you cannot : Can you have interest in Christ without the New Creature ? my Text expressly tells you it can never be ; *for if any man be in Christ, he is new creature.* O Reader, whatever slight thoughts of this matter, and with what a careless and unconcerned eye soever thou readest these lines ; yet know, thou must either be a New Creature, or a miserable and damn'd creature for

for ever. If civility without the New Creature could save thee, Why are not the *moral Heathens* saved also? if strictness of Life, without the New Creature, could save thee, Why did it not save the *Scribes and Pharisees* also? if an high profession of Religion, without the New Creature, can save thee, Why did it not save *Judas, Hymenæus, and Philetus* also? Nothing is more evident than this, that no repentance, obedience, self-denial, prayers, tears, reformations, or ordinances, without the New Creature, avail any thing to the Salvation of thy Soul; the very Blood of Christ himself without the New Creature, never did, and never will save any Man. Oh how necessary a work is the New Creature? Circumcision avails nothing, and Uncircumcision nothing, but a New Creature.

Fifthly, The new Creature is a marvellous and wonderful creature: there are many wonders in the first Creation; the Works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein, *Psal. 111.* 2. but there are no wonders in nature, like those in grace. Is it not the greatest wonder that ever was seen in the World (except the Incarnation of the Son of God) to see the nature, and temper of Man, so altered and changed as it is by Grace: to see *Lawless Carnalists*, and *Idolatrous Ephesians* become mortified and Heavenly Christians; to see a fierce, and cruel Persecutor, become a glorious Confessor, and sufferer for Christ, *Gal. 1. 23.* to see the carnal mind of Man, which was lately fully set in a strong bent to the World, to be wholly taken off from its lusts, and set upon things that are Spiritual and Heavenly: certainly it was not a greater Miracle to see dead *Lazarus* come out of his Sepulchre, that it is to see the Dead and Carnal Mind coming out of its Lusts, to embrace Jesus Christ. It was not a greater wonder to see the dead dry bones in the Vally to move, and come together, than it is to see a dead Soul moving after God, and moving to Christ in the way of Faith.

Sixthly, The new Creature is an immortal Creature, a creature that shall never see death, *John 4. 14.* it is in the Soul of Man a Well of Water, springing up unto Eternal Life. I will not adventure to say, it is immortal in its own nature, for it is but a creature, as my Text calls it; and we know that essential interminability is the incommunicable property of God: The New Creature hath both a beginning, and succession, and therefore might also have an end, as to any thing in it self, or its own nature: experience also shews us, that it is capable both of increasing and decreasing; and may be brought nigh unto death, *Rev. 3. 2.* the works of the Spirit in Believers may be ready to die; but though its perpetuity flow not out of its own nature, it flows out of God's Covenant, and Promises, which make it an immortal Creature: When all other excellencies in Man go away, as at Death they will, *Job 4. 21.* this excellency only remains: our Gifts may leave us, our Friends may leave us, our Estates leave us, but our Graces will never leave us: they ascend up with the Soul (in which they inhere) into Glory, when the Stroke of Death separates it from the Body.

Seventhly, The New Creature is an heavenly creature: 'tis not born of flesh, nor of Blood, or of the will of Man, but of God, *Joh. 1. 13.* its descent and original is heavenly, it is Spirit born of Spirit, *Joh. 3. 6.* its center is Heaven, and thither are all its tendencies, *Psal. 63. 8.* its proper food on which it lives are heavenly things, *Psal. 4. 6, 7.* It cannot feed as other creatures do upon earthly things: the object of all its delights and loves is in Heaven, *Psal. 73. 26.* Whom have I in heaven but thee? The hopes and expectations of the New Creature are all from Heaven: it looks for little in this World, but waits for the coming of the Lord. The life of the New Creature upon earth is a life of patient waiting for Christ: his desires and longings are after Heaven, *Phil. 1. 23.* The flesh indeed lingers and would delay, but the New Creature hastens and would fain be gone, *2 Cor. 5. 2.* It is not at home while it is here; it came from Heaven, and cannot be quiet, nor suffer the Soul in which it dwells to be so, until it comes thither again.

Eighthly, The New Creature is an active and laborious Creature: no sooner it is born, but it is acting in the Soul, *Acts 9. 6.* behold he prayeth! Activity is its very nature, *Gal. 5. 25.* If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit. Nor is it to be admired, that it should be always active and stirring in the Soul, seeing activity, in obedience, was the very end for which it was created, For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, *Eph. 2. 10.* and he that is acted in the duties of Religion, by this Principle of the New Creature, or Nature, will (so far as that Principle acts him) delight to do the Will of God; rejoice in the way of his Commandments; and find the sweetest pleasure in the paths of duty.

Ninthly, The new creature is a thriving creature, growing from strength to strength, *1 Pet. 2. 2.* and changing the Soul in which it is subjected from glory unto glory, *2 Cor. 3. 18.* The vigorous tendencies and constant strivings of this New Creature is to attain its just perfection and maturity, *Phil. 3. 11.* It can endure no flints and limits to its desires short of Perfection: every degree of strength it attains, doth but whet and sharpen his desires after higher degrees: upon this account it greatly delights in the Ordinances of God, Duties of Religion and Society of the Saints; as they are helps and improvements to it, in order to its great design.

Tenthly, The new Creature is a creature of *Gratia* wonderful preservations: there are many wonders of Divine Providences in the preservation of our natural lives, but none like those where- by the life of the new Creature is preserved in our Souls: there are critical times of temptation and desertion, in which it is ready to die, *Rev. 3. 2.* The degrees of its strength and liveliness are sometimes sadly abated, and its sweet and comfortable workings intermitted, *Rev. 2. 4.* the evidences by which its being in us was wont to be discovered, may be, and often are darkened, *2 Pet. 1. 9.* And the Soul in which it is may draw very sad conclusions *entur, non excurtur; defuit fructus, later fructus; effectus justificationis suspenditur, at status justificationis dissolvitur.* Sauting, Brit.

about the issue and event; concluding its life not only to be hazarded, but quite extinguished, *Psal.* 51. 10, 11, 12. but though it be ready to die, God wonderfully preserves it from death: it hath as well its reviving as its fainting seasons. And thus you see what are the lovely and eximious properties of the new creature. In the next place,

Fourthly, We will demonstrate the necessity of this new Creation to all that are in Christ, and by him expect to attain Salvation: and the necessity of the new Creature will appear divers ways.

4- First, From the positive and express will of God revealed in Scripture touching this matter; search the Scriptures and you shall find God hath laid the whole stress and weight of your eternal happiness by Jesus Christ upon this work of the Spirit in your Souls. So our Saviour tells *Nicodemus*, *John* 3. 5. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God: agreeable whereunto are those words of the Apostle, Heb.* 12. 14. *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.* And whereas some may think that their birth-right privileges, enjoyment of Ordinances and profession of Religion may commend them to God's acceptance without this new Creation; he shews them how fond and ungrounded all such hopes are, *Gal.* 6. 15. *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature:* Christ and Heaven are the gifts of God, and he is at liberty to bestow them upon what terms and conditions he pleaseth; and this is the way, the only way and stated method in which he will bring Men by Christ unto Glory: Men may raise out the impressions of these things from their own hearts, but they can never alter the settled course and method of Salvation: either we must be new Creatures, as the Precepts of the Word command us, or lost and damned creatures, as the Threatnings of the Word plainly tell us.

Secondly, This new Creation is the inchoative part of that great Salvation which we expect through Christ, and therefore without this all hopes and expectations of Salvation must vanish: Salvation and Renovation are inseparably connected. Our Glory in Heaven, if we rightly understand its nature, consisteth in two things; namely, our assimilation to God, and our fruition of God: and both these take their beginning and rise from our Renovation in this World: here we begin to be changed into his Image in some degree, *2 Cor.* 3. 18. for the new Man is created *after God*, as was opened above. In the work of Grace God is said to begin that good work which is to be finished or consummated in the day of Christ, *Phil.* 1. 6. Now nothing can be more irrational than to imagine that ever that design or work should be finished or perfected which never had a beginning.

Thirdly, So necessary is the new creation to all that expect Salvation by Christ, that without this Heaven would be no Heaven, and the Glory thereof no Glory to us, by reason of the unsuitableness and aversion of our carnal Minds thereunto; *the carnal mind is enmity against God*, *Rom.* 8. 7. and enmity is exclusive of all complacency and delight:

There is a necessity of a suitable and agreeable frame of heart to God, in order to that complacential rest of our Souls in him: and this agreeable temper is wrought by our new Creation, *2 Cor.* 5. 5. *He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God:* Renovation you see is the working or moulding of a Man's Spirit into an agreeable temper; or as it is in *Col.* 1. 12. the making of us meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light.

From all which it follows, that seeing there can be no complacency or delight in God without suitableness and conformity to him, as is plain from *1 Job.* 3. 2. as well as from the reason and nature of the thing it self; either God must become like us suitable to our sinful, corrupt and vain hearts, which were but a rude blasphemy once to imagine; or else we must be made agreeable and suitable to God, which is the very thing I am now proving the necessity of.

Fourthly, There is an absolute necessity of the new Creature to all that expect interest in Christ and the glory to come; since all the characters, marks and signs of such an interest are constantly taken from the new Creature wrought in us. Look over all the marks and signs of interest in Christ or salvation by him which are dispersed through the Scriptures, and you shall still find purity of heart, *Math.* 5. 8. Holiness both in Principle and Practice, *Heb.* 12. 14. Mortification of Sin, *Rom.* 8. 13. longing for Christ's appearance, *2 Tim.* 4. 8. with multitudes more of the same nature, to be constantly made the marks and signs of our Salvation by Christ. So that either we must have a new bible, or a new Heart: for if these Scriptures be the true and faithful words of God, no unrenewed Creature can see his face; which was the Fourth thing to be open'd.

Fifthly. The last thing to be open'd is, how the new Creation is an infallible Proof and Evidence of the Souls interest in Christ; and this will appear diverse ways.

5- First, Where all the saving Graces of the Spirit are, there interest in Christ must needs be certain; and where the new Creature is, there all the saving Graces of the Spirit are: For what is the new Creature, but the frame or System of all special saving Graces? It is not this or that particular Grace, as Faith, or Hope, or Love to God, which constitutes the new Creature, for these are but as so many particular limbs, or branches of it: but the New Creature is comprehensive of all the Graces of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. *The fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, &c.* any one of the saving special Graces of the Spirit gives proof of our interest in Christ: How much more then the New Creature, which is the complex frame or System of all the Graces together.

Secondly, To conclude; Where all the causes of an interest in Christ are found, and all the effects and fruits of an interest in Christ do appear; there undoubtedly a real interest in Christ is found: but where ever you find a new Creature, you find all the causes and all the effects of an interest in Christ; for there you shall find,

First,

First, The *impulsive cause*, viz. The electing Love of God, from which the new Creature is inseparable, 1 Pet. i. 2. with the new Creature also the *meritorious, efficient and final causes of Interest in Christ, and Union with him are ever found*, Eph. 2. 10. Eph. i. 4, 5, 6.

Secondly, All the Effects and Fruits of interest in Christ, are found in the new Creature; there are all the Fruits of Obedience, for we are created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, Eph. 2. 10. Rom. 7. 4. there is true spiritual opposition to Sin, 1 Joh. 5. 18. *He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not: There is love to*

the People of God, 1 Joh. 4. 7. *Every one that loveth his born of God.* There is a conscientious respect to the Duties of both Tables; for the New Creature is created after God in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. 4. 24. there is performance in the ways of God to the very end, and victory over all Temptations; for whosoever is born of God overcometh the World, 1 Joh. 5. 4. It were easie to run over all other particular Fruits of our Union with Christ, and shew you every one of them in the New Creature. And thus much of the Doctrinal Part of this Point.

Serm. 26.

SERMON XXVI.

2 COR. V. 17.

Text. *Therefore if any Man be in Christ, he is a New Creature: Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

Doct. After the explication of the Sense of this Scripture we observed,

Doct. That God's creating of a new supernatural work of Grace in the Soul of any Man, is that Man's sure and infallible evidence of a saving Interest in Jesus Christ.

You have heard why the regenerating work of the Spirit is called a new Creation; in what respect every Soul in Christ is renewed; what the eximious properties of this New Creature are; the indispensibleness, and necessity thereof hath been also proved: And how it evidences our interest in Christ, was cleared in the Doctrinal Part, which we now come to improve in the several Uses serving for our

1. Information.
2. Conviction.
3. Examination.
4. Exhortation.
5. Consolation.

Use 1.

Is the new Creature the sure and infallible Evidence of our saving interest in Christ? From hence then we are informed.

Infer. 1.

Inference 1.

How miserable and deplorable an estate all unrenewed Souls are in: who can lay no claim to Christ, during that state, and therefore are under an impossibility of Salvation. O Reader, if this be the state of thy Soul, better had it been for thee not to have been God's natural workmanhip as a *Man*, except thou be his spiritual workmanhip as a *new Man*. I know the *Schoolmen* determine otherwise, and say that damnation is rather to be chosen than annihilation: A miserable Being is better than no Being: And it is very true, with respect to the Glory of God, whose Justice shall triumph for ever in the damnation of the unregenerate; but with respect to us, 'tis much better never to have been his Creatures in the way of *Generation*, than not to be his new Creatures in the way

of *Regeneration*. So Christ speaks of Judas, that Son of Perdition, Mark 14. 21. *Good had it been for that Man if he had never been born.* For what is a Being without the comfort of it? What is Life without the Joy and Pleasure of Life? A damned Being is a Being without comfort, no glimpse of Light shines into that Darkness; they shall indeed see and understand the felicity, light, and joy of the Saints in Glory; but not partake in the least measure of the comfort, Luke 13. 28. *They shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of God, but they themselves shall not.* Such a sight is so far from giving any comfort, that it will be the aggravation and increase of Torment. 'Tis better to have no Being at all, than to have a Being only to capitate a Man for misery; to desire Death while Death flies from him, Rev. 4. 6. The Opinion of the *Schoolmen* will never pass for sound Doctrine among the damned: Think on it, Reader, and lay it to thine Heart, better thou hadst died from the Womb, better the Knees had prevented thee, and the Breasts which thou hast sucked, than that thou shouldst live and die a Stranger to the New Birth, or that thy Mother should bring thee forth only to encrease and fill up the number of the damned.

Inference 2.

Infer. 2.

And on the contrary we may hence learn, what cause regenerate Souls have to bless God for the day wherein they were born. O what a privileged state doth the New Birth bring Men into! 'Tis possible, for the present, they understand it not; for many Believers are like a great Heir lying in the Cradle, that knows not to what an Estate and Honour he is born: Nevertheless on the same day, wherein we become new Creatures by regeneration, we have a firm Title, and solid claim to all the Privileges of the Sons of God, Job. 1. 12, 13. God becomes our Father by a treble Title, not only the Father of our *Beings* by Nature, which was all the relation we had to him before, but our Father by *Adoption* and by *Regeneration*: Which is a much sweeter and more

com-

comfortable relation. In that day the Image of God is restored, *Eph. 4. 24.* this is both the health and beauty of the Soul. In that day we are begotten again to a lively hope, *1 Pet. 1. 3.* A hope more worth than ten thousand Worlds, in the troubles of Life, and in the straits of Death; this is a Creature which lives for ever, and will make thy Life happy for ever. Some have kept their Birth-day as a Festival, a day of rejoicing, but none have more cause to rejoice that ever they were born, than those that are new born.

Infer. 3.

Inference 3.

Learn from hence that the work of Grace is wholly supernatural; 'tis a Creation, and Creation-work is above the power of the Creature: No Power, but that which gave Being to the World, can give a Being to the New Creature: Almighty Power goes forth to give Being to the New Creature: This Creature is not born of Flesh or of Blood, nor of the Will of Man, but of God, *Job. 1. 13.* The Nature of this New Creature speaks its Original to be above the Power of Nature; the very notion of a New Creation spoils the proud Boasts of the great Asserters of the power and ability of the Will of Man. When God therefore puts the Question, who maketh thee to differ? And what hast thou that thou hast not received? Let thy Soul, Reader, answer it with all humility and thankfulness; 'tis thou, Lord, thou only, that madest me to differ from another, and what I have received. I have received from thy Free Grace.

Infer. 4.

Inference 4.

If the work of Grace be a New Creation, let not the Parents and Friends of the unregenerate utterly despair of the conversion of their Relations, howsoever their present discouragements are; if it had been possible for a Man to have seen the rude and indigested Chaos before the Spirit of God moved upon it, would he not have said, Can such a beautiful order of Beings, such a pleasant variety of Creatures spring out of this dark lump? Surely it would have been very hard for a Man to have imagined it. It may be you see no dispositions or hopeful inclinations in your Friends towards God and spiritual things; nay, possibly they are totally opposite and filled with enmity against them; they deride and jeer all serious piety, wherever they behold it; this indeed is very sad; but yet remember the work of Grace is Creation-work; though there be no disposition at all in their Wills, no tenderness in their Consciences, no light or knowledge in their Minds; yet God that commanded the light to shine out of darkness, can shine into their Hearts; to give them the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ; he can say to the dry Bones, live; to the proud and stubborn Heart, come down, and yield thy self to the Will of God; and if he command, the work is done. God can make thee yet to rejoice over thy most uncomfortable Relations, to say with the Father of the Prodigal, *Luke 15. 24.* *This my Son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found; and they began to be merry;* difficulties are for Men, but not for God; he works in conversion by a Power which is able to subdue all things unto it self.

Inference 5.

Infer. 5.

If none but New Creatures be in Christ, how small a remnant among Men belong to Christ in this World! Among the multitude of rational Creatures inhabiting this World, how few, how very few are New Creatures? 'Tis the observation of the learned Mr. Brierwood, that if the World be divided into thirty parts, nineteen parts are heathenish Idolaters; six parts Mahometans, and only five out of thirty, which may be in a large sense called Christians; of which the far greater part is overspread with Popish Darknes; separate from the remainder, the multitudes of prophane, meerly civil and hypocritical Professors of Religion; and how few will remain for Jesus Christ in this World? Look over the Cities, Towns, and Parishes in this populous Kingdom; and how few shall you find that speak the Language, or do the works of New Creatures? How few have ever had any awakening convictions on them? And how many of those that have been convinced have miscarried and never come to the New Birth? The more cause have they whom God hath indeed regenerated, to admire the riches of God's distinguishing Mercy to them.

Inference 6.

Infer. 6.

If the change by Grace be a new Creation, how universal and marvellous a change doth regeneration make upon men! The new Creation speaks a marvellous and universal alteration both upon the state and tempers of Men; they come out of darkness, gross, hellish darkness, into light, a marvellous and heavenly light, *1 Pet. 2. 9. Eph. 5. 8.* their condition, disposition and conversation (as you have heard) is all new; and yet this marvellous change, as great and universal as it is, is not alike evident and clearly discernible in all New Creatures: And the Reasons are,

First, Because the work of Grace is wrought in diverse methods and manners in the People of God. Some are changed from a state of notorious prophaneness unto serious Godliness; there the change is conspicuous and very evident; all the neighbourhood rings of it: But in others it is more insensibly distilled in their tender years, by the Blessing of God upon religious Education, and there it is more in discernible.

Secondly, Though a great change be wrought, yet much natural corruption still remains for their humiliation and daily exercise; and this is a ground of fear and doubtings: They see not how such corruptions are consistent with the New Creature.

Thirdly, In some the New Creature shews it self mostly in the affectionate part, in desires and breathings after God; and but little in the clearness of their understandings, and strength of their judgments; for want of which they are entangled, and kept in darkness most of their days.

Fourthly, Some Christians are more tried and exercised by temptations from Satan than others are, and these Clouds darken the work of Grace in them.

Fifthly, There is great difference and variety found in the natural tempers and constitutions of the regenerate. Some are of a more melancholy, fearful, and suspicious temper,

per, than others are, and are therefore much longer held under doubtings, and trouble of Spirit. Nevertheless, what differences soever these things make, the change made by Grace is a marvellous change.

Infer. 7.

Inference 7.

Lastly, *How incongruous are carnal ways and courses to the Spirit of Christians? who being New Creatures can never delight or find pleasure in their former sinful Companions and Practices?* Alas, those things are now most unsuitable, loathsome, and detestable, how pleasant soever they once were; that which they counted their Liberty, would now be reckoned their greatest Bondage; that which was their Glory is now their Shame, Rom. 6. 21. *What fruit had ye then in those things wherof ye are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death;* they need not be pressed by others, but will freely confess of themselves what Fools and Madmen they once were; none can censure their former conversation more severely than themselves do, 1 Tim 1. 13, 14.

Use 2.

2. Use for Conviction.

If none be in Christ but New Creatures, and the new Creation make such a change as hath been described, This may convince us, how many of us deceive our selves, and run into dangerous and fatal mistakes in the greatest concernment we have in this World. But before I fall into this use, I desire none may make a perverse and ill use of it; let not the wicked conclude from hence, that there is no such thing as true Religion in the World, or that all who do profess it are but a pack of Hypocrites; neither let the godly injure themselves by that which is designed for their benefit; let none conclude, that seeing there are so many mistakes committed about this New Creature, that therefore assurance must needs be impossible, as the *Papists* affirm it to be. The proper use that should be made of this Doctrine is, to undeceive false Pretenders, and to awaken all to a more deep and thorough search of their own conditions; which being precationed, let all Men be convinced of the following Truths.

1.

First, That the change made by civility upon such as were lewd and prophane, is in its whole kind and nature a different thing from the New Creature; the power and efficacy of moral Vertue is one thing, the influence of the regenerating Spirit is quite another thing; however some have studied to confound them. The Heathens excelled in moral and *homly* Virtues. *Plato, Aristides, Seneca*, and multitudes more have outvied many professed Christians in Justice, Temperance, Patience, &c. yet were perfect Strangers to the new Creation. A Man may be very strict and temperate, free from the gross pollutions of the World; and yet a perfect Stranger to Regeneration all the while, *Job. 3. 10.*

2.

Secondly, That many strong convictions and troubles for Sin may be found where the New Creature is never formed. Conviction indeed is an antecedent unto, and preparative for the new Creature, as the Blossoms of the Tree are to the Fruit that follows them; but as Fruit doth not always follow, where those Blossoms and Flowers appear; so neither doth the new Creature follow all convictions and

troubles for Sin. Conviction is a common work of the Spirit, both upon the Elect and Reprobates; but the new Creature is formed only in God's Elect. Convictions may be blasted, and vanish away, and the Man that was under troubles for Sin, may return again with the Dog to his Vomit, and the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the Mire, 2 Pet. 2. 22. but the new Creature never perishes, nor can consist with such a return unto Sin.

Thirdly, That excellent Gifts and Abilities fitting Men for Service in the Church of God, may be where the new Creature is not, for these are promiscuously dispensed by the Spirit, both to the regenerate, and unregenerate, *Matth. 7. 22. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name? Gifts are attainable by Study, Prayer and Preaching are reduced to an art; but Regeneration is wholly supernatural. Sin in dominion is consistent with excellent Gifts, but wholly incompatible with the new Creature. In a word, these things are so different in Nature from the new Creature, that they oftentimes prove the greatest bars and obstacles in the World to the Regenerating-work of the Spirit. Let no Man therefore trust to things, whereby multitudes deceive, and destroy their own Souls. Reader, it may cost thee many an aking head to obtain Gifts, but thou wilt find an aking heart for Sin, if ever God maketh thee a new Creature.*

Fourthly, Be convinced that multitudes of Religious Duties may be performed by Men, in whom the new Creature was never formed. Though all new Creatures perform the Duties of Religion, yet all that perform the Duties of Religion are not new Creatures: Regeneration is not the only root from which the Duties of Religion spring, *Ilsa. 58. 2. Tet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a Nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God, they ask of me the ordinances of Justice, they take delight in approaching to God. These are but weak and slippery Foundations for Men to build their Confidence and Hopes upon.*

3. Use for Examination.

Use 3.

Next therefore, let me perswade every Man to try the state of his own Heart in this matter, and closely consider, and weigh this great question, Am I really and indeed a new Creature, or am I an old Creature still, in the new Creatures dress and habit? Some light may be given for the discovery hereof from the considerations of the

1. Antecedents
2. Concomitants
3. Consequents

} of the New Creation.

First, Weigh and consider well the Antecedents of the new Creature; have those things past upon your Souls which ordinarily make way for the new Creature in whomsoever the Lord forms it?

First, Hath the Lord opened the Eyes of your understanding in the knowledge of Sin, and of Christ? Hath he shewed you both your Disease and Remedy, by a new Light shining from Heaven into your Souls? Thus the Lord doth where-ever he forms the new Creature, *Acts 26. 18.*

Vol. 1.

I i i

Secondly,

Secondly, Hath he brought home the word with mighty power and efficacy upon your Hearts, to convince and humble them? This is the method in which the new Creature is produced, *Rom. 7. 9. 1 Thes. 1. 5.*

Thirdly, Have these convictions overturned your vain confidences, and brought you to a great pinch, and inward distress of Soul, making you to cry *what shall we do to be saved?* These are the ways of the Spirit in the formation of the new Creature, *Acts 16. 29. Acts 2. 37.* If no such antecedent works of the Spirit have passed upon your Hearts, you have no ground for your confidence, that the new Creature is formed in you.

Secondly, Consider the concomitant frames and workings of Spirit, which ordinarily attend the production of the new Creature, and judge impartially betwixt God and your own Souls, whether they have been the very frames and workings of your Hearts.

First, Have your vain Spirits been composed to the greatest seriousness, and most solemn consideration of things Eternal, as the Hearts of all those are whom God Regenerates? When the Lord is about this great Work upon the Soul of Man, whatever vanity, levity, and sinful jollity was there before, it is banished from the Heart at this time; for now Heaven and Hell, Life and Death, are before a Man's Eyes, and these are the most awful and solemn things that ever our thoughts conversed with in this World: Now a Man of the most airy and pleasant constitution, when brought to the sight and sense of those things, saith of *Laughter it is Mad, and of Mirth, What doth it?* *Eccles. 2. 2.*

Secondly, A lowly, meek, and humble frame of Heart, accompanies the new Creation; the Soul is weary and heavy laden, *Matth. 11. 28.* Convictions of Sin hath plucked down the Pride and Loftiness of the Spirit of Man, emptied him of his vain Conceits; those that were of lofty, proud, and blustering Humours before, are meekened, and brought down to the very dust now: It is with them (to speak allusively) as it was with *Jerusalem*, that lofty City, *Isa. 29. 1, 4. Wo to Ariel, to Ariel, the City where David dwelt; thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust.* *Ariel* signifies the *Lion of God*, so *Jerusalem* in her Prosperity was, other Cities trembled at her Voice; but when God brought her down by humbling Judgments, then she whispered out of the dust: So it is in this case.

Thirdly, A longing thirsting frame of Spirit accompanies the new Creation; the desires of the Soul are ardent after Christ; never did the *birdling* long for the shadow, as the weary Soul doth for Christ, and rest in him; if no such frames have accompanied that which you take for your new Birth, you have the greatest reason in the World to suspect your selves under a cheat.

Thirdly, Weigh well the effects and consequences of the new Creature, and consider, whether such Fruits as these are found in your Hearts and Lives.

First, Whether the new Creature is formed, there a Man's course and conversation is

changed, *Eph. 4. 22. That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old Man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful Lusts, and be renewed in the Spirit of your Mind:* The new Creature cannot but blush and be ashamed of the old Creatures conversation, *Rom. 6. 21.*

Secondly, The new Creature continually opposes, and conflicts with the motions of Sin in the Heart, *Gal. 5. 17. The Spirit lusteth against the Flesh:* Grace can no more incorporate with Sin, than Oyl with Water; contraries cannot consist in the same subject longer than they are fighting with each other; if there be no conflict with Sin in thy Soul; or if that conflict be only betwixt the Conscience and Affections, *Light* in the one struggling with *Lust* in the other; thou wantest that Fruit which should evidence thee to be a new Creature.

Thirdly, The Mind and Affections of the new Creature are set upon heavenly and spiritual things, *Col. 3. 1, 2. Ephes. 4. 23. Rom. 8. 5.* If therefore thy Heart and Affections be habitually, earthly, and wholly intent upon things below, driving eagerly after the World, as the great business and end of thy Life: Deceive not thy self, this is not the Fruit of the new Creature, nor consistent with it.

Fourthly, The New Creature is a Praying Creature, living by its daily Communion with God, which is its livelihood and subsistence, *Zech. 12. 10. Acts 9. 11.* If therefore thou be a Prayerless Soul, or if in all thy Prayers, thou art a Stranger to Communion with God; if there be no brokenness of Heart for Sin in thy Confessions, no melting affections for Christ and holiness in thy supplications; surely *Satan* doth but baffle and delude thy over-credulous Soul, in perswading thee that thou art a new Creature.

Fifthly, The new Creature is restless after falls into Sin, until it have recovered Peace and Pardon, it cannot endure it self in a state of desilement and pollution, *Psal. 51. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.* It is with the Conscience of a new Creature under Sin, as it is with the Eye when any thing offends it, it cannot leave twinkling and watering, till it have wept it out; and in the very same restless state it is under the hiding of God's Face, and Divine withdrawals, *Cant. 5. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.* If therefore thou canst sin, and lie again, without such a burdensome sense of Sin, or restlessness, or solicitude how to recover Purity, and Peace, with the light of God's Countenance shining as in days past upon thy Soul; delude not thy self, thou hast not the signs of a new Creature in thee.

4. Use of Exhortation.

If the new Creation be a found evidence of our interest in Christ, then hence let me perswade all that are in Christ to evidence themselves to be so, by walking as it becomes new Creatures.

The new Creature is *born from above*, all its tendencies are Heaven-ward; accordingly, set your affections on things that are above, and let your conversation be in Heaven: If you live earthly and sensual Lives, as others do; you must cross your new Nature therein; And

Use 4

And can those Acts be pleasant unto you which are done with so much regret? Wherein you must put a force upon your own Spirits, and offer a kind of violence to your own Hearts: Earthly delights and sorrows are suitable enough to the unregenerate and sensual Men of the World; but exceedingly contrary unto that Spirit by which you are renovated. If ever you will act becoming the Principles and Nature of new Creatures, then seek earthly things with submission, enjoy them with fear and caution, resign them with cheerfulness and readiness; and thus let your moderation be known unto all Men, Phil. 4. 5. Let your Hearts meditate, and your Tongues discourse about heavenly things, be exceeding tender of sin, strict and punctual in every duty; and hereby convince the World that you are Men and Women of another Spirit.

Use 5. 5. Use for Consolation.

Let every new Creature be cheerful and thankful: If God have renewed your Natures, and thus altered the frame and temper of your Hearts; he hath bestowed the richest Mercy upon you that Heaven or Earth affords: This is a work of greatest rarity, a new Creature may be called. One among a Thousand: 'Tis also an everlasting work, never to be destroyed, as all other natural works of God (how excellent soever) must be, 'tis a work carried on by

Almighty Power, through unspeakable difficulties, and mighty oppositions, Ephes. 1. 12. The exceeding greatness of God's Power goes forth to produce it; and indeed no less is required to enlighten the blind Mind, break the rocky Heart, and bow the stubborn Will of Man; and the same Almighty Power which at first created it, is necessary to be continued every moment to preserve and continue it, 1 Pet. 1. 5. the new Creature is a Mercy which draws a train of innumerable and invaluable Mercies after it, Eph. 2. 13, 14. 1 Cor. 3. 22. when God hath given us a new Nature, then he dignifies us with a new Name, Rev. 2. 17. brings us into a new Covenant, Jer. 31. 33. begets us again to a new hope, 1 Pet. 1. 3. intitles us to a new inheritance, Job. 1. 12, 13. 'tis the new Creature, which through Christ makes our Persons and Duties acceptable with God, Gal. 6. 15. In a word, it is the wonderful work of God, of which we may say, *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our Eyes*; there are unsearchable wonders in its Generation, in its Operation, and in its Preservation. Let all therefore whom the Lord hath thus renewed, fall down at the Feet of God, in an humble admiration of the unsearchable Riches of Free Grace, and never open their Mouths to complain under any adverse or bitter Providences of God.

SERMON XXVII.

GAL. V. 24.

And they that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.

Serm. 27:
Text. Of
the Na-
ture, Prin-
ciple, and
Necessity
of Mortifi-
cation.

TWO great Tryals of our interest in Christ are finished, we now proceed to a third, namely, the mortification of sin: they that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh. The scope of the Apostle in this context, is to heal the unchristian Breaches among the Galatians, prevailing by the instigation of Satan, to the breach of brotherly love: To cure this he urges four weighty Arguments.

First, From the great Commandment, to love one another, upon which the whole Law, (i. e.) all the Duties of the Second Table do depend, ver. 14.

Secondly, He powerfully dissuades them from the consideration of the sad events of their bitter Contentions, Calumnies, and Detractions, viz. mutual ruine and destruction, ver. 15.

Thirdly, He dissuades them from the consideration of the contrariety of these practices unto the Spirit of God, by whom they all profess themselves to be governed, from ver. 17, to the 23.

Fourthly, He powerfully dissuades them from these Animosities, from the inconsistency of these or any other Lusts of the Flesh with an interest in Christ: *They that be Christ's have crucified the Flesh*, &c. q. d. you all profess yourselves to be Members of Christ, to be Followers of him; but how incongruous are

these practices to such a profession? Is this the Fruit of the Dove-like Spirit of Christ? Are these the Fruits of your Faith, and professed Mortification? Shall the Sheep of Christ snarl and fight, like rabid and furious Beasts of Prey? *Tamene animis celestibus ire*? O how repugnant are these practices with the study of Mortification, which is the great study and endeavour of all that be in Christ! *They that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts*. So much for the order of the words; the words themselves are a Proposition, wherein we have to consider both the

1. Subject.

2. Predicate.

First, The Subject of the Proposition, they that are Christ's, viz. true Christians, real Members of Christ; such as truly belong to Christ, such as have given themselves up to be governed by him, and are indeed acted by his Spirit; such, all such Persons (for the indefinite is equipollent to an universal) all such, and none but such.

Secondly, The Predicate, *they have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts*: By Flesh we are here to understand carnal Conscience, the workings and motions of corrupt Nature; and by the Affections we are to understand, not the natural, but the inordinate Affections; for Christ doth not abolish and

non se-
cus accum
duo com-
versis in-
paelia
tauri,
Frontibus
incutunt.

1.
Vere Chri-
stiani qui
ad Chri-
stum perser-
nent, qui
se ei dede-
re regem-
dos. Vol.
Synopsi:
2.

destroy, but correct and regulate the Affections of those that are in him : And by crucifying the Flesh, we are not to understand the total extinction, or perfect subduing of corrupt Nature, but only the deposing of corruption from its regency and dominion in the Soul ; its dominion is taken away, though its Life be prolonged for a Season ; but yet, as Death surely, though slowly, follows crucifixion, (the Life of crucified Persons gradually departing from them with their Blood,) so it is just so in the Mortification of Sin ; and therefore what the Apostle in this place calls crucifying, he calls in *Rom. 8. 13.* mortifying ; *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie, ^{subduere}* if ye put to death the deeds of the Body : But he chooseth in this place to call it crucifying, to shew not only the conformity there is betwixt the Death of Christ, and the Death of Sin, in respect of shame, pain, and lingering slowness ; but to denote also the principle, means and instrument of Mortification, *viz.* the Death or Cross of Jesus Christ, in the virtue whereof Believers do mortifie the corruptions of their Flesh ; the great Arguments and Persuatives to Mortification being drawn from the sufferings of Christ for Sin. In a word, he doth not say, they that believe Christ was crucified for Sin, are Christ's ; but they, and they only are his, who feel as well as profess the power and efficacy of the sufferings of Christ in the mortification, and subduing of their Lusts and sinful Affections. And so much briefly of the Parts and Sense of the Words.

The Observation followeth.

Doct. *Doct. That a saving interest in Christ may be regularly and strongly inferred and concluded from the mortification of the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.*

This point is fully confirmed by those words of the Apostle, *Rom. 6. 5, 6, 7, 8.* *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his Death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection ; knowing this, that our old Man is crucified with him, that the Body of Sin might be destroyed ; that henceforth we should not serve Sin ; for he that is dead is free from Sin : Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.*

Mark the force of the Apostle's reasoning ; if we have been planted into the likeness of his Death, *viz.* by the mortification of Sin, which resembles, or hath a likeness to the kind and manner of Christ's Death (as was noted above) then we shall be also in the likeness of his Resurrection ; and why so, but because this mortification of Sin is an undoubted evidence of the Union of such a Soul with Christ, which is the very ground work and principle of that blessed and glorious Resurrection : And therefore he saith, *verse 11.* *Reckon ye also your selves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord, &c.* reason thus with your selves, these mortifying influences of the death of Christ are unquestionable prefaces of your future Blessedness : God never taking this course with any but those who are in Christ, and are designed to be glorified with him ; the Death of your Sin is as evidential as any thing in the World can be, of your spiritual Life for the

present, and of your eternal Life with God hereafter. Mortification is the Fruit and Evidence of your Union, and that Union is the firm ground-work, and certain pledge of your Glorification ; and so you ought to reckon or reason the case with your selves, as the word *ἀποκτείνω* there signifies. Now for the stating and explicating of this part, I shall in the doctrinal point labour to open and confirm these five things.

1. What the Mortification or Crucifixion of Sin imports.
2. Why this Work of the Spirit is expressed by crucifying.
3. Why all that are in Christ must be so Crucified, or Mortified unto Sin.
4. What is the true Evangelical Principle of Mortification.
5. How the Mortification of Sin evinces our interest in Christ.

And then apply the whole.

First, What the Mortification or Crucifixion of Sin imports.

And for clearness sake, I shall speak to it both *negatively* and *positively*, shewing you what is not intended ; and what is principally aimed at by the Spirit of God in this expression.

First, The Crucifying of the Flesh doth not imply the total abolition of Sin in Believers, or the destruction of its very Being and Existence in them for the present : Sanctified Souls so put off their Corruptions with their Bodies at Death : This will be the effect of our future Glorification, not of our present Sanctification ; it doth exist in the most mortified Believer in the World, *Rom. 7. 17.* it still acteth and lusteth in the regenerate Soul, *Gal. 5. 17.* yea, notwithstanding its crucifixion in Believers, it still may, in respect of single acts, surprize and captivate them, *Psal. 65. 3. Rom. 7. 23.* This therefore is not the intention of the Spirit of God in this expression.

Secondly, nor doth the Crucifixion of Sin consist in the suppression of the external acts of Sin only ; for Sin may reign over the Souls of Men, whilst it doth not break forth into their lives in gross and open actions, *2 Pet. 2. 20. Matth. 12. 43.* *Morality in the Heathens (as Tertullian well observes) did abscondere, sed non abscondere vitia, hide them, when it could not kill them : Many a Man shews a white and fair hand, who yet hath a very foul and black heart.*

Thirdly, The Crucifixion of the Flesh doth not consist in the cessation of the external act of Sin ; for in that respect the lusts of Men may die of their own accord, even a kind of natural Death. The Members of the Body are the Weapons of unrighteousness as the Apostle calls them ; Age or Sickness may so blunt or break those Weapons, that the Soul cannot use them to such sinful purposes and services, as it was wont to do in the vigorous and healthful season of Life ; not that there is less Sin in the Heart, but because there is less strength and activity in the Body. Just as it is with an old Soldier, who hath as much skill, policy, and delight as ever in military

Neg. 1.
Mortificari carnem non est eam si a peccatis ut aut propterea non fit, aut nulla pravitas in homine desideria commoveat, quod in corpore mortis hujus non contingat, &c. Eftus in loc.

military actions; but Age and hard Services have so infeebled him, that he can no longer follow the Camp.

Fourthly, The Crucifixion of Sin doth not consist in the severe castigations of the Body, and penancing it by stripes, fasting, and tiresome Pilgrimages. This may pass for Mortification among *Papists*, but never was any lust of the Flesh destroyed by this rigour. Christians indeed are bound not to indulge and pamper the Body, which is the Instrument of Sin, nor yet must we think that the spiritual corruptions of the Soul feel those stripes which are inflicted upon the Body: See *Col* 2. 23. 'tis not the vanity of superstition, but the power of true Religion which crucifies and destroys corruption; 'tis Faith in Christ's Blood, not the spilling of our own Blood, which gives Sin the Mortal wound.

Post. 2. Secondly, But if you enquire, what then is implied in the mortification or crucifixion of Sin, and wherein it doth consist? I answer,

First, It necessarily implies the Soul's implantation into Christ, and union with him; without which it is impossible that any one corruption should be mortified, they that are [*Christ's*] have crucified the Flesh: The attempts and endeavours of all others are vain and ineffectual: *When we were in the Flesh* (saith the Apostle) *the motions of sin which were by the Law did work in our Members to bring forth fruit unto death*, *Rom.* 5. 7.

Sin was then in its full dominion,

no abstinence, rigour, or outward severity; no purposes; promises or solemn vows could mortify or destroy it; there must be an implantation into Christ, before there can be any effectual crucifixion of Sin: What Believer almost hath not in the days of his first convictions, tried all external methods and means of mortifying Sin, and found it in experience to be to as little purpose as the binding of *Sampson* with green Withs or Cords? But when he hath once come to act Faith upon the Death of Christ, then the design of Mortification hath prospered and succeeded to good purpose.

Secondly, Mortification of Sin implies the agency of the Spirit of God in that work, without whose assistances and aids all our endeavours must needs be fruitless: Of this work we may say as it was said in another case, *Zech.* 4. 6. *Not by might, nor by power; but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.* When the Apostle therefore would shew by what hand this work of Mortification is performed, he thus expresseth it, *Rom.* 8. 13. *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the Body, ye shall live:* The Duty is ours, but the Power whereby we perform it, is God's: The Spirit is the only successful Combatant against the Lusts that war in our Members, *Gal.* 5. 17. 'tis true, this excludes not, but implies our endeavours; for it is we through the Spirit that mortify the deeds of the Body; but yet all our endeavours without the Spirit's aid and influence avail nothing.

Thirdly, The Crucifixion of Sin necessarily implies the subversion of its dominion in the Soul: A mortified Sin cannot be a reigning Sin, *Rom.*

6. 12, 13, 14. Two things constitute the dominion of Sin, viz. the fulness of its power, and the Souls subjection to it. As to the fulness of its power, that rises from the suitability it hath, and pleasure it gives to the corrupt Heart of Man: It seems to be as necessary as the Right Hand, as useful and pleasant as the Right Eye, *Matth.* 5. 29. but the mortified Heart is dead to all pleasures and profits of Sin; it hath no delight or pleasure in it; it becomes its burden and daily complaint. Mortification presupposes the illumination of the mind and conviction of the Conscience; by reason whereof Sin cannot deceive and blind the mind, or bewitch and ensnare the Will and Affections, as it was wont to do, and consequently its dominion over the Soul is destroyed and lost.

Fourthly, The crucifying of the Flesh implies a gradual weakening of the power of Sin in the Soul. The Death of the Cross was a slow and lingering Death, and the crucified Person grew weaker and weaker every hour; so it is in the mortification of Sin: The Soul is still cleansing it self from all filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, and perfecting holiness in the fear of God, *2 Cor.* 7. 1. And as the Body of Sin is weakened more and more; so the inward Man, or the new Creature is renewed day by day, *2 Cor.* 4. 16. For Sanctification is a progressive work of the Spirit: And as holiness increases, and roots it self deeper and deeper in the Soul; so the power and interest of Sin proportionably abates, and sinks lower and lower, until at length it be swallowed up in Victory.

Fifthly, The crucifying of the Flesh notes to us the Believers designed application of all spiritual means, and sanctified instruments for the destruction of it: There is nothing in this World which a Gracious Heart more vehemently desires and longs for, than the death of Sin, and perfect deliverance from it, *Rom.* 7. 24. the sincerity of which desires doth accordingly manifest it self in the daily application of all God's Remedies, such are daily watching against the occasions of Sin, *Job* 31. 1. *I have made a Covenant with mine eyes;* more than ordinary vigilancy over their special or proper Sin, *Psal.* 18. 23. *I kept my self from mine iniquity:* Earnest cries to Heaven for preventing Grace, *Psal.* 19. 13. *Keep back thy Servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me:* Deep humblings of Soul for Sins past, which is an excellent preventive unto future Sins, *2 Cor.* 2. 11. *in that be sorrowed after a Godly sort, what carefulness is wrought?* Care to give no furtherance or advantage to the design of Sin, by making provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof, as others do, *Rom.* 13. 13, 14. willingness to bear the due reproofs of Sin, *Psal.* 141. 5. *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness:* These and such like means of mortification, regenerate Souls are daily using, and applying, in order to the death of Sin. And so much of the first particular, what the mortification of Sin, or crucifying of the Flesh implies.

Secondly, In the next place, we shall examine the reasons, why this work of the Spirit is expressed under that *Trope*, or figurative expression, of crucifying the Flesh. Now the ground

Errant in ipsa natura mortificationis Christiane, nam corporis afflictionem et injuriam reputant pro vera mortificatione, cum illam non ad carnem praeicipue aut inferiorem animae partem, sed ad mentem voluntariam, maxime pertineat. Davenant in Colloff. 156.

ground and reason of the use of this expression, is the resemblance which the mortification of Sin bears unto the Death of the Crofs: And this appears in five particulars.

First, The Death of the Crofs was a *painful Death*, and the mortification of Sin is very painful work, *Matth. 25. 29.* 'tis the cutting off our Right Hands, and plucking out our Right Eyes; it will cost many thousand Tears, and Groans, Prayers and strong Cries to Heaven, before one Sin will be mortified. Upon the account of the difficulty of this work, and mainly upon this account, the Scripture saith, *narrow is the way, and strait is the gate that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it, Matth. 7. 14.* and that the righteous themselves are scarcely saved.

Secondly, The Death of the Crofs was *universally painful*, every Member, every Sense, every Sinew, every Nerve was the Seat and Subject of tormenting pain. So is it in the mortification of Sin; 'tis not this or that particular Member, or Act; but the whole Body of Sin that is to be destroyed, *Rom. 6. 6.* and accordingly the conflict is in every Faculty of the Soul; for the Spirit of God, by whose hand Sin is mortified, doth not combat with this or that particular Lust only, but with Sin as Sin; and for that reason with every Sin, in every Faculty of the Soul. So that there are conflicts, and anguish in every part.

Thirdly, The Death of the Crofs was a *slow and lingering Death*; denying unto that suffered it the favour of a quick dispatch.

Mortificatio peccati non fit uno momento, sed opus est luctu assiduo: peccatum languescit ab initio mortificationis nostre, in progressu tabescit; ad extremum (i.e.) in ipsa morte nostra, abolebitur. Origen in Epist. ad Rom.

Just so it is in the Death of Sin, though the Spirit of God be mortifying it day by day; yet this is a Truth sealed by the sad experience of all Believers in the World, that Sin is long a dying: And if we ask a reason of this dispensation of God, among others, this seems to be one; corruptions in Believers, like the *Canaanites* in the Land of *Israel*, are left to

prove, and to exercise the People of God, to keep us watching and praying, mourning and believing; yea, wondering and admiring at the riches of pardoning and preserving Mercy all our days.

Fourthly, The Death of the Crofs was a very *opprobrious and shameful Death*; they that died upon the Crofs were loaded with ignominy; the Crimes for which they died were exposed to the publick view; after this manner dieth Sin, a very shameful and ignominious Death. Every true Believer draws up a charge against it in every Prayer, aggravates and condemns it in every Confession, bewails the evil of it with multitudes of Tears and Groans, making Sin as vile and odious as they can find words to express it, though not so vile as it is in its own Nature. *O my God (saith Ezra) I am ashamed, and even blush to look up unto thee, Ezra 9. 6.* So Daniel in his Confession, *Dan. 9. 7.* *O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of Faces, as at this day.* Nor can it grieve any Believer in the World, to accuse, condemn, and shame himself for Sin, whilst he remembers and considers, that all that shame and confusion of Face which he takes to himself, goes to the

vindication, Glory, and Honour of his God: As *David* was content to be more vile still for God, so it pleases the Heart of a Christian to magnifie and advance the Name and Glory of God, by exposing his own shame, in humble and broken-hearted confessions of Sin.

Fifthly, In a word, the Death of the Crofs was not a *natural*, but a *violent Death*: Such also is the Death of Sin: Sin dies not of its own accord, as Nature dieth in old Men, in whom the *Balsamum radicale*, or radical moisture is consumed; for if the Spirit of God did not kill it, it would live to eternity in the Souls of Men; 'tis not the everlasting burnings, and all the wrath of God which lies upon the damned for ever, that can destroy Sin. Sin, like a *Salamander*, can live to eternity in the Fire of God's wrath; so that either it must die a violent death by the hand of the Spirit, or never dieth at all. And thus you see, why the mortification of Sin is *Typically* expressed by the crucifying of the Flesh.

3. Thirdly, Why all that are in Christ must be so crucified, or mortified unto Sin: And the necessity of this will appear divers ways.

First, From the inconsistency and contrariety that there is betwixt Christ and unmortified Lust, *Gal. 5. 17.* *These are contrary the one to the other.* There is a threefold inconsistency betwixt Christ and such Corruptions; they are not only contrary to the *holiness of Christ*, *1 Joh. 3. 6.* *Whoever abideth in him sinneth not; who sinner sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him, (i. e.)* whosoever is thus ingulphed and plunged into the lust of the Flesh, can have no communion with the pure and holy Christ; but there is also an inconsistency betwixt such Sin and the Honour of Christ, *2 Tim. 2. 19.* *Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from iniquity: As Alexander said to a Soldier of his Name, recordare nominis Alexandri, remember thy Name is Alexander, and do nothing unworthy of that Name.* And unmortified Lusts are also contrary to the *Dominion* and Government of Christ, *Luke 9. 23.* *If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his Crofs daily, and follow me:* These are the self-denying terms, upon which all Men are admitted into Christ's service: And without Mortification and Self-denial he allows no Man to call him Lord and Master.

Secondly, The necessity of Mortification appears from the necessity of conformity betwixt Christ the Head, and all the Members of his mystical Body; for how incongruous and uncomely would it be to see a holy heavenly Christ, leading a Company of unclean, carnal, and sensual Members? *Matth. 11. 29.* *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, &c.* it would be monstrous to the World, to behold a company of *Lions* and *Wolves* following a meek and harmless *Lamb*: Men of raging and unmortified Lusts, professing and owning me for their Head of Government: And again, *1 Joh. 2. 6.* *He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked, &c.* either imitate Christ in your *Practice*, or never make pretensions to Christ in your *Profession*: This was what the *Apostle* complained of, *Phil. 3. 18.* for

for many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the Enemies of the Cross of Christ: Men cannot study to put a greater dishonour and reproach upon Christ, than by making his Name and Profession a cloak and cover to their filthy Lusts.

Thirdly, The necessity of crucifying the Flesh, appears from the method of Salvation as it is stated in the Gospel. God every where requires the practice of Mortification under pain of Damnation, Matth. 18. 8. *Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee; it is better for thee to enter into Life halt or maimed; rather than having two hands, or two feet, to be cast into everlasting Fire:* The Gospel legitimates no hopes of Salvation, but such as are accompanied with serious endeavours of Mortification, 1 Joh. 3. 3. *Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure:* 'Twas one special end of Christ's coming into the World, to save his People from their Sins, Matth. 1. 21. nor will he be a Saviour unto any who remain under the dominion of their own Lusts.

Fourthly, The whole stream and current of the Gospel puts us under the necessity of Mortification. Gospel-Precepts have respect unto this, Col. 3. 5. *Mortify your Members therefore, which are upon the Earth,* 1 Pet. 1. 15. *Be ye holy for I am holy.* Gospel-Presidents have respect unto this, Heb. 12. 1. *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, &c.* Gospel-threatenings are written for this end, and do all press Mortification in a thundring dialect, Rom. 8. 13. *If ye live after the Flesh ye shall die,* Rom. 1. 18. *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of Men:* The Promises of the Gospel are written designedly to promote it, 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Having therefore these Promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God:* But in vain are all these Precepts, Presidents, Threatnings and Promises written in the Scripture, except Mortification be the daily study and practice of Professors.

Fifthly, Mortification is the very scope and aim of our Regeneration, and the infusion of the principles of Grace: *If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit,* Gal. 5. 25. In vain were the habits of Grace planted, if the Fruits of Holiness and Mortification be not produced; yea, Mortification is not only the design and aim, but it is a special part, even the one half of our Sanctification.

Sixthly, If Mortification be not the daily practice and endeavour of Believers, then the way to Heaven no way answers to Christ's description of it in the Gospel: He tells us, Matth. 7. 13, 14. *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it:* Well then, either Christ must be mistaken in the account he gave of the way to Glory, or else all unmortified Persons are out of the way; for what makes the way of Salvation narrow, but

the difficulties and severities of Mortification?

Seventhly, In a word, he that denies the necessity of Mortification, confounds all discriminating marks betwixt Saints and Sinners; pulls down the Pale of distinction, and lets the World into the Church, and the Church into the World; 'tis a great design of the Gospel to preserve the boundaries betwixt the one and the other, Rom. 2. 7, 8. Rom. 8. 1, 4, 5, 6, 13. But if Men may be Christians without Mortification, we may as well go into the Taverns, Ale-houses, or Brothel-houses, among the roaring or sottish crew of Sinners, and say, here be those that are redeemed by the Blood of Christ; here be his Disciples and Followers; as go to seek them in the purest Churches, or most strictly religious Families; by all which the necessity of Mortification, unto all that are in Christ, is abundantly evidenced.

Fourthly, In the next place we are to enquire into the true principle of Mortification: 'Tis true there are many ways attempted by Men for the Mortification of Sin, and many rules laid down to guide Men in that great work; some of which are very trifling and impertinent things; such are those prescribed by Popish Priests; but I shall lay down this as a sure conclusion, that the *sanctifying Spirit is the only effectual principle of Mortification*; and without him no Resolutions, Vows, Abstinences, Castigations of the Body, or any other external endeavours can ever avail to the Mortification of one Sin: The moral Heathens have prescribed many pretty rules and helps for the suppression of Vice: *Aristides, Seneca, and Cato* were renowned among them upon this account: But yet as *Lactantius* well observes, *moral Philosophy did rather abscondere vitia, quam abscondere*, hide it, rather than kill it; formal Christians have also gone far in the reformation of their Lives, but could never attain true Mortification; formality pares off the excrescencies of Vice, but never kills the root of it; it usually recovers it self again, and their Souls like a Body not well purged, relapse into a worse condition than before, Matth. 12. 43, 44. 2 Pet. 2. 20.

This work of Mortification is peculiar to the Spirit of God, Rom. 8. 13. Gal. 5. 17. and the Spirit becomes a principle of Mortification in Believers two ways, namely,

1. By the implantation of contrary Habits.
2. By assailing those implanted Habits in all the times of need.

First, The Spirit of God implants Habits of a contrary Nature, which are destructive to Sin, and are purgative of corruption, 1 Joh. 5. 4. *Abide in it.* Grace is to Corruption what Water is to Fire; betwixt which there is both a formal and effective opposition; a contrariety both in Nature and Operation, Gal. 5. 17. There is a threefold remarkable advantage given us by Grace for the destruction and mortification of Sin. For,

First, Grace gives the Mind and Heart of Man a contrary bent and inclination; by reason

son whereof spiritual and heavenly things become connatural to the regenerate Soul, *Rom. 7. 22. For I delight in the Law of God after the inner Man*: Sanctification is in the Soul as a living spring running with a kind of *central force* Heaven-ward, *Job. 4. 14.*

Secondly, Holy Principles destroy the interest that Sin once had in the love and delight of the Soul; the sanctified Soul cannot take pleasure in Sin, or find delight in that which grieves God, as it was wont to do; but that which was the object of delight, hereby becomes the object of grief and hatred, *Rom. 7. 15. What I hate, that I do.*

Thirdly, From both these follow a third advantage for the mortification of Sin, in as much as Sin being contrary to the new Nature, and the object of grief and hatred, cannot possibly be committed without reluctance, and very sensible regret of Mind; and actions done with regret, are neither done frequently nor easily. The case of a regenerate Soul under the Surprizals, and particular Victories of Temptation, being like that of a Captive in War, who marches not with delight, but by constraint among his Enemies. So the Apostle expresseth himself, *Rom. 7. 23. But I see another Law in my Members, warring against the Law of my Mind; and bringing me into captivity unto the Law of sin, which is in my Members*: Thus the Spirit of God promotes the design of Mortification by the implantation of contrary Habits.

2. Secondly, By assisting those Gracious Habits in all the times of need, which he doth many ways; sometimes notably awakening and rousing Grace out of the dull and sleepy Habit, and drawing forth the activity and power of it into actual and successful resistances of Temptations, as *Gen. 39. 9. How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* Holy fear awakens first, and raises all the powers of Grace in the Soul, to make a vigorous resistance of temptation: The Spirit also strengthens weak Grace in the Soul, *2 Cor. 12. 9. My Grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness*: And by reason of Grace thus implanted, and thus assisted, he that is born of God keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not.

5. Fifthly, The last Query to be satisfied, is, how Mortification of Sin solidly evinceth the Soul's interest in Christ; and this it doth divers ways, affording the mortified Soul many sound evidences thereof. As,

Evidence 1.

Whatsoever evidences the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God in us, must needs be evidential of a saving interest in Christ; as hath been fully proved before; but the mortification of Sin doth plainly evidence the indwelling of the Spirit of God; for as we proved but now, it can proceed from no other Principle; there is a strong and inseparable connexion betwixt Mortification and

the Spirit, as betwixt the Effect and its proper Cause, and the self-same connexion betwixt the in-being of the Spirit, and union with Christ. So that to reason from mortification to the inhabitation of the Spirit, and from the inhabitation of the Spirit to our union with Christ, is a strong Scriptural way of reasoning.

Evidence 2.

That which proves a Soul to be under the Covenant of Grace, evidently proves its interest in Christ; for Christ is the Head of that Covenant, and none but sound Believers are under the Blessings and Promises of it; but mortification of Sin is a found evidence of the Soul's being under the Covenant of Grace, as is plain from those words of the Apostle, *Rom. 6. 12, 13, 14. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal Body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof; neither yield ye your Members, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield your selves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your Members as instruments of righteousness unto God; for sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace*: Where the Apostle presseth Believers unto Mortification by this encouragement, that it will be a good evidence unto them of a new Covenant-interest; for all legal duties and endeavours can never mortify Sin: 'Tis the Spirit in the New Covenant which produces this; whoever therefore hath his corruptions mortified, hath his interest in the Covenant, and consequently in Christ, so far cleared unto him.

Evidence 3.

That which is the Fruit and Evidence of saving Faith, must needs be a good evidence of our interest in Christ; but Mortification of Sin is the Fruit and Evidence of saving Faith, *Acts 15. 9. Purifying their Hearts by Faith*, *1 Joh. 5: 4. This is the Victory whereby we overcome the World, even our Faith*: Faith overcomes both the allurements of the World upon the other hand; by mortifying the Heart and Affections to all earthly things: A mortified Heart is not easily taken with the ensnaring pleasures of the World, or much moved with the disgraces, losses, and sufferings it meets with from the World; and so the strength and force of its temptations is broken, and the mortified Soul becomes victorious over it, and all this by the instrumentality of Faith.

Evidence 4.

In a word, there is an intimate and indissoluble connexion betwixt the mortification of Sin, and the Life of Grace, *Rom 6. 11. Reson your selves to be dead indeed unto Sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ*: And the Life of Christ must needs involve a saving interest in Christ; by all which is fully proved what was asserted in the observation from this Text. The Application follows in the next Sermon.

SERMON XXVIII.

GAL. V. 24.

*And they that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.*Serm. 28.
Text.

From hence our Observation was,

Doct.

That a saving interest in Christ may be regularly and strongly inferred, and concluded from the Mortification of the Flesh, with its Affections and Lusts.

Having opened the Nature, and necessity of Mortification in the former Sermon, and shewn how regularly a saving interest in Christ may be concluded from it; we now proceed to apply the whole, by way of

1. Information.
2. Exhortation.
3. Direction.
4. Examination.
5. Consolation.

Use 1.
Infer. 1.

If they that be Christ's have crucified the Flesh, *Then the Life of Christians is no idle or ease Life*: The corruptions of his Heart continually fill his Hands with work, with work of the most difficult nature, sin-crucifying work, which the Scripture calls the cutting off the Right Hand, and plucking out of the Right Eye: Sin-crucifying work is hard work, and it is constant work, throughout the Life of a Christian; there is no time or place freed from this conflict; every occasion stirs corruption, and every stirring of corruption calls for mortification: Corruptions work in our very best Duties, *Rom. 7. 23.* and put the Christian upon mortifying Labours. The World and the Devil are great Enemies and Fountains of many Temptations to Believers, but not like the corruptions of our own Hearts; they only tempt *objectively and externally*; but this tempts *internally*, and therefore much more dangerous; they only tempt at Times and Seasons; this continually at all Times and Seasons: Besides, whatever *Satan* or the *World* attempts upon us, would be altogether ineffectual, were it not for our own corruptions, *Job. 14. 30.* So that the corruptions of our own Hearts, as they give us most danger, so they must give us more labour; our Life and this labour must end together; for sin is long a dying in the best Heart: Those that have been many years exercised in the study of Mortification, may haply feel the same corruption tempting and troubling them now, which put them into tears, and many times to their Knees twenty or forty years ago. It may be said of Sin as it was of *Hannibal*, that active Enemy; that it will never be quiet, whether conquering or conquered; and until Sin cease working, the Christian must not cease mortifying.

Infer. 2.

Inference 2.

If mortification be the great work of a Christian, then certainly those that give the corruptions of Christians an occasion to revive, must needs do them a very ill Office: They are not our best Friends that stir the Pride of our

Vol. I.

Hearts by the flattery of their Lips. The Graces of God in others, I confess, are thankfully to be owned, and under discouragements, and contrary temptations, to be wisely and modestly spoken of; but the strongest Christians do scarcely shew their own weakness in any one thing more than they do in bearing their own Praises. Christian, thou knowest thou carriest Gunpowder about thee, desire those that carry Fire to keep at a distance from thee; 'tis a dangerous Crisis when a proud Heart meets with flattering Lips, *auserte ignem*, &c. take away the Fire (said a Holy Divine of Germany, when his Friend commended him upon his Death-bed) for I have yet combustible matter about me: Faithful, reasonable, discreet reproofs are much more safe to us, and advantageous to our mortifying work; but alas, How few have the boldness or wisdom duly to administer them? 'Tis said of *Alexander*, that he bid a *Philosopher* (who had been long with him) to be gone; for, said he, so long thou hast been with me, and never Reproved me; which must needs be thy fault; for either thou sawest nothing in me worthy of Reproof, which argues thy ignorance; or else thou durst not Reprove me, which argues thy unfaithfulness. A wife and faithful Reprover is of singular use to him that is heartily engaged in the delign of mortification; such a faithful Friend, or some malicious Enemy, must be helpful to us in that work.

Inference 3.

Infer. 3.

Hence it follows, that manifold and successive afflictions are no more than is necessary for the best of Christians; the mortification of our Lusts require them all, be they never so many, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *if need be, ye are in heaviness*; 'tis no more than need, that one loss should follow another, to mortifie an earthly Heart; for so intensely are our Affections set upon the World, that it is not one, or two, or many checks of Providence, that will suffice to wean and alienate them. Alas, the earthliness of our Hearts will take all this, it may be much more than this to purge them: The wise God sees it but necessary to permit frequent discoveries of our own weakness, and to let loose the Tongues of many Enemies upon us, and all little enough to pull down the Pride and Vanity that is in our Hearts. Christian, how difficult soever it be for thee to bear it; yet the pride of thy Heart requires all the Scoffs and Jeers, all the Calumnies and Reproaches, that ever the Tongues or Pens of thy bitterest Enemies, or mistaking Friends, have at any time thrown upon thee. Such rank Weeds, as grow in our Hearts, will require hard Frosts, and very sharp Weather to rot them; the straying *Rullock* needs a heavy clog, and so doth a Christian, whom God will keep within the bounds and limits of his Commandments, *Psal. 119. 67. Dan. 11. 35.*

K k k

Infer.

Infer. 4.
Non est
sa varius
cruce
Christi,
quoniam est
crucifixus
in Christo
qui non est
in membrum
Christi.
Prosper.

Inference 4.

If they that be Christs have crucified the flesh, then the number of real Christians is very small: 'tis true, if all that seem to be meek, humble and heavenly, might pass for Christians, the number would be great: but if no more must be accounted Christians, than those who crucifie the flesh, with its affections and lusts, O how small is the number! For O how many be there under the Christian name, that pamper and indulge their lusts, that secretly hate all that faithfully reprove them, and really affect none but such as feed their lusts, by praising and admiring them? How many that make provision for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts? who cannot endure to have their corruptions crost: How many are their that seem very meek and humble, untill an occasion be given to stir their passion, and then you shall see in what degree they are mortified: the Flint is a cold stone, till it be struck, and then 'tis all fiery. I know the best of Christians are mortified but in part: and strong corruptions are oftentimes found in very eminent Christians; but they love them not so well as to purvey for them, to protect, defend and countenance them: nor dare they secretly hate such as faithfully reprove them; as many thousands that go under the name of Christians do. Upon the account of mortification it is said, *Matth. 7. 13. Narrow is the way, and strait is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

Infer. 5.

Inference 5.

If they that be Christs have crucified the flesh; (i.e.) mortification is their daily work and study; then how falsely are Christians charged as troublers of the World, and disturbers of the civil peace and tranquility of the times and places they live in? Justly may they retort the charge, as *Elijah* did to *Abah*, *It is not I that trouble Israel, but thou and thy Fathers house*: It is not the holy, meek and humble Christians that put the World into confusion: this is done by the Prophane, and Atheistical; or by the designing and hypocritical World, and laid at the innocent Christians door: as all the publick Calamities, which from the immediate hand of God, or by Foreign, or domestick enemies beset *Rome*, were constantly charged upon Christians; and they condemned and punished, for what the righteous hand of God inflicted, or the working-heads of the enemies of that State without their privacy contrived. The Apostle *James* propounds, and answers a very pertinent question unto this discourse, *James 4. 1. From whence come wars and fightings among you; come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?* O if all Men did but study mortification and self-denial, and live as much at home in the constant work of their own hearts, as some Men do; What tranquillity and peace, what blessed halcyon days should we quickly see! 'Tis true, Christians are always fighting and quarrelling, but it is with themselves and their own corrupt hearts and affections: they hate no enemy but sin, they thirst for the Blood and ruine of none but of that enemy: they are ambitious of no victory but what is over the corruptions of their own hearts; they carry no grudge except it be against this enemy sin, and yet these are the Men who are the most suspected, and charged

of disturbing the times they live in. Just as the *Wolf* accused the *Lamb*, which was below him, for puddling and defiling the stream. But there will be a day, when God will clear up the innocency and integrity of his mistaken and abused servants; and the World shall see it was not Preaching and Praying, but Drinking, Swearing, Prophaneness and enmity unto true Godliness, which disturbs and breaks the tranquillity, and quietness of the times; mean time let innocency commit it self unto God who will protect, and in due time vindicate the same.

Inference 6.

Infer. 6.

If they that be Christs have crucified the flesh, then whatsoever Religion, Opinion or Doctrine, doth, in its own nature countenance and encourage sin, is not of Christ; the Doctrine of Christ every where teacheth mortification; the whole stream of the Gospel runs against sin; the Doctrine it teacheth, is holy, pure and Heavenly; it hath no tendency to extol corrupt nature, and feed its pride by magnifying its freedom and power; or by stamping the merit and dignity of the Blood of Christ upon its works and performances; it never makes the death of Christ a cloak to cover sin, but an instrument to destroy it; and whatsoever Doctrine it is, which nourishes the pride of nature, to the disparagement of Grace; encourages licentiousness and fleshly lust, is not the Doctrine of Christ; but a spurious off-spring begotten by Satan upon the corrupt nature of Man.

Inference 7.

Infer. 7.

If mortification be the great business, and character of a Christian, then that condition is most eligible and desirable by Christians, which is least of all exposed to Temptation, *Prov. 30. 8. Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient*; that holy judicious man was well aware of the danger lurking in both extremes; and how near they border upon deadly temptations, and approach the very precipice of ruine, that stand upon either ground: few Christians have an head strong and steady enough to stand upon the pinnacle of wealth and honour, nor is it every one that can grapple with poverty and contempt. A mediocrity is the Christians best external security, and therefore most desirable, and yet how do the corruptions, the pride and ignorance of our hearts grasp, and covet that condition which only serves to warm and nourish our lusts, and make the work of Mortification much more difficult? 'Tis well for us, that our wise Father leaves us not to our own choice, that he frequently dashes our earthly projects, and disappoints our fond expectations. If Children were left to carve for themselves, how often would they cut their own fingers?

Inference 8.

Infer. 8.

If Mortification be the great business of a Christian, then Christian fellowship, and society duly managed, and improved, must needs be of singular use, and special advantage to the people of God. For thereby we have the friendly help and assistance of many other hands, to carry on our great design, and help us in our most difficult business; if corruptions be too hard for us, others this way come in to our assistance, *Gal. 6. 1. Brethren if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are Spiritual restore such an one in the Spirit*

rit of meakness. If temptations prevail, and over-bear us that we fall under sin, 'tis a special mercy to have the reproofs and counsels of our brethren, who will not suffer sin to rest upon us, *Levit. 19. 17.* Whilst we are sluggish and sleepy, others are vigilant, and careful for our safety: The humility of another, reproves and mortifies my pride: The activity and liveliness of another, awakens and quickens my deadness: The prudence and gravity of another, detects and cures my levity and vanity: The Heavenlyness and Spirituality of another, may be exceeding useful both to reprove, and heal the earthliness, and sensuality of my heart. Two are better than one, but wo unto him that is alone. The Devil is well aware of this great advantage, and therefore strikes with special malice against embodied Christians, who are as a well disciplined army, whom he therefore more especially endeavours to rout and scatter by persecutions, that thereby particular Christians may be deprived of the sweet advantages of mutual society.

Inference 9.

Infer. 9. How deeply hath sin fixed its roots in our corrupt nature, that it should be the constant work of a Christians whole life, to mortify and destroy it? God hath given us many excellent helps, his Spirit within us, variety of ordinances and duties are also appointed as instruments of Mortification: And from the very day of Regeneration unto the last moment of dissolution the Christian is daily at work in the use of all sanctified means external and internal, yet can never dig up, and destroy corruption at the root all his life long. The most eminent Christians of longest standing in Religion, who have shed Millions of tears for sin, and poured out many thousand Prayers for the Mortification of it; do after all find the grudgings of their old disease, that there is still life and strength in those corruptions which they have given so many wounds unto in duty. O the depth and strength of sin! which nothing can separate from us, but that which separates our Souls and Bodies. And upon that account the day of a believers death, is better than the day of his birth. Never till then, do we put off our armour, sheath our sword, and cry victory, victory.

2. Use for Exhortation.

Use 2. If they that are Christs have crucified the flesh, &c. Then as ever we hope to make good our claim to Christ, let us give all diligence to mortify sin, in vain else are all our pretences unto Union with him. This is the great work, and discriminating character of a believer. And seeing it is the main business of life, and great evidence for Heaven, I shall therefore press you to it by the following Motives and Considerations.

Mot. 1. 1 *Motive.* And first, methinks the comfort and sweetness resulting from Mortification should effectually persuade every believer to more diligence about it. There is a double sweetness in Mortification, one in the nature of the work, as it is a duty, a sweet Christian duty; another as it hath respect to Christ, and is evidential of our Union with him. In the first consideration there is a wonderful sweetness in Mortification, for dost thou not feel a blessed calmness, cheariness and tranquility in thy con-

science, when thou hast faithfully repelled temptations, successfully resisted and overcome thy corruptions? Dost not God smile upon thee; confidence encourage, and approve thee? Hast thou not an heaven within thee? whilst others feel a kind of hell in the deadly gripes, & bitter accusations of their own consciences, are covered with shame, and filled with horrors. But then, consider it also as an evidence of the Souls interest in Christ, as my Text considers it; and what an heaven upon earth must then be found in Mortification! These endeavours of mine to subdue and mortify my corruptions, plainly speak the Spirit of God in me, and my being in Christ; and O what is this! What heart hath largeness and strength enough to receive and contain the joy and comfort which flows from a cleared interest in Jesus Christ! Certainly Christians, the tranquility and comfort of your whole life depends upon it: and what is life without the comfort of life, *Rom. 8. 13.* *If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deed of the body, ye shall live, (i. e.)* you shall live a serene, placid, comfortable life, for it is corruption unmortified which clouds the face of God, and breaks the peace of his people, and consequently imbibers the life of a Christian.

2 *Motive.* As the comfort of your own lives *Mt. 1* which is much, so your instrumental fitness for the service of God which is much more, depends upon the Mortification of your sins, *2 Tim. 2. 21.* *If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour; sanctified and meet for the masters use, and prepared unto every good work.* Where is the mercy of life, but in the usefulness and serviceableness of it unto God? It is not worth while to live sixty, or seventy years in the world, to eat and drink, to buy and sell, to laugh and cry, and then go down to the place of silence. So far as any Man lives to God, an useful serviceable life to his praise and honour; so far only, and no farther doth he answer the end of his being. But it is the purged mortified Soul which is the vessel of honour, prepared, and meet for the Masters use. Let a proud or an earthly heart be employed in any service for God, and you shall find that such an heart will both spoil the work, by managing it for a self-end as *Jesus* did; and then devour the praise of it by a proud boast: *Come, see my zeal.* When the Lord would employ the Prophet *Isaiah* in his work and service, his iniquity was first purged; and after that he was employed, *Isai. 6. 6, 7, 8.* Sin is the Soul's sickness, a consumption upon the inner Man; and we know that languishing consumptive persons are very unfit to be employed in difficult and strenuous labours: Mortification so far as it prevails, cures the disease, recovers our strength, and enables us for service to God in our Generations.

3 *Motive.* Your stability, and safety in the hour of Temptation depends upon the success of your mortifying endeavours. Is it then a valuable Mercy in your eyes to be kept upright and steadfast in the critical season of Temptation, when Satan shall be wrestling with you for the Crown, and Prize of eternal life? Then give diligence to mortify your corruptions. Temptation is a Siege, Satan is the Enemy without the Walls, labouring to forew

force an entrance, natural corruptions are the Traytors within, that hold correspondency with the enemy without, and open the gate of the Soul to receive him. It was the covetousness of Judas his heart which overthrew him in the hour of Temptation. They are our fleshly lusts which go over unto Satan in the day of Battel, and fight against our souls, 1 Pet. 2. 11. the corruptions (or infectious Atoms which fly up and down the World in times of Temptation, as that word *judicium* imports) are through lusts, 2 Pet. 1. 4. 'Tis the lust within which gives a lustre to the vanities of the world without, and thereby makes them strong temptations to us, 1 Job, 2. 16. Mortify therefore your corruptions as ever you expect to maintain your station in the day of trial: cut off those advantages of your enemy, lest by them he cut off your Souls, and all your hopes from God.

Motive 4. 4. Motive. As Temptations will be irresistible, so Afflictions will be unsupportable to you without mortification. My friends, you live in a mutable world, Providence daily rings the changes in all the Kingdoms, Cities, and Towns all the world over. You that have Husbands or Wives to day, may be left desolate to morrow: You that have Estates, and Children now, may be bereaved of both before you are aware. Sicknes will tread upon the heel of health, and death will assuredly follow life, as the night doth the day. Consider with your selves, are you able to bear the loss of your sweet enjoyments with patience? Can you think upon the parting hour without some tremblings? O get a heart mortified to all these things, and you will bless a taking as well as a giving God. 'Tis the living world, not the crucified world, that raises such tumults in our Souls in the day of Affliction. How cheerful was holy Paul under all his sufferings! and what think you gave him that peace, and cheerfulness, but his mortification to the world? Phil. 4. 12. *I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where, and in all things I am instructed, both to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound, and suffer need.* Job was the mirror of patience in the greatest shock of Calamity, and what made him so, but the mortifiedness of his heart in the fullest enjoyment of earthly things? Job 31. 25.

Motive 5. 5. Motive. The reputation and honour of Religion is deeply concerned in the mortification of the Professors of it: For unmortified Professors will first or last be the scandals, and reproaches of it. The profession of Religion may give credit to you, but to be sure you will never bring credit to it. All the scandals and reproaches that fall upon the name of Christ in this world, flow from the fountain of unmortified corruption. Judas and Demas, Hymeneus and Philetus, Ananias and Sapphira ruined themselves, and became rocks of offence to others by this means. If ever you will keep Religion sweet, labour to keep your hearts mortified and pure.

Motive 6. 6. Motive. To conclude, what an hard tug will you have in your dying hour, except you get a heart mortified to this world, and all that is in it? Your parting hour is like to be a dreadful hour without the help of mortification. Your corruptions like glew fasten your affec-

tions to the world, and how hard will it be for such a Man to be separated by death? O what a bitter and doleful parting have carnal hearts from carnal things! whereas the mortified Soul can receive the messengers of death without trouble, and as cheerfully put off the body at death, as a Man doth his clothes at night: death need not pull and hale; such a Man goes half way to meet it, Phil. 1. 23. *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* Christian, wouldst thou have thy death-bed soft and easie? wouldst thou have an *exsursus*, as the Philosophers desired for himself, an easie death without pain or terror; then get a mortified Heart: the Chirurgians knife is scarce felt, when it cuts off a mortified member.

3d. Use for Direction.

Use 3.

Are you convinced and fully satisfied of the excellency and necessity of Mortification, and inquisitive after the means, in the use whereof it may be attained? then for your help and encouragement I will in the next place offer my best assistance, in laying down the rules for this work.

1. Rule. If ever you will succeed and prosper in the work of Mortification, then get and daily exercise more Faith. Faith is the great instrument of Mortification. *This is the Victory* (or sword by which the victory is won, the instrument) *by which you overcome the world, even your faith,* 1 John 5. 4. By Faith alone eternal things are discovered to our Souls in their reality and excelling glory, and these are the preponderating things for the sake whereof self-denial and Mortification becomes easie to believers; by opposing things eternal to things temporal we resist Satan, 1 Pet. 5. 8. This is the shield by which we quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, Eph. 6. 16.

Rule 2.

2. Rule. Walk in daily communion with God, if ever you will mortify the corruptions of Nature, that is the Apostles own prescription, Gal. 1. 16. *This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.* Spiritual and frequent communion with God, gives manifold advantages for the Mortification of sin: as it is a bright glass wherein the holiness of God and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, as it is opposite thereto, are most clearly and sensibly discovered, than which scarce any thing can set a keener edge of indignation upon the Spirit of a Man against Sin. Besides, all communion with God is assimilating, & transformative of the soul into his image, it leaves also a heavenly relish and favour upon the Soul: it darkens the lustre and glory of all earthly things, by presenting to the Soul a Glory which excelleth. It marvelously improves, and more deeply radicats Sanctification in the Soul, by all which means it becomes singularly useful, and successful in the work of Mortification.

3. Rule. Keep your Consciences under the awe, and in the fear of God continually, as ever you hope to be successful in the Mortification of Sin. The fear of God is the great preservative from Sin, without which all the external rules and helps in the world signifie nothing. *By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil,* Prov. 16. 6. Not only from external and more open evils, which the fear of Men as well as the fear of God may prevent, but from the most secret, and inward evils, which

is a special part of Mortification, *Levit. 19. 14.* It keeps Men from those evils which no eye, nor ear of Man can possibly discover. The fear of the Lord breaks. Temptations baited with pleasure, with profit & with secrecy. In a word, if ever you be cleansed from all filthiness of flesh & Spirit, it must be by the fear of God, *2 Cor. 7. 1.*

Rule 4. Readers, if ever you would have a true sight of the emptiness and vanity of the creature, and get a mortified heart to the world; now is the time, for at this day the providence of God hath withered all the fading flowers of earthly delights, and shewed you the worlds hack parts, as it is departing from you

4. Rule. Study the vanity of the Creature, and labour to get true notions of the emptiness and transitoriness thereof, if ever you will attain to the Mortification of your affections towards it. 'Tis the false picture and image of the World in our fancy, that crucifies us with so many cares, fears, and solitudes about it; and it is the true picture and image of the world, represented to us in the glass of the world, which greatly helps to crucify our affections to the world. O if we did but know and believe three things about the world, we would never be so fond of it as we are, viz. the fading, desiring, and destroying nature of it: the best and sweetest enjoyments of the world are but fading flowers, and withering grass, *Isa. 14. 6. James 1. 10, 11.* Yea, it is of a desiring as well as a fading nature, *John 5. 19.* It lies in wickedness, it spreads universal infection among all Mankind. *2 Pet. 1. 4.* Yea, it destroys, as well as desires multitudes of Souls, *drowning men in perdition, 1 Tim. 6. 9.* Millions of Souls will wish to eternity they had never known the riches, pleasures or honours of it: were this believed, how would Men slack their pace, and cool themselves in the violent and eager pursuit of the world! This greatly tends to promote Mortification.

Rule 5.

5. Rule. Be careful to cut off all the occasions of sin, and keep at the greatest distance from temptations, if ever you will mortify the deeds of the body. The success and prevalence of sin mainly depends upon the wiles and stratagems it makes use of to ensnare the incantulous Soul, therefore the Apostle bids us keep off at the greatest distance, *1 Thes. 5. 22. Abstain from all appearances of evil. Prov. 8. 8. Come not nigh unto the door of her house.* He that dares venture to the very brink of sin, discovers but little light in his understanding, and less tenderness in his conscience, he neither knows sin, nor fears it as he ought to do: and 'tis usual with God to chastise self-confidence by shameful lapses into sin.

Rule 6.

6. Rule. If you will successfully mortify the corruptions of your Nature, never engage against them in your own single strength, *Eph. 6. 10.* When the Apostle draws forth Christians into the field against sin, he bids them be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. O remember what a meek feather thou art in the gusts of Temptation. Call to mind the height of Peter's confidence, *though all men forsake thee, yet will not I,* and the depth of his fall, shame and sorrow. A weak Christian trembling in himself, depending by faith upon God, and graciously assisted by him, shall be able to stand against the shock of temptation, when the bold and confident resolutions of others (like *Pendleton* in our English story) shall melt away as wax before the flames.

Rule 7.

7. Rule. Set in with the mortifying design of God in the day of thine affliction Sanctified afflictions are ordered & prescribed in Heaven for

the purging of our corruptions, *Isa. 27. 9.* By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin. 'Tis a fair glass to represent the evil of sin, and the vanity of the creature, to imberber the world, and disgust thy affections towards it: fall in therefore with the gracious design of God, follow home every affliction with prayer, that God would follow it with his blessing. God kills thy comforts out of no other design but to kill thy corruptions with them. Wants are ordained to kill wantonness: Poverty is appointed to kill Pride, Reproaches are permitted to pull down Ambition: Happy is the Man who understands, approves, and heartily fers in with the design of God in such afflicting providences.

Rule 8:

8. Rule. Bend the strength of your duties and endeavours against your proper and special sin. 'Tis in vain to lop off branches, whilst this root of bitterness remains untouched: This was David's practice, *Psal. 18. 23. I was also upright before him, and I kept my self from mine iniquity.* We observe in Natural Men, that one faculty is more vigorous than another: We find in nature that one soil suits with this seed, rather than another: and every believer may find his nature and constitution inclining him to one sin rather than another. As graces, so corruptions excel one another even in the regenerate. The power of special corruptions arises from our constitutions, education, company, custom, callings, and such like occasions. But from whencesoever it comes, this is the Sin that most endangers us, most easily begets us, and accordingly to the progress of mortification in that sin, we may safely estimate the degrees of mortification in other sins: strike therefore at the life and root of your own iniquity.

Rule 9:

9. Rule. Study the nature and great importance of those things which are to be won or lost, according to the success and issue of this conflict: your life is as a race, eternal glory is the prize, grace and corruption are the antagonists, and accordingly as either finally prevails, eternal life is won or lost, *1 Cor. 9. 24. Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize: So run that ye may obtain.* This consideration will make mortification appear the most rational and necessary thing to you in the whole World. Shall I lose Heaven for indulging the Flesh, and humouring a wanton appetite? God forbid. *I keep under my body (saith Paul) and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away, 1 Cor. 9. 28.*

Rule 10:

10. Rule. Accustom your thoughts to such Meditations as are proper to Mortify Sin in your affections, else all endeavours to Mortify it will be but faint and languid. To this purpose I do all recommend the following Meditations, as proper means to destroy the interest of sin.

Mtd. 1.

1. Meditation. Consider the evil that is in Sin, and how terrible the appearances of God will one day be against those that obey it, in the lust thereof, *Rom. 1. 18. The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, 1 Thes. 1. 7; 8, 9. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall*

shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Let your thoughts dwell much upon the consideration of the fruits and consequences of Sin: It shows its fairest side to you in the hour of temptation. O but consider how it will look upon you in the day of affliction, *Numb. 22. 23.* In that day your Sin will find you out: think what its aspect will be in a dying hour, *1 Cor. 15. 56.* The sting of death is Sin. Think what the frightful remembrances of it will be at the bar of Judgment, when Satan shall accuse, Conscience shall upbraid, God shall condemn, and everlasting burnings shall avenge the evil of it: such thoughts as these are mortifying thoughts.

Med. 2. 2. *Meditation.* Think what it cost the Lord Jesus Christ to expiate the guilt of Sin, by the suffering the wrath of the great and terrible God for it in our room: The Meditations of a crucified Christ are very crucifying Meditations unto Sin, *Gal. 6. 14.* He suffered unspeakable things for Sin: it was Divine wrath which lay upon his Soul for it: that wrath of which the Prophet saith, *Nah. 1. 5, 6.* The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, Who can stand before his indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him. It was the unmixed, and unallayed wrath, poured out in the fulness of it, even to the last drop; And shall we be so easily drawn to the Commission of those sins which put Christ under such sufferings? O do but read such Scriptures as these, *Luke 22. 44. Mat. 26. 36, 37. Mark 14. 33.* And see what a plight Sin put the Lord of glory into: how the wrath of God put him into a fore amazement, a bloody sweat, and made his Soul heavy even unto Death.

Med. 3. 3. *Meditation.* Consider what a grief, and wound the sins of believers are to the Spirit of God, *Eph. 4. 30. Ezek. 16. 43. Isa. 63. 10.* O how it vexes, frets, and grieves the holy Spirit of God! Nothing is more contrary to his nature. O do not that abominable thing which I hate, saith the Lord, *Jer. 44. 4.* Nothing obstructs and crosses the sanctifying design of the Spirit as sin doth, defacing and spoiling the most rare, and admirable workmanship that ever God wrought in this World, violating all the engagements laid upon us by the love of the Father, by the death of his Son, by the operations of his Spirit, in all his illuminations, convictions, compunctions, renovation, preservation, obligation, and manifold consolations. Lay this Meditation upon thy heart believer, and say, *Sicne rependis?* Dost thou thus requite the Lord, O my ungrateful heart, for all his goodness? Is this the fruit of his temporal, spiritual, common, and peculiar Mercies, which are without number?

Med. 4. 4. *Meditation.* Consider with your selves, that no real good, either of profit or pleasure can result from sin, you can have no pleasure in it, whatever others may have, it being against your new nature; and as for that brutish pleasure, and evanid joy which others have in sin, it can be but for a moment, for either they must repent, or not repent: if they do repent, the pleasure of sin will be turned into the gall of *Aps* here, if they do not repent, it will terminate in everlasting howlings hereaf-

ter: that's a smart question, *Rom. 6. 21.* What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death. You that are believers must never expect any pleasure in sin, for you can neither commit it without regret, nor reflect upon it without shame and confusion. Expect no better consequences of sin, than the woundings of Conscience, and dismal cloudings of the face of God; that is all the profit of sin. O let these things sink into your heart.

Med. 5. 5. *Meditation.* Consider what the Damned suffer for those sins which the Devil now tempteth you to commit: it hath deprived them of all good, all outward good, *Luke 16. 25.* all Spiritual good, *Matth. 25. 41.* and of all hope of enjoying any good for ever. And as it hath deprived them of all good, so it hath remedially plunged them into all positive misery. Misery from without, the wrath of God being come upon them to the uttermost, and misery from within, for their worm dieth not, *Mark 9. 44.* The memory of things past, the sense of things present, and the fearful expectations of things to come, are the nibblings and bitings of the worm of Conscience, at every bite whereof damned Souls give a dreadful shriek, crying out, O the worm! the worm! Would any man that is not forsaken by reason, run the hazard of those eternal miseries for the brutish Pleasures of a moment?

Med. 6. 6. *Meditation.* Bethink your selves what inexcusable hypocrisy it will be in you to indulge your selves in the private satisfaction of your lusts, under a contrary profession of Religion: You are a people that profess holiness, and professedly own your selves to be under the Government and Dominion of Christ. And must the worthy Name of Christ be only used to cloak and cover your lusts and corruptions which are so hateful to him? God forbid. You daily pray against sin, you confess it to God, you bewail it, you pour out supplications for pardoning and preventing Grace. Are you in jest or earnest in these solemn duties of Religion? Certainly, if all those duties produce no mortification, you do but flatter God with your lips, and put a dreadful cheat upon your own Souls. Nay, Do you not frequently censure, and condemn those things in others, and dare you allow them in your selves? What horrid hypocrisy is this? Christians are dead to Sin, *Rom. 6. 2.* Dead to it by profession, dead to it by obligation, dead to it by relation to Christ who died for it; And how shall they that are so many ways dead to sin live any longer therein? O think not that God hates sin the less in you, because you are his people: nay, the very consideration aggravates it the more, *Amos 3. 2.*

Med. 7. 7. *Meditation.* Consider with your selves what hard things some Christians have chosen to endure and suffer, rather, than they would defile themselves with guilt; and shall every small temptation inflame and take your Souls? Read over the *Eleventh Chapter to the Hebrews*, and see what the Saints have endured to escape sin: no torments were so terrible to them, as the displeasure of God, and woundings of conscience; and did God oblige them more by his grace and favour than he hath obliged you? O Christians how can you that have found such

*Ipse de
libra &
peccata
fidelium
odio sunt,
& dispice
cent Deo,
sed odio
simplici,
non redun
danti in
personam.*
Davenant.
in Col. 1.
10.

such mercies, mercies as free, pardons as full as ever any Souls found, show less care, less fear, less tenderness of grieving God than others have done? Certainly, if you did see sin with the same eyes they saw it, you would hate it as deeply, watch against it as carefully, and resist it as vigorously as any of the Saints have done before you.

Med. 8. 8. *Meditation.* Consider with your selves what sweet pleasure, rational and solid comfort is to be found in the Mortification of sin: 'Tis not the fulfilling of your lusts can give you the thousandth part of that comfort and contentment that the resistance of them, and victory over them will give you. Who can express the comfort that is to be found in the cheering testimony of an acquitting and absolving conscience? 2 Cor. 1. 12. Remember what satisfaction and peace it was to *Hezekiah* upon his supposed death-bed, when he turned to the wall and said *Remember now O Lord, I beseech thee how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart; and have done that which is good in thy sight.* Isa. 38. 3.

Use 4. 4th. *Use for Examination.*

In the next place this point naturally puts us upon the Examination and trial of our own hearts, whether we who so confidently claim a special interest in Christ have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts; and because two sorts of Persons will be concerned in this Trial, viz. the weaker, and the stronger Christians; I shall therefore lay down two sorts of Evidences of Mortification, one respecting the sincerity, and truth, the other respecting the strength, and progress of that work in confirmed and grown Christians, and both excluding false pretenders.

First There are some things that are Evidential of the truth and sincerity of Mortification, even in the weakest Christians: as,

First. True tenderness of Conscience in all known Sins, one as well as another, is a good sign Sin hath lost its Dominion in the Soul? O'tis a special mercy to have a heart that shall smite and reprove us for those things that others make nothing of: to check and admonish us for our secret Sins which can never turn to our reproach among men; this is a good Sign that we hate Sin as Sin: however, through the weakness of the flesh we may be ensnared by it, Rom. 7. 15. *What I hate, that I do.*

Secondly. The sincere and earnest desires of our Souls to God in prayer for heart-purging and sin-mortifying grace, is a good sign our Souls have no love for sin. Canst thou say, poor believer, in thee truth of thy heart; that if God would give thee thy choice, it would please the better to have sin cast out, than to have the world cast in; that thy heart is not so earnest with God for daily bread, as it is for heart-purging grace? this is a comfortable evidence that sin is nayled to the Cross of Christ.

Thirdly. Do you make Conscience of guarding against the occasions of sin? Do you keep a daily watch over your hearts and senses, according to 1 John 5. 18. *Joh 31.1.* This speaks a true design and purpose of Mortification also.

Fourthly. Do you rejoice and bless God from your hearts when the Providence of God orders any means for the prevention of sin?

Thus did *David*, 1 Sam. 25. 33. *And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel which sent thee this day to meet me, and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou which hast kept me this day from coming to shed Blood, and from avenging my self with my own hand.*

Fifthly. In a word, though the thoughts of death may be terrible in themselves, yet if the expectation and hope of your deliverance from sin thereby, do sweeten the thoughts of it to your Souls, it will turn unto you for a testimony, that you are not the servants and friends of Sin. And so much briefly of the first sort of Evidences.

Secondly. There are other signs of a more deep and through Mortification of Sin in more grown and confirmed Believers, and such are these.

First. The more submissive and quiet any Man is under the will of God in smart and afflicting Providences, the more that Man's heart is mortified unto sin, *Psal.* 119. 67, 71. *Col.* 1. 11.

Secondly. The more able any one is to bear the reproaches and rebukes of his Sin, the more mortification there is in that man, *Psal.* 141. 5.

Thirdly, the more easily any man can resign and give up his dearest earthly comforts at the call and command of God, the more progress that man hath made in the work of mortification, *Heb.* 11. 17. 2 Sam. 15. 25.

Fourthly. The more power any man hath to resist sin in the first motions of it, and stifle it in the birth; the greater degree of mortification that man hath attained, *Rom.* 7. 23, 24.

Fifthly. If great changes upon our outward condition make no change for the worse upon our Spirits, but we can bear prosperous and adverse Providences with an equal mind; then mortification is advanced far in our Souls, *Phil.* 4. 11, 12.

Sixthly. The more fixed and steady our hearts are with God in duty, and the less they are infested with wandering thoughts and earthly interpositions; the more mortification there is in that soul. And so much briefly of the Evidences of Mortification.

5th. *Use for Consolation.*

It only remains, that I shut up all with a few words of consolation unto all that are under the mortifying influence of the Spirit. Much might be said for the comfort of such. In brief,

First. Mortified sin shall never be your ruine: 'tis only reigning sin that is ruining sin, *Rom.* 8. 13. Mortified sin, and Pardoned sin shall never lye down with us in the dust.

Secondly. If Sin be dying, your Souls are living; for dying unto Sin, and living unto God, are inseparably connected, *Rom.* 6. 11.

Thirdly. If Sin be dying in you, it is certain that Christ died for you, and you cannot desire a better Evidence of it, *Rom.* 6. 5, 6.

Fourthly. If Sin be dying under the Mortifying influences of the Spirit, and it be your daily labour to resist and overcome it, you are then in the direct way to Heaven, and eternal Salvation; which few, very few in the World shall find, *Luke* 13. 24.

Fifthly. To shut up all, if you, through the Spirit, be daily mortifying the deeds of the Body, then the death of Christ is effectually applied by the Spirit unto your Souls, and your interest in him is unquestionable: for they that are Christs have Crucified the Flesh with the affections and lusts, and they that have to Crucified the Flesh with its affections and lusts, are Christs.

Blessed be God for a Crucified Christ.

SER-

SERMON XXIX.

I JOHN II. 6.

Serm. 29.
Text.Of the
imitation
of Christ
in Holiness
of his Life,
and the
necessity
of it in all
Believers.*He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

THE express and principal design of the Apostle in this Chapter, is to propound marks and signs both *Negative and Positive*, for the trial and examination of Men's Claims to Christ; amongst which (not to spend time about the Coherence) my Text is a principal one; a trial of Men's interest in Christ by their imitation of Christ. It is supposed by some Expositors, that the Apostle, in laying down this mark, had a special design to overthrow the wicked Doctrine of the *Carpocratians*, who Taught (as *Epiphanius* relates it) that Men might have as much Communion with God in Sin, as in Duty. In full opposition to which, the Apostle lays down this Proposition, wherein he asserts the necessity of a Christ-like conversation, in all that claim Union with him, or interest in him. The Words resolve themselves into two parts, *viz.*

1. A Claim to Christ supposed.
 2. The only way to have our Claim warranted.
1. First, We have here a Claim to Christ supposed; *if any man say he abideth in him*: Abiding in Christ is an expression denoting proper and real interest in Christ, and communion with him; for it is put in opposition to those temporary, light, and transient effects of the Gospel, which are called a Morning Dew, or an early Cloud; such a receiving of Christ as that, *Matth. 13. 21.* which is but a present flash, a sudden vanishing pang; abiding in Christ notes a solid, durable, and effectual work of the Spirit, thoroughly and everlastingly joining the Soul to Christ. Now, if any Man whosoever he be (for this indefinite is equivalent to an universal term) let him never think his Claim to be good and valid, except he take this course to adjust it.

2. Secondly, The only way to have this Claim warranted, and that must be by *so walking even as he walked*; which Words carry in them the necessity of our imitation of Christ. But it is not to be understood indifferently and universally of all the Works or Actions of Christ, some of which were extraordinary and miraculous; some purely mediatory and not imitable by us: In these paths no Christian can follow Christ; nor may so much as attempt to walk as he walked. But the words point at the ordinary and imitable Ways and Works of Christ; therein it must be the care of all to follow him, that profess and claim interest in him; they must so walk as he walked; this [is] a very bearing Word in this place; the Emphasis of the Text seems to lie in it; however, certain it is that this *so walking* doth not imply an equality with

Christ in Holiness and Obedience; for as he was filled with the Spirit without measure, and anointed with that Oil of Gladness above his Fellows, so the purity, holiness, and obedience of his Life is never to be matched and equalized by any of the Saints. But this *so walking* only notes a sincere intention, design, and endeavour to imitate and follow him in all the paths of Holiness and Obedience according to the different measures of Grace received. The Life of Christ is the Believer's copy, and though the Believer cannot draw one Line or Letter exact as his copy is, yet his Eye is still upon it, he is looking unto Jesus, *Heb. 12. 2.* and labouring to draw all the Lines of his Life, as agreeably as he is able unto Christ his Pattern.

Hence the Observation is,

Doct. That every Man is bound to the imitation of Christ, under penalty of forfeiting his claim to Christ. Doct.

The Saints imitation of Christ is solemnly enjoined by many great and express Commands of the Gospel; so you find it, *1 Pet. 1. 15.* But as he that hath called you is Holy, so be ye Holy in all manner of conversation: *So Eph. 5. 1, 2.* Be ye therefore Followers of God as dear Children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us. Christians (saith Bernard) receive this Name from Christ; and it is very meet that as they inherit his Name, so they should also imitate his Holiness. Now to state the method of this Discourse, it will be needful to discuss and open three things in the Doctrinal part.

1. What the Saints imitation of Christ supposes and comprizes.
2. In what particulars they are especially bound to imitate Christ.
3. Why no claim to Christ is valid without this imitation of him.

And then apply the whole in divers Uses.

First, What the Saints imitation of Christ supposeth and comprizeth. Now there are divers great and weighty Truths supposed and implied in this imitation of Christ; or walking as he walked, *viz.*

First, It supposes, that no Christian is or may pretend to be a Rule to himself, to act according to the dictates of own Will and Pleasure; for as no Man hath Wisdom enough to direct and govern himself; so if his own will were made the rule of his own actions, it would be the highest invasion of the Divine Prerogative that could be imagined: *I know, O Lord, (saith Jeremy) that the way of Man is not in himself, it is not in him that walketh to direct his own steps, Jer. 10. 23.* We may as well pretend to be our own Masters as our own

Christiani à Christo nomen acceperunt, & opera primum est, ut sicut sunt heredes nominis, ita sint imitatores sanctitatis. Bern. sent. lib. p. 436.

own Guides. It is a pretty observation of *Aquinas*, that if the Workman's Hand were the Rule of his Work, it were impossible he should ever err in working: And if the Will of Man were the only Law and Guide of his way, we might then say no Man would sin in his walking. The Apostle indeed saith of the Heathens, Rom. 2. 14. *that they are a law to themselves*; but it is not his meaning that their Will is their Law, but the Law of God engraven upon their Hearts; the light and dictates of their own Consciences, did oblige and bind them as a Law.

Secondly, This imitation of Christ implies, that as no Man is or may pretend to be his own Guide, so no meer Man, how wise or holy soever he be, may pretend to be a Rule to other Men; but Christ is the Rule of every Man's way and walking. 'Tis true indeed, the Apostle saith, *We should be Followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises*, Heb. 6. 12. And again, James 5. 10. *Take my Brethren the Prophets who have spoken in the Name of the Lord for an example of suffering affliction and of Patience*; but you must always remember that there is a two-fold Rule.

1. *Regula regulans*, the Rule ruling.

2. *Regula regulata*, the Rule ruled.

The wisest and holiest among Men may pretend no higher than a ruled Rule. The great Apostle, though filled with as great a measure of the Spirit of Wisdom and Holiness as ever was possessed by any meer Man; yet goes no higher than this, 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be ye Followers of me, as I also am of Christ*. The best of Men are but Men at best; they have their Errors and Defects which they freely acknowledge; and where they differ from Christ, 'tis our duty to differ from them; we may not pin our Faith upon any Man's Sleeve, for we know not where he will carry it. It was the commendation which Paul gave of the *Thessalonians*, 1 Thes. 1. 6. *And ye became Followers of us, and of the Lord*. The Noble Bereans were also commended for searching the Scriptures, and examining the *Apostles Doctrine* by it; and it was a good reply of the *Father*, to a clamorous Disputant, crying, hear me, hear me, I will neither hear thee, nor do thou hear me; but let us both hear Christ.

Thirdly, The imitation of Christ implies the necessity of Sanctification in all his Followers; forasmuch as it is impossible there should be a practical conformity in point of Obedience, where there is not a conformity in Spirit and Principle; all external conformity to Christ's practice, depends upon an internal conformity to Christ in the Principle and Spirit of Holiness. 'Tis very plain from *Ezek. 11. 19, 20.* that a new Heart must be given us, and a new Spirit put into us, before we can walk in God's Statutes; we must first live in the Spirit, before we can walk in the Spirit, Gal. 5. 25.

Fourthly, The imitation of Christ plainly holds forth this, that Christian Religion is a very precise and strict Religion; no way countenancing licentiousness, or indulging Men in their Lusts; it allows no Man to walk loosely and inordinately; but rejects every Man's claim to Christ, who studies and labours not

to tread exactly in the footsteps of his holy and heavenly Example. Profaneeness and licentiousness therefore can find no shelter or protection under the Wing of the Gospel; this is the universal Rule, laid upon all the Professors of the Christian Religion: *Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ, depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. (i. e.) let him either put on the Life of Christ, or put off the Name of Christ; let him shew the Hand of a Christian in works of Holiness and Obedience, or else the Tongue and Language of a Christian must gain no belief or credit.

Fifthly, The imitation of Christ necessarily implies the defectiveness and imperfection of the best Men in this Life; for if the Life of Christ be our Pattern, the best and holiest of Men must confess they come short in every thing of the Rule of their Duty. Our Pattern is still above us; the best of Men are ashamed when they compare their Lives with the Life of Christ. 'Tis true, a vain Heart may swell with Pride, when a Man compares himself with other Men; thus measuring our selves by our selves, and comparing our selves among our selves we shew our folly, and nourish our pride; but if any Man will compare his own Life with Christ's, he will find abundant cause at every time, in every thing to be humbled. Paul was a great proficient in Holiness and Obedience; he had been long striving to come up to the top of Holiness; yet when he looks up and sees the Life of Christ, and Rule of Duty so far above him, he reckons himself still but at the Foot of the Hill, Phil. 3. 12. *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend, that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus*, q. d. Alas I am not come up to my duty; I am a great way behind, but I am following after, if at last I may attain it; perfection is in my expectation and hope at last, not in my attainment here.

Sixthly, The imitation of Christ, as our general Rule and Pattern, necessarily implies the transcending Holiness of the Lord Jesus. His Holiness is greater than the Holiness of all Creatures; for only that which is first and best in every kind, is the rule and measure of all the rest. 'Tis the height of Saints ambition to be made conformable to Christ, Phil. 3. 10. Christ hath a double perfection, a perfection of *Being*, and a perfection of *Working*: His Life was a perfect Rule, no blot or error could be found therein; for he was *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners*: And such an High-Priest became us, as the Apostle speaks, Heb. 7. 26. The conformity of Professors to Christ's example, is the test and measure of all their Graces: The nearer any Man comes to this Pattern, the nearer he approaches towards perfection.

Seventhly, The Christians imitation of Christ, under penalty of losing his claim to Christ, necessarily implies sanctification and obedience to be the evidences of our justification and interest in Christ; assurance is unattainable without obedience, we can never be comfortable Christians, except we be strict and regular Christians, Gal. 6. 10. *As many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy; and upon the Israel of God*. A loose

*Primum
& opti-
mum in
unquo-
que gene-
re est regula
& mensu-
ra cetero-
rum.*

*Nec ego
se, nec tu
me, sed
ambo au-
divimus
Christum.
Aug.*

and careless conversation can never be productive of true Peace and Consolation, 2 Cor. 1. 12. *This is our rejoicing, the Testimony of our Conscience; that in simplicity and godly sincerity; not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God; we have had our conversation in the World.* Let Men talk what they will of the immediate Sealings, and Comforts of the Spirit; without any regard to Holiness, or respect to Obedience: Sure I am, whatever delusion they meet with in that way; true Peace and Consolation is only to be expected and found here: *The fruit of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness, and assurance for ever: We have it not for our Holiness, but we always have it in the way of Holiness.* And so much of the first particular, namely, what the imitation of Christ implies and comprises in it.

2. Secondly, In the next place, we are to enquire, in what things all that profess Christ are obliged to the imitation of him; or what those excellent Graces in the Life of Christ were, which are propounded as Patterns to the Saints.

Quid vobis cum virtutibus qui vestrem Christi ignoratis? Ubinaam, quæ vera prudentia, nisi in Christi doctrina? Ubi vera temperantia, nisi in Christi vita? Ubi vera fortitudo, nisi in Christi passione? Bernard.

The Life of Christ was a Living Law; all the Graces and Vertues of the Spirit were represented in their Glory, and brightest lustre, in his conversation upon Earth: Never Man spake as he spake; never any lived as he lived: *We beheld his Glory* (saith the Evangelist) *as the Glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth,* Joh. 1. 14. But to descend to the particular imitable excellencies in the Life of Christ, which are high Patterns, and excellent Rules, for the conversations of his People, we shall, from among many others, single out the ten following Particulars, which we are obliged to imitate.

Pattern 1. And first of all, the Purity and Holiness of the Life of Christ, is propounded as a Glorious Pattern for the Saints imitation, 1 Pet. 1. 15. *As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation: as those who are obedient,* in every creek and turning of your lives. There is a twofold Holiness in Christ; the Holiness of his Nature, and the Holiness of his Practice; his holy Being, and his holy Working; this obligeth all that profess interest in him, to a twofold Holiness, viz. Holiness in *actu primo*, in the Principles of it in their Hearts; and Holiness in *actu secundo*, in the practice and exercise of it in their conversations: 'Tis very true, we cannot in all respects imitate the Holiness of Christ; for he is essentially Holy; proceeding by Nature, as a pure Beam of Holiness from the Father; and when he was incarnate he came into the World immaculate, and pure from the least stain of pollution; therefore it was said, Luke 1. 29. *That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God:* In this we can never be like Christ in the way of our production; for *who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean?* not one. The Lord Jesus was also essentially holy, (i. e.) he makes others holy; therefore his sufferings and blood are called a Fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness, (i. e.) to cleanse other Men's

Souls, Zech. 13. 1. in this Christ also is inimitable: No Man can make himself or others holy. That's a great truth though it will hardly go down with proud Nature, *minus est se fecisse hominem quam sanctum*, we may sooner make our selves to be Men than to be Saints. Beside, Christ is infinitely holy as he is God, and there are no stints or measures set to his holiness as Mediator; Joh. 3. 34. *for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.* But notwithstanding these excepted respects, the Holiness of Christ is propounded as a Pattern for our imitation six ways.

First, He was truly and sincerely holy, without fiction or simulation; and this appeared in the greatest trial of the truth of Holiness that ever was made in this World, John 14. 30. *The Prince of this World cometh, and hath nothing in me:* When he was agitated and shaken with the greatest temptations, no dregs appeared; he was like pure Fountain-water in a Crystal Glass. The Hypocrite makes shew of more Holiness than he hath; but there was more Holiness in Christ, than ever appeared to the view of Men. We may say of the way of Christ, what the Philosopher saith of the milky way in the Heavens; that those faint streams of light which we see there, are nothing else but the reflection of innumerable Stars which shine there, though they be invisible to us: There was much inward beauty in him, and so there ought to be in all his Followers; our holiness, like Christ's, must be sincere and real, Eph. 4. 24. shining with inward Beauty towards God, rather than towards Men.

Secondly, Christ was uniformly holy, at one time as well as another; in one place and company as well as another; he was still like himself, an Holy Christ; one and the same tenour of Holiness ran throughout his whole Life, from first to last; so must it be with all his People, Holy in all manner of Conversation. Christians, look to your copy, and be sure to imitate Christ in this; write fair after your Copy; let there not be here a Word and there a Blot; one part of your Life heavenly and pure, and another earthly and dreggy; or (as one expresses it) now an heavenly rapture, and by and by a fleshly frolick.

Thirdly, Christ was exemplarily holy; a Pattern of Holiness to all that came nigh him, and conversed with him. O imitate Christ in this. It was the commendation of the Thessalonians, that they were *examples to all that believed in Macedonia and Achaia, and that in every place their Faith to God-ward was spread abroad,* 1 Thes. 1. 7, 8. Let no Man go out of your company without conviction or edification; so exemplary were the primitive Christians, Phil. 3. 17.

Fourthly, Christ was strictly and precisely Holy: *Which of you convinceth me of sin?* The most envious and observing Eyes of his greatest Enemies could not pick a hole, or find a flaw in any of his words or actions: 'Tis our Duty to imitate Christ in this, Phil. 2. 15. *That ye may be blameless and harmless, the Sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation,*

Galaxia est maxima frequentia minimarum stellarum, quæ præ exquisitè ad nostrum aspectum distincte pervenire nequeunt, ut cæteræ stellæ, atque ita inter se lumen commiscunt, et confundunt, Cœl. nimb. de Meteor. cap. 2.

Nation, among whom ye shine (or as the word may be rendered imperatively, *among whom shine ye*) as lights in the World. Thus it becomes the Followers of Christ to walk circumspectly or precisely, for so is the Will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, 1 Pet. 2. 15.

Fifthly, Christ was perseveringly Holy, Holy to the last breath; as he began, so he finished his whole Life in a constant course of Holiness; in this also he is our great Pattern; it becomes not any of his People to begin in the spirit, and end in the flesh; but on the contrary, their last works should be more than their first; let him that is holy be holy still, Rev. 22. 11.

Sixthly, In a word, the delight of Christ was only in holy things and holy persons; they were his chosen Companions; even so it becometh his People to have all their delights in the Saints, and in the excellent of the Earth, Psa. 16. 3. Thus Christians, be ye Followers of Christ in his Holiness: God hath decreed this conformity to Christ in all that shall be saved, Rom. 8. 29. he banisheth all unholy Ones from his gracious presence for ever, 1 Cor. 6. 9. Heb. 12. 14. The design of Christ in dying for you, was to make you pure and holy, Eph. 5. 25, 26. O then study Holiness; eye your Pattern; and, as dear Children, be ye Followers of your most holy Lord Jesus Christ.

Pattern 2. The obedience of Christ to his Father's Will is a Pattern for the imitation of all Christians; 'tis said of Christ, Heb. 5. 8. *that he learned obedience by the things which he suffered*: a Text which labours under some difficulties: Christ learned obedience, and yet was not ignorant before of what he learned afterward: He was perfect in knowledge; and yet the Apostle speaks of him as a proficient in the School of Wisdom. But we must consider there are two ways of learning, viz. by

1. The Comprehension of the Mind.

2. By the Experience of the Sense.

Christ, as God, was perfect in knowledge; nothing could be added to him: But when he became Man, then he came to understand, or learn by sufferings, as the Apostle here speaks; which though it added nothing to his knowledge, yet it was a new method and way of knowing. Now the obedience of Christ is our Pattern, whereunto we are obliged (as ever we will warrant our claim of interest in him) to conform our selves in the following properties of it.

First, Christ's obedience was free and voluntary, not forced or compulsory; it was so from the very first undertaking of the work of our Redemption, Prov. 8. 30, 31. *Then was I by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his Earth: and my delights were with the Sons of Men.* And when the fulness of time was come for executing that blessed design, which had been in prospect from all eternity, how cheerfully did the Will of Christ echo to his Father's call, Psa. 40. 7. *Then said I, lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy Law is within my heart.* Nor was this a flourish before he came into the Field,

and saw the Enemy; for he laid down his Life with the greatest cheerfulness and spontaneity that could be, Joh. 10. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again; no Man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my self:* And indeed the voluntariness of Christ, in his obedience unto Death, gave his Death the nature and formality of a Sacrifice; for so all Sacrifices ought to be offered, 1 Lev. 1. 3: and so Christ's Sacrifice was offered unto God, Eph. 5. 2. It was as grateful a work to Christ to die for us, as it was to Moses his Mother to take him to Nurse from the hand of Pharaoh's Daughter. O Christians, tread in the steps of Christ's Example; do nothing grudgingly for God, let not his commands be grievous, 1 Joh. 5. 3. If you do any thing for God willingly, you have a reward; if otherwise, a dispensation only is committed to you, 1 Cor. 9. 7. Obedience in Christ was an abatement to him, but in you a very great honour and advancement, you have reason therefore to obey with cheerfulness.

Secondly, The obedience of Christ was universal and complete, he was obedient to all the Will of God, making no demur to the hardest Service imposed by the Will of God upon him, Phil. 2. 8. *He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross:* And though its true the humanity of Christ recoiled and staggered, when that bitter Cup of the wrath of God was given him to drink; yet how soon was that innocent averfation overcome in him, by a perfect submission? *nevertheless not my Will, but thine be done,* Matth. 26. 39. Christians here is your Pattern: Happy art thou, Reader, if thou canst say, when God calls thee to suffering and self-denying work, I am filled with the Will of God. Such was Paul's obedience, Acts 21. 13. *I am ready not only to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus.*

Thirdly, The obedience of Christ was sincere and pure, without any base or by end, purely aiming at the Glory of God, Joh. 17. 4. *I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do.* He fought not Honour of Men. This was the great desire of his Soul, Joh. 12. 28. *Father glorify thy Name:* And truly the choicest part of your obedience consists in the purity of your ends, and in this Christ is propounded as your Pattern, Phil. 2. 3, 4, 5.

Fourthly, The streams of Christ's obedience flowed from the Spring and Fountain of ardent love to God; Joh. 14. 31. *But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do:* Thus let all your obedience to God turn upon the hinge of love; for love is the fulfilling of the Law, Rom. 13. 10. Not as if no other duty but love were required in the Law; but because no act of obedience is acceptable to God, but that which is performed in love.

Fifthly, In a word, The obedience of Christ was constant, he was obedient unto the death, he was not weary of his work to the last. Such a patient continuance in well-doing is one part of your conformity to Christ, Rom. 2. 7. 'tis laid upon you by his own express command, and a command back'd with the most

in encouraging promise, *Rev. 2. 10. Thou shalt be faithful unto the death, and I will give thee the crown of life.*

Vo'pibus infa-tu-rupes ex-cisale-iran. Pre-ter E' at-que au-bu das sivo-que-tem: Ast hominis nato nullis succed-er sedis. Est licitum. Henricus.

Pattern 3. The self-denial of Christ is the Pattern of Believers, and their conformity unto it is their indispensable duty, *Phil. 2. 4, 5, 6. 2 Cor. 8. 9. For ye know the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be rich.* Jesus Christ, for the Glory of God, and the love he bare to the elect, denied himself all the delights and pleasures of this World, *Matth. 20. 28. The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his Life a ransom for many;* he was all his life long in the World a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, *Isa. 53. 3.* more unprovided of comfortable accommodations, than the Birds of the Air, or Beasts of the Earth, *Luke 9. 58. The Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.* Yet this was the least part of Christ's self-denial: What did he not deny when he left the Bosom of his Father, with the ineffable delights and pleasures he there enjoyed from Eternity, and instead thereof to drink the cup, the bitter cup of his Father's wrath for our sakes? O Christians, look to your Pattern; and imitate your self denying Saviour. There is a three-fold Self you are to deny for Christ.

First, Deny your *Natural Self* for him, *Luke 14. 26. Hate your own Life in competition with his Glory, as well as your Natural Lusts, Titus 2. 12.*

Secondly, Deny your *Civil Self* for Christ; whether they be Gifts of the Mind, *Phil. 3. 8.* or your dearest Relations in the World, *Luke 14. 26.*

Thirdly, Deny your *moral and religious Self* for Christ, your own righteousness, *Phil. 3. 10.* Deny sinful Self *absolutely*, *Col. 3. 4, 5.* Deny Natural Self *conditionally* (i. e.) be ready to forsake its interests at the call of God. Deny your Religious Self, even your own Graces *comparatively*, not in the notion of duties, but in the notion of *righteousness*: And to encourage you in this difficult work, consider,

First, What great things Christ denied for you, and what small matters you have to deny for him.

Secondly, How readily he denied all for your sakes, making no objections against the difficultest Commands.

Thirdly, How incapable you are to put any obligation upon Christ to deny himself in the least for you, and what strong obligations Christ hath put you under to deny your selves in your greatest interests upon Earth for him.

Fourthly, Remember, that your self-denial is a condition consented to, and subscribed by your selves, if ever you received Christ aright.

Fifthly, In a word, Consider how much your self-denial for Christ makes for your advantage in both Worlds, *Luke 18. 29.* O therefore look not every Man upon his own things, but upon the things that are of Christ, let not that be justly charged upon you, which was charged upon them, *Phil. 2.*

21. *All seek their own, not the things which are Christ's.*

Pattern 4. The activity and diligence of Christ in finishing the work of God, which was committed to him, was a Pattern for all Believers to imitate. 'Tis said of him, *Acts 10. 38. He went about doing good.* O what a great and glorious work did Christ finish in a little time! A work to be celebrated to all Eternity by the Praises of the Redeemed. Six things were very remarkable in the diligence of Christ about his Father's Work.

First, That his Heart was intently set upon it, *Psal. 4. 8. Thy Law is in the midst of my Heart, or bowels.*

Secondly, That he never fainting under the many great discouragements he frequently met withal in that work, *Isa. 42. 4. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged.*

Thirdly, That the shortness of his time provoked him to the greatest diligence, *Job. 9. 4. I must work the work of him that sent me, while it is day, for the night cometh when no Man can work.*

Fourthly, That he improved all opportunities, companies, and occurrences to further the great work which was under his hand, *Job. 4. 6, 10.*

Fifthly, Nothing more displeased him than when he met with dissensions and discouragements in his work; upon that account it was that he gave Peter so sharp a check, *Matth. 8. 33. Get thee behind me Satan.*

Sixthly, Nothing rejoiced his Soul more than the prosperity and success of his work, *Luke 10. 20, 21.* When the Disciples made the report of the success of their Ministry, it is said, *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in Spirit.* And O what a triumphant shout was that upon the Cross, at the accomplishment of his work, *Job. 19. 30. It is finished.*

Now, Christians, eye your Pattern, look unto Jesus, trifle not away your lives in vanity. Christ was diligent, be not you slothful. And to encourage you in your imitation of Christ in labour, and diligence, consider,

First, How great an Honour God puts upon you in employing you for his service: Every Vessel of service is a Vessel of honour, *2 Tim. 2. 21.* The Apostle was very ambitious of that honour, *Rom. 15. 20.* It was the Glory of Eliakim to be fastened as a Nail in a sure place, and to have many People hang upon him, *Isa. 22. 33.*

Secondly, Your diligence in the work of God will be your great security in the hour of temptation, for the Lord is with you, while you are with him, *2 Chron. 15. 2.* The Schoolmen put the question: How the Saints in Heaven become impeccable? And resolve it thus, that they are therefore freed from Sin, because they are continually employed and swallowed up in the blessed Visions of God.

Thirdly, Diligence in the work of God is an excellent help to the improvement of Grace. For though gracious habits are not acquired, yet they are greatly improved by frequent acts. To him that hath shall be given, *Matth. 25. 29.* It is a good note of Luther, *Fides pinguescit operibus*, Faith is made fat by Obedience.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Diligence in the work of God is the direct way to the assurance of the love of God, 2 Pet. 1. 5. 10. This path leads you into Heaven upon Earth.

Fifthly, Diligence in obedience is a great security against back sliding: Small remissions in duty, and little neglects, increase by degrees unto great Apostasies, you may see how that disease is bred, by the method prescribed for its cure, Rev. 2. 5. *Do thy first works.*

Sixthly, In a word, laborious diligence in the day of Life will be your singular comfort when the Night of death overtakes you, 2 Pet. 1. 11. 2 Kings 20. 3.

Pattern 5. Delights in God, and in his service, was eminently conspicuous in the Life of Christ, and is a rare Pattern for Believers imitation, Job. 4. 32, 34. But he said unto them I have meat to eat that ye know not of, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his Work. The delights of Christ were all in Heaven. The Son of Man was in Heaven in respect of delight in God, while he conversed here among Men. And if you be Christ's, heavenly things will be the delight of your Souls also. Now spiritual delight is nothing else but the complacency and well-pleasedness of a renewed Heart in conversing with God, and the things of God; resulting from the agreeableness of them to the spiritual temper of his Mind. Four things are considerable about spiritual delights.

First, The Nature of it, which consisteth in the complacency, rest, and satisfaction of the mind in God, and spiritual things. The Heart of a Christian is centred, it is where it would be; it is gratified in the highest in the actions forth of Faith and Love upon God; as the taste is gratified with a suitable delicious relish, Psal. 63. 5, 6. Psal. 119. 14, 24. Psal. 17. 18.

Secondly, The Object of spiritual delight, which is God himself, and the things which relate to him. He is the Blessed Ocean into which all the Streams of spiritual delight do pour themselves, Psal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and on earth there is none that I desire in comparison of thee.*

Thirdly, The Subject of spiritual delight, which is a renewed heart, and that only so far as it is renewed, Rom. 7. 22. *I delight in the Law of God after the inward Man.*

Fourthly, The Principle and Spring of this delight, which is the agreeableness of spiritual things to the temper and frame of a renewed mind. A sensitive pleasure arises from the suitableness of the Faculty and Object. So it is here, no delicious sweetness can be so pleasant to the taste, or beautiful colours to the Eye, or melodious sounds to the Ear, as spiritual things to the renewed Souls, because spiritual Sense are delicate, and the objects more excellent.

But my business here is not so much to open its Nature, as press you to the practice thereof in conformity to your great Pattern, whose Life was a Life of delight in God, and whose work was performed with the greatest delight for God. *I delight to do thy will, O my God. O Christians strive to imitate your Pattern in*

this; and to encourage you, I will briefly hint a few things.

First, Scarce any thing can be more evidential of sincerity than a Heart delighting in God, and the will of God. Hypocrites go as far as others in the material part of Duties, but here they are defective, they have no delight in God and things spiritual; but do whatsoever they do in Religion from the compulsions of Conscience, or accommodations of self ends.

Secondly, An Heart delighting in God will be a choice help and means to perseverance. The reason why many so easily part with Religion is, because their Souls never tasted the sweetness of it; they never delighted in it, but the Christian who delights in the Law of God, will be meditating day and night, and shall be like a Tree planted by a River of Water, whose Leaf fadeth not, Psal. 1. 2, 3.

Thirdly, This will represent Religion very beautifully, and takingly to such as are yet Strangers to it; you will then be able to invite them to Christ by your Example, the Language whereof will be like that, Psal. 34. 8. *O taste and see that God is good.*

Fourthly, This will make all your services to God very pleasing and acceptable through Christ, you will now begin to do the Will of God on Earth, as it is done in Heaven, your Duties are so far Angelical as they are performed in the strength of delight in God.

But may not a sincere Christian act in duty without delight? Yea, may he not feel some kind of wariness in Duties.

Yes, doubtless he may, but then we must distinguish betwixt the Temper and Dis temper of a renewed Heart, the best Hearts are not always in their right frame.

*Pattern 6. The inoffensiveness of the Life of Christ upon Earth, is an excellent Pattern to all his People; he injured none, offended none, but was holy and harmless, as the Apostle speaks, Heb. 7. 26. He denied his own liberty to avoid occasion of offence; as in the case of the Tribute Money, Matth. 19. 27. The Children are free, notwithstanding lest we should offend them go, &c. So circumspect was Christ, and inoffensive among all Men, that though his Enemies sought occasion against him, yet could they find none, Luke 6. 7. Look unto Jesus, O ye Professors of Religion, imitate him in this gracious excellency of his Life, according to his command, Phil. 2. 15. *That ye may be harmless and blameless, the Sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation.* You are indeed allowed the exercise of your prudence, but not a jot farther than will consist with your innocence. *Be ye wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves.* 'Tis the rule of Christ, that you offend none, 1 Cor. 10. 32. 2 Cor. 6. 3. And to engage you to the imitation of Christ in this, I will briefly press it with a few encouragements, which methinks should prevail with any Heart that's truly gracious.*

First, For the Honour of Jesus Christ, be you inoffensive, his Name is called upon you, his Honour is concerned in your deportment; if your carriage in the World give just matter

Obj.

Sok

of offence, Christ's worthy Name will be blasphemed thereby, *James* 2. 7. Your inoffensive carriage is the only means to stop the mouths of Detractors, *1 Pet.* 2. 15.

Secondly, For the sake of Souls, the precious immortal Souls of others, be wary that you give no offence: *Wo to the World*, saith Christ, *because of offences*, *Matth.* 13. 7. Nothing was more commonly objected against Christ and Religion, by the Heathen in *Cyprian's* time, than the loose and scandalous

Ecce qui jactant se redemptos a tyrannide Satanae, qui predicant se mortuos esse mundo, nihilominus vincuntur cupiditatibus suis. Cyprian.

Lives of Professors: Behold, say they, these are the Men, who boast themselves to be redeemed from the tyranny of Satan, to be dead to the World; nevertheless see how they are overcome by their own Lusts. And much after

the same rate *Salvian* brings in the Wicked of his time, stumbling at the looseness of Professors, and saying, Where is that Catholic Law which they believe? Where are the Examples of Piety and Chastity which they have learned, &c. O Christians, draw not the guilt of other Men's eternal ruine upon your Souls.

Thirdly, In a word, answer the ends of God in your sanctification, and providential dispose in the World this way; by the holiness and harmlessness of your lives, many may be won to Christ, *1 Pet.* 3. 1. What the Heathens said of Moral Vertue (which they called *verticordia*, turn-heart) that if it were but visible to mortal Eyes, all Men would be enamoured upon it, will be much more true of Religion, when you shall represent the beauty of it in your conversations.

Pattern 7. The humility and lowliness of Christ is propounded by himself, as a Pattern for his People's imitation. *Matth.* 11. 29. *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly.* He could abase and empty himself of all his Glory, *Phil.* 2. 5, 6, 7. He could stoop to the meanest Office, even to wash the Disciples Feet. We read but of one triumph in all the Life of Christ upon Earth, when he rode to *Jerusalem*, the People strewing branches in the way, and the very Children in the streets of *Jerusalem*, crying, *Hosanna to the Son of David, Hosanna in the highest*; and yet with what lowliness and humility was it performed by Christ, *Matth.* 21. 5. *Behold thy King cometh unto thee meek and lowly.* The humility of Christ appeared in every thing he spake, or did. Humility discovered it self in his Language, *Psal.* 22. 6. *I am a worm, and no Man.* In his Actions, not refusing the meanest Office, *Job.* 13. 14. In his condescensions to the worst of Men, upon which ground they called him a *Friend of Publicans and Sinners*, *Matth.* 11. 19. But especially, and above all, in stooping down from all his Glory to a state of deepest contempt for the Glory of God, and our Salvation. Christians here is your Pattern, look to your meek and humble Saviour, and tread in his steps, be you clothed with humility, *1 Pet.* 5. 5. Whoever are ambitious to be the World's great ones, let it be enough for you to be Christ's little ones. Convince the World, that since you knew God, and your selves, your Pride hath been dying from that day. Shew your humility in your habits, *1 Pet.* 3. 3.

1 Tim. 2. 9, 10. In your company, not contemning the meanest and poorest that fear the Lord, *Psal.* 15. 4. *Rom.* 12. 16. In your language, that dialect befits your Lips, *Eph.* 3. 8. *less than the leaf of all Saints*; but especially in the low value, and humble thoughts you have of your selves, *1 Tim.* 1. 15. And to press this I beseech you to consider.

First, From how vile a root Pride springs. Ignorance of God, and of your selves, gives rise and being to this Sin: They that know God will be humble, *Isa.* 6. 5. And they that know themselves cannot be proud, *Rom.* 7. 9.

Secondly, Consider the mischievous effects it produces; it estrangeth the Soul from God, *Psal.* 138. 6. It provokes God to lay you low, *Job.* 40. 11, 12. It goes before destruction, and a dreadful fall, *Prov.* 10. 18.

Thirdly, As it is a great sin, so it is a bad sign, *Hab.* 2. 4. *Behold his heart which is lifted up, is not upright in him.*

Fourthly, How unsuitable it is to the sense you have, and the complaints you make of your own corruptions, and spiritual wants, and, above all, how contrary it is to your Pattern and Example: Did Christ, speak, act, or think as you do? O learn humility from Jesus Christ; it will make you precious in the Eyes of God, *Isa.* 57. 15.

Pattern 8. The Contentation of Christ, in a low and mean condition in the World, is an excellent Pattern for his People's imitation. His lot, in this World, fell upon a condition of deepest Poverty and Contempt: Yet how well was he satisfied and contented with it! Hear him expressing himself about it, *Psal.* 16. 6. *The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.* The contentation of his Heart, with a suffering condition, evidenced it self in his silence, under the greatest sufferings, *Isa.* 53. 7. *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a Sheep before the shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.* O that in this also the poorest Christians would imitate their Saviour, and learn to manage an afflicted condition with a contented Spirit: Let there be no murmurs, complaints, or foolish charges of God heard from you, whatever strait or troubles he bring you into: For,

First, The meanest and most afflicted Christian is owner of many rich invaluable Mercies, *Eph.* 1. 3. *1 Cor.* 3. ult. Is Sin pardoned, and God reconciled? then never open your Mouths any more, *Ezek.* 16. 63.

Secondly, You have many precious Promises, that God will not forsake you in your straits, *Hab.* 13. 5. *Isa.* 41. 17. And your whole Life hath been a Life of experiences of the faithfulness of God in his Promises. Which of you cannot say with the Church, *Lam.* 3. 23. *His Mercies are new every morning, and great is his faithfulness.*

Thirdly, How useful and beneficial are all your afflictions to you? they purge your Sins, prevent your Temptations, wean you from the World, and turn to your Salvation: And how unreasonable then must your discontentedness at them be?

Fourthly,

Fourthly, The time of your relief, and full deliverance from all your troubles is at hand; the time is but short that you shall have any concernment about these things, 1 Cor. 7. 29. If the Candle of your earthly comfort be blown out, yet remember it is but a little while to the break of day, and then there will be no need of Candles. Besides,

Fifthly, Your Lot falls, by Divine direction, upon you, and as bad as it is, it is much easier and sweeter than the condition of Christ in this World was: Yet he was contented, And why cannot you? O that we could learn contentment from Christ in every condition. And thus I have laid before you some excellent Patterns in the Life of Christ, for your Imitation:

SERMON XXX.

Serm. 30.

1 JOHN II. 6.

Text. *He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

THESE Words having been resolved into their parts, and their Sense opened in the former Sermon: The Observation was this:

Doct. *That every Man is bound to the imitation of Christ, under penalty of forfeiting his claim to Christ.*

In prosecution of this Point, we have already shewn what the Imitation of Christ imports, and what the imitable excellencies in the Life of Christ are: It now remains that I shew you, in the next place, why all that profess Christ, are bound to imitate his example, and then apply the whole. Now the necessity of this imitation of Christ will convincingly appear divers ways.

1. First, From the established order of Salvation, which is fixed and unalterable: God that hath appointed the end, hath also established the means and order by which Men shall attain the ultimate end. Now Conformity to Christ is the established method in which God will bring Souls to Glory, Rom. 8. 29. *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son; that he might be the first-born among many Brethren.* The same God who hath predestinated Men to Salvation, hath, in order thereunto, predestinated them unto Conformity to Christ, and this order of Heaven is never to be reversed, we may as well hope to be saved without Christ, as to be saved without Conformity to Christ.

2. Secondly, The Nature of Christ mystical requires this Conformity, and renders it indispensably necessary. Otherwise, the Body of Christ must be heterogeneous; of a Nature different from the Head: And how monstrous, and uncomely would this be? This would represent Christ to the World in an Image, or Idea, much like that, Dan. 2. 32, 33. *The head of fine gold, the breast and arms of silver, the thighs of brass, the legs of iron, the feet part of iron, part of clay.* Christ the Head is pure and holy, and therefore very unsuitable to sensual and earthly Members. And therefore the Apostle in his description of mystical Christ describes the Members of Christ (as they ought to be) of the same Nature and Quality with the Head, 1 Cor. 15. 48. *As is the heaven,*

so are they also that are heavenly; and as we have born the image of the earthly, so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. That image or resemblance of Christ which shall be complete and perfect after the Resurrection, must be begun in its first draught here, by the work of Regeneration.

Thirdly, This resemblance and conformity to Christ appears necessary from the communion, which all Believers have with Christ in the same Spirit of Grace and Holiness. Believers are called Christ's *Fellows* or Co-partners, Psal. 45. 7. from their participation with him of the same Spirit, as it is, 1 Thes. 4. 8. God giveth the same Spirit unto us, which he more plentifully poured out upon Christ. Now where the same Spirit and Principle is, there the same Fruits and Operations must be produced, according to the proportions and measures of the Spirit of Grace communicated; and this reason is farther enforced, by the very design and end of God in the infusion of the Spirit of Grace; for it is plain from Ezek. 36. 27. that practical Holiness and Obedience is the scope and design of that infusion of the Spirit. The very innate property of the Spirit of God in Men, is to elevate their Minds, and set their Affections upon heavenly things, to purge their Hearts from earthly dross, and fit them for a Life of Holiness and Obedience: Its Nature also is assimilating, and changeth them in whom it is, into the same image with Jesus Christ their heavenly Head, 2 Cor. 3. 18.

Fourthly, The necessity of this imitation of Christ may be argued from the design and end of Christ's exhibition to the World in a Body of Flesh. For though we detest that Doctrine of the *Socinians*, which makes the exemplary Life of Christ to be upon the matter, the whole end of his Incarnation; yet we must not run so far from an Error as to lose a precious Truth. We say the satisfaction of his Blood was a main and principal end of his Incarnation, according to Matt. 20. 28. We affirm also, that it was a great design and end of the Incarnation of Christ, to set before us a Pattern of Holiness for our imitation: For so speaks the Apostle, 1 Pet. 2. 21. *He hath left us an Example, that we should follow his steps.*

steps. And this Example of Christ greatly obliges Believers to his imitation, *Phil. 2. 5. Let this mind be in you which also was in Christ Jesus.*

5. Fifthly, Our imitation of Christ is one of those great Articles which every Man is to subscribe, whom Christ will admit into the number of his Disciples, *Luke 14. 27. Whosoever doth not come after me, cannot be my Disciple.* And again, *Joh. 12. 26. If any Man serve me, let him follow me.* To this condition we have submitted, if we be sincere Believers, and therefore are strictly bound to the imitation of Christ, not only by God's command, but by our own consent. But if we profess interest in Christ, when our Hearts never consented to follow and imitate his Example; then are we self-deceiving Hypocrites, wholly disagreeing from the Scripture-character of Believers, *Rom. 8. 1. They that are Christ's being there described to be such as walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit: And Gal. 5. 25. If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit.*

6. Sixthly, The Honour of Christ necessitates the conformity of Christians to his Example, else what way is there left to stop detracting Mouths, and vindicate the Name of Christ from the reproaches of the World? How can wisdom be justified of her Children, except it be this way? By what means shall we cut off occasion from such as desire occasion, but by regulating our lives by Christ's Example? The World hath Eyes to see what we *practise*, as well as Ears to hear what we *profess*. Therefore either shew the consistency betwixt your Profession and Practice, or you can never hope to vindicate the Name and Honour of the Lord Jesus. The uses follow, for

1. Information.
2. Exhortation.
3. Consolation.

Use 1.

Infer. 1.

1. Use for Information.

Inference 1.

If all that profess interest in Christ be strictly bound to imitate his Holy Example, then it follows, that Religion is very unjustly charged by the World with the scandals and evils of them that profess it. Nothing can be more unjust, and irrational, if we consider,

First, That Christian Religion severely censures loose and scandalous actions in all Professors; and therefore is not to be censured for them. 'Tis absurd to condemn Religion, for what it self condemns: Looseness no way flows from the Principles of Christianity, but is most opposite, and contrary to it, *Tit. 2. 11, 12. For the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all Men: teaching us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World.*

Secondly, It is an argument of the excellency of Christian Religion, that even wicked Men themselves covet the Name, and Profession of it, though they only cloak and cover their evils under it. I confess it is a great abuse of such an excellent thing as Religion is, but yet if it had not an awful reverence paid it, by the Consciences of all Men, it would never be abused to this purpose by Hypocrites, as it is.

Thirdly, According to this reasoning there can be no Religion in the World, for name sake that Religion which is not scandalized by the Practices of some that profess it. So that this practice hath a natural tendency to *Atheism*, and is no doubt encouraged by the Devil for that end.

Inference 2.

Infer. 2.

If all Men forfeit their claim to Christ who endeavour not to imitate him in the holiness of his Life, then how small a number of real Christians are there in the World? Indeed if liberal talking without accurate walking, if common Profession without holy Practices were enough to constitute a Christian, then this Quarter of the World would abound with Christians. But if Christ owns none for such, but those that tread in the steps of his Example, then the number of real Christians is very small. The generality of Men that live under the Christian Name, are such as walk after the Flesh, *Rom. 8. 2. According to the course of this World, they yield their Members as Instruments of unrighteousness unto Sin, Rom. 6. 13. Strict godliness is a meer bondage to them, narrow is the way, and few there be that walk therein.*

Inference 3.

Infer. 3.

What Blessed Times should we all see if true Religion did once generally obtain and prevail in the World! How would it humble the Proud, meek the Passionate, and spiritualize those that are Carnal! The perverse World charges Religion with all the Tumults and Disturbances that are in it, when as nothing in the World, but Religion, advanced in the power of it, can heal and cure these Epidemical Evils. O if Men were once brought under the power of Religion indeed, to walk after Christ in holiness, obedience, meekness, and self-denial; no such miseries as these would be heard of among us, *Isa. 11. 8, 9. The sucking Child shall play upon the hole of the Asps, and a weaned Child shall put his hand on the Cockatrice den, they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*

Inference 4.

Infer. 4.

Hence it also follows, That real Christians are the sweetest companions. 'Tis a comfortable thing to walk with them that walk after the example of Christ. The holiness, heavenliness, humility, self-denial, and diligence in obedience which was in Christ, is in some measure to be found in all sincere Christians. They shew forth the Virtues of him that calleth them. The Graces of the Spirit do more or less shine forth in them. And oh how endearing, sweet, and engaging are these things? Upon this very account the Apostle invited others into the Fellowship of the Saints, *1 Joh. 1. 3. That ye may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Christ Jesus: And is it not sweet to have Fellowship with them, who have Fellowship with Christ? O let all your delights be in the Saints, and in the Excellent of the Earth, who excel in Vertue, Psal. 16. 3. Yet mistake not, there is a great deal of difference betwixt one Christian and another, and even the best of Christians are sanctified but in part. If there be something sweet and engaging,*

there

there is also something bitter and distasteful in the best of Men. If there be something to draw forth your delight and love, there is also something to excise your pity and patience. Yet this is most certain, that notwithstanding all their infirmities and corruptions, they are the best and sweetest Company this World affords.

Inference 5.

Infer. 5. In a word, if no Man's Claim to Christ be warranted, but theirs that walk as be walked, How vain and groundless then are the hopes and expectations of all unsanctified Men who walk after their own Lusts? None are more forward to claim the privileges of Religion, than those that reject the duties of it; multitudes hope to be saved by Christ, who yet refuse to be governed by him. But such hopes have no Scripture warrant to support them. Yea, they have many Scripture Testimonies against them, 1 Cor. 6. 9. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.* O how many thousand vain hopes are laid in the dust; and how many thousand Souls are sentenced to Hell by this one Scripture.

2. Use for Exhortation.

Use 2. If this be so, it naturally presses all the Professors of Christianity to strict Godliness in their conversations, as ever they expect benefit by Christ. O Professors be ye not conformed unto this World, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your Minds. Set the Example of Christ before you, and labour to tread in his steps. This is the great business of Religion; the main scope of the Gospel. Give me leave therefore closely to press it upon your Hearts by the following Motives.

Motive 1.

1. Motive. Christ hath conformed himself to you by his abasing Incarnation: How reasonable therefore is it that you conform your selves to him in the way of Obedience and Sanctification? He came as near to you as is possible for him to do, strive you therefore to come as near to Christ as it is possible for you to do. He hath taken your Nature upon him, Heb. 2. 14. yea, and with your Nature he hath taken your weaknesses and infirmities, Rom. 8. 3. and not only your Natures, and your Infirmities, but your condition also; for he came under the Law for your sakes, Gal. 4. 4. He conformed himself to you, though he was infinitely above you, that was his abasement; do you conform your selves to him, who are infinitely beneath him, that will be your advancement; his conformity to you emptied him of his Glory; your conformity to him will fill you with Glory: He conformed himself to you, though you had no obligation upon him: Will not you conform your selves to him, who lie under infinite obligations so to do?

Motive 2.

2. Motive. You shall be conformed to Christ in Glory: How reasonable therefore is it you should now conform your selves to him in holiness? The Apostle saith, 1 Joh. 2. 2. *We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.* Yea, Vol. I.

not only your Souls shall be like him, but your very Bodies, even those vile Bodies of yours shall be changed, that they may be fashioned like unto his Glorious Body. How forcible a Motive is this to bring Men into conformity with Christ here! especially seeing our conformity to him in Holiness, is the evidence of our conformity to him in Glory, Rom. 6. 5. 2 Pet. 3. 11. O Professors, as ever you look to be with Christ in Glory hereafter, see that ye walk after Christ's Example, in Holiness and Obedience here.

3. Motive. The Conformity of your lives to Christ your Pattern, is your highest excellency in this World; the measure of your Grace is to be estimated by this Rule. The excellency of every Creature rises higher and higher, according as it approaches still nearer and nearer to its original; the more you resemble Christ in Grace, the more illustrious and resplendent will your conversations be in true spiritual Glory.

4. Motive. So far as you imitate Christ in your lives, and no farther, you will be beneficial to the World in which you live. So far as God helps you to follow Christ, you will be helpful to bring others to Christ, or build them up in Christ; for all Men are forbidden by the Gospel to follow you one step farther than you follow Christ, 1 Cor. 11. 1. and when you have finished your course in this World, the remembrance of your ways will be no farther sweet to others, than they are ways of Holiness and Obedience to Christ, 1 Cor. 4. 17. If you walk according to the course of this World, the World will not be the better for your walking.

5. Motive. To walk as Christ walked is a walk only worthy of a Christian; this is to walk worthy of the Lord, 1 Thess. 2. 12. Col. 1. 10. by worthiness the Apostle doth not mean meritoriousness, but comeliness, or that decorum which befits a Christian, as when a Man walks suitably to his Place and Calling in the World, we say he acts like himself.

So when you walk after Christ's Pattern, you then act like your selves, like Men of your Character and Profession. This is consonant to your vocation, Eph. 4. 1. *I beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called.* This walking suits with your obligation, 2 Cor. 5. 15. For it is to live unto him who died for us. This walking only suits with your designation, Eph. 2. 10. *For you are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained we should walk in them.* In a word, such walking as this, and such only, becomes your expedition, 2 Pet. 3. 14. *Wherefore [beloved] seeing that you look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace without spot and blameless.*

6. Motive. How comfortable will the close of your Life be at Death, if you have walked after Christ's Pattern and Example in this World! A comfortable Death is ordinarily the close of a Holy Life, Psal. 37 37. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.* A loose careless Life puts many terrible stings into death. As Worms in the Body are bred of the putrefaction there,

M m m

Dignitatis vocabulum in scripturis, non semper denotat exaltationem proportionem a qualitate rei ad rem, sed quendam convenientiam & decentiam que tollit repugnantiam, Davenant. in Col. p. 52.

Motive 6.

so the Worm of Conscience is bred of the Moral Putrefaction, or Corruption that is in our Natures and Conversations. O then be prevailed with by all these Considerations to imitate Christ in the whole course and compass of your Conversations.

Use 3.

3. Use for Consolation.

Lastly, I would leave a few Words of support and comfort to such as sincerely study and endeavour according to the tendency of their new Nature, to follow Christ's Example, but being weak in Grace, and meeting with strong Temptations, are frequently carried beside the holy purposes and designs of their honest meaning Hearts, to the great grief and disengagement of their Souls. They heartily wish and aim at holiness, and say with David, *Psal. 119. 5. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.* They follow after exactness in holiness as Paul did, *Phil. 3. 12. If by any means they might attain it.* But finding how short they come in all things of the Rule and Pattern, they mourn as he did, *Rom. 7. 24. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Well, well, if this be thy case, be not discouraged, but hearken to a few words of support and comfort, with which I shall close this point.

1. Support.

1. Support. Such defects in Obedience make no flaw in your Justification. For your Justification is not built upon your Obedience, but upon Christ's, *Rom. 3. 24.* and how incomplete and defective forever you be in your selves, yet at the same instant, you are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power, *Col. 2. 10. Wo to Abraham, Moses, David, Paul,* and the most eminent Saints that ever lived, if their Justification and acceptance with God had depended upon the perfection and completeness of their own Obedience.

2. Support.

2. Support. Your deep troubles for the defectiveness of your obedience, doth not argue you to be less, but more sanctified, than those who make no such complaints; for this proves you to be better acquainted with your own Hearts, than others are, to have a deeper hatred of Sin than others have, and to love God with a more fervent love than others do; the most eminent Saints have made the bitterest complaints upon this account, *Psal. 65. 3. Rom. 7. 23, 24.*

3. Support.

3. Support. The Lord makes excellent uses even of your infirmities and failings to do you good, and makes them turn to your unexpected advantage: For by these defects he hides pride from your Eyes; he beats you off

from self-dependance; he makes you to admire the riches of Free Grace; he makes you to long more ardently for Heaven, and entertain the sweeter thoughts of Death: And doth not the Lord then make blessed Fruits to spring up to you from such a bitter root? O the blessed Chymistry of Heaven, to extract such Mercies out of such Miseries!

4. Support. Your bewailed infirmities do not 4. Support.

break the Bond of the everlasting Covenant. The Bond of the Covenant holds firm, notwithstanding your defects and weaknesses, *Jer. 32. 40. Iniquities prevail against me, saith David, yet in the same breath he adds, as for our transgressions thou shalt purge them away, Psal. 65. 3. He's fill thy God, thy Father for all this.*

5. Support. Though the defects of your obedience are grievous to God, yet your deep 5. Support.

sorrows for them are well-pleasing in his Eyes, *Psal. 51. 17. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Ephraim was never a more pleasant Child to his Father, than when he moaned himself, and smote upon his Thigh as thou dost, Jer. 31. 20. Your Sins grieve him, but your sorrows please him.*

6. Support. Though God have left many 6. Support.

defects to humble you, yet he hath given many things to comfort you. This is a comfort, that the desire of thy Soul is to God, and to the remembrance of his Name. This is a comfort, that thy Sins are not thy delight as once they were; but thy shame and sorrow. This is a comfort, that thy case is not singular; but more or less the same complaints and sorrows are found in all gracious Souls through the World; and, to say all in one word, this is the comfort above all comforts, that the time is at hand, in which all these defects, infirmities and failings shall be done away, *1 Cor. 13. 10. When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*

For ever blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

And thus I have finished the third General Use of Examination, whereby every Man is to try his Interest in Christ, and discern whether ever Christ hath been effectually applied to his Soul. That which remains is

An Use of Lamentation.

Wherein the miserable, and most wretched state of all those to whom Jesus Christ is not effectually applied, will be yet more particularly discovered and bewailed.

S E R M O N XXXI.

EPHES. V. 14.

Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and rise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee Light.

THIS Scripture represents unto us the miserable and lamentable state of the unregenerate, as being under the power of spiritual death, which is the cause and inlet of

all other Miseries. From hence therefore I shall make the first Discovery of the woful and wretched State of them that apply not Jesus Christ to their own Souls.

The

Serm. 31.
Text. Of
the State
of Spiritual
Death and
the
Miserable
thereof.

The Scope of the *Apostle* in this Context, is to perswade Believers to a circumspect and holy Life; to walk as *Children of Light*. This Exhortation is laid down in *ver. 8.* and pressed by divers Arguments in the following Verses.

First, From the tendency of holy Principles unto holy Fruits and Practices, *ver. 9, 10.*

Secondly, From the convincing efficacy of Practical Godliness upon the Consciences of the wicked, *ver. 11, 12, 13.* It awes and convinces their Consciences.

Thirdly, From the co-incidence of such a Conversation with the great design and drift of the Scriptures; which is to awaken Men by regeneration out of that spiritual Sleep, or rather Death, which Sin hath cast them into: And this is the Argument of the Text, *Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, &c.* There is some difficulty in the reference of these Words. Some think it refers to *Isa. 26. 19. Awake and sing ye that dwell in the Dust.* Others to *Isa. 60. 1. Arise, shine, for thy Light is come, &c.* But most probably the Words neither refer to this or that particularly, but to the drift and scope of the whole Scriptures, which were inspired and written upon this great Design to awaken and quicken Souls out of the state of spiritual Death. And in them we are to consider these three things more distinctly and particularly.

1. The miserable State of the Unregenerate; they are asleep and dead.
2. Their duty; which is to awake, and stand up from the dead.
3. The Power enabling them thereunto; *Christ shall give thee Light.*

First, The miserable State of the unregenerate, represented under the Notions of *sleep and death*; both expressions intending one and the same thing, though with some variety of Notion. The Christless and unregenerate World is in a deep sleep; a spirit of slumber, senselessness and security is fallen upon them, though they lie exposed immediately to eternal Wrath and Misery, ready to drop into Hell every moment. Just as a Man that is fast asleep in a House on Fire, and whilst the consuming Flames are round about him, his Fancy is sporting it self in some pleasant Dream; this is a very lively resemblance of the unregenerate Soul. But yet he that sleeps hath the principle of Life entire in him, though his senses be bound, and the actions of Life suspended by sleep. Left therefore we should think it is only so with the unregenerate, the Expression is designedly varied, and those that were said to be *asleep*, are positively affirmed to be *dead*; on purpose to inform us that it is not a simple *suspension* of the acts and exercise, but a total *privation* of the principle of spiritual Life, which is the misery of the unregenerate.

Secondly, We have here the duty of the unregenerate, which is to *awake out of sleep, and arise from the dead.* This is their great concernment: No Duty in the World is of greater necessity and importance to them. *Strive* (saith Christ) *to enter in at the strait Gate,* Luke 13. 24. And the order of these Duties is very natural. First awake, then arise. Startling and rousing Convictions make way for spiritual

Vol. I.

Life; till God awake us by Convictions of our misery, we will never be perswaded to arise, and move towards Christ for Remedy and Safety.

Thirdly, But you will say, if unregenerate Men be dead Men, to what purpose is it to perswade them to arise and stand up? The very Exhortation supposes some power or ability in the unregenerate; else in vain are they commanded to arise. This Difficulty is solved in this very Text, though

the duty be ours, yet the power is God's. God commands that in his Word, which only his Grace can perform. *Christ shall give thee Light.* Popish Commentators would build the power of Free-will upon this Scripture, by a very weak Argument drawn from the order wherein these things are here expressed; which is but a weak Foundation to build upon, for it is very usual in Scripture to put the Effect before, and the Cause after, as it is here, so in *Isa. 26. 19. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the Dust.* But I will not here intangle my discourse with that Controversie, that which I aim at is plain in the Words, *viz.*

Doct. That all Christless Souls are under the Power of Spiritual Death, they are in the State of the dead.

Multitudes of Testimonies are given in Scripture to this Truth, *Eph. 2. 1, 5. You hath be quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.* Col. 2. 13. *And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath be quickened together with him;* with many other places of the same importence. But the Method in which I shall discourse this Point will be this:

First, I will shew you in what sense Christless and unregenerate Men are said to be dead.

Secondly, What the State of spiritual Death is.

Thirdly, How it appears that all unregenerate Men are in this sad State. And then apply it.

First, In what sense are Christless and unregenerate Men said to be dead Men.

To open this, we must know there is a threefold death, *viz.*

1. Natural.
2. Spiritual.
3. Eternal.

Natural Death is nothing else but the privation of the principle of Natural Life, or the separation of the Soul from the Body, *James 2. 26. The Body without the Spirit is dead.* Spiritual Death is the privation of the Principle of spiritual Life, or the want and absence of the quickning Spirit of God in the Soul; the Soul is the Life of the Body, and Christ is the Life of the Soul; the absence of the Soul is death to the Body, and the absence or want of Christ is death to the Soul. Eternal Death is the separation both of Body and Soul from God, which is the misery of the Damned. Now Christless and unregenerate Men are not dead in the first sense; they are naturally alive, though they are dead while they live: Nor are they yet dead in the last sense, eternally separated from God, by an irrevocable Sentence.

M m 2

3.

Quamvis verba videntur velle, primum excitari, & surgere, deinde illuminari; eadem intelligendum est, ut lucis Christi excitari eum, & surgere.
Rol. in Loc.

tence as the damned are; but they are dead in the second sense, they are spiritually dead, whilst they are naturally alive, and this spiritual death is the Fore-runner of eternal death. Now spiritual death is put in Scripture in opposition to a two-fold spiritual Life. viz.

1. The Life of Justification.
2. The Life of Sanctification.

Spiritual death in opposition to the Life of Justification is nothing else but the guilt of sin, bringing us under the Sentence of death. Spiritual Death in opposition to the Life of Sanctification is the Pollution or Dominion of Sin. In both these senses unregenerate Men are dead Men; but it is the last which I am properly concerned to speak to in this place: And therefore,

Secondly, Let us briefly consider what this Spiritual death is, which as before was hinted, is the absence of the quickening Spirit of Christ from the soul of any man. That Soul is a dead Soul into which the Spirit of Christ is not infused in the work of regeneration, and all its works are dead works, as they are called, *Heb. 9. 14.* For, look how it is with the damned, they live, they have sense and motion, and an immortality in all these; yet because they are eternally separated from God, the life which they live, deserves not the name of life, but is every where in scripture filed death: So the unregenerate, they are naturally alive: They eat, and drink, they buy, and sell, they talk, and laugh, they rejoice in the creatures; and many of them spend their days in pleasures, and then go down to the grave. This is the life they live, but yet the scripture rather calls it death than life; because though they live, yet it is without God in the World, *Eph. 2. 12.* Though they live, yet it is a life alienated from the life of God, *Eph. 4. 18.* And therefore while they remain naturally alive, they are in scripture said to remain in death, *1 John 3. 14.* and to be dead while they live, *1 Tim. 5. 6.* And there is great reason why a Christless and unregenerate state should be represented in scripture under the notion of death; for there is nothing in nature which more aptly represents that miserable state of the Soul than natural death doth. The dead see and discern nothing, and the natural man perceiveth not the things that are of God. The dead have no beauty or desirableness in them; *Bury my dead*, said *Abraham*, *out of my sight*: Neither is there any spiritual loveliness in the unregenerate. True it is, some of them have sweet natural qualities, and moral excellencies, which are taking things; but these are as so many flowers decking and adorning a dead Corpse. The dead are Objects of pity, and great lamentation; Men use to mourn for the Dead, *Eccles. 12. 5.* *Man goeth to his long home, and the Mourners go about the streets.* But unregenerate, and Christless souls are much more the Objects of pity and lamentation. How are all the People of God (especially those that are naturally related to them) concerned to mourn over them, and for them, as *Abraham* did for *Ismael*, *Gen. 17. 18.* *O that Ismael might live before thee.* Upon these, and many other accounts, the state of unregeneracy is represented to us in the notion of Death.

Thirdly, And that this is the state of all Christless and un sanctified persons, will undeniably appear two ways.

1. The causes of spiritual life have not wrought upon them.

2. The effects and signs of spiritual life do not appear in them; and therefore they are in the state, and under the power of spiritual death.

First, The causes of spiritual life have not wrought upon them. There are two causes of spiritual life.

1. Principal and internal.
2. Subordinate and external.

The principal internal cause of spiritual life, is the regenerating spirit of Christ, *Rom. 8.*

2. *The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death.* 'Tis the spirit as a regenerating spirit that unites us with Christ in whom all spiritual life originally is, *John 5. 25, 26.* *Verily, I say unto you, that the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear, shall live: for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.* As all the Members of the natural Body receive Animation, Sense, and Motion by their Union with their natural head; so all believers, the members of Christ, receive spiritual life and animation by their Union with Christ their mystical head, *Eph. 4. 15, 16.* Except we come to him and be united with him in the way of faith, we can have no life in us, *John 5. 40.* *Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life.* Now the Spirit of God hath yet exerted no regenerating, quickening influences, nor begotten any special saving faith in natural un sanctified men; what ever he hath done for them in the way of natural, or spiritual common gifts, yet he hath not quickned them with the life of Christ. And as the subordinate external means of life, viz. the preaching of the Gospel, which is the instrument of the spirit in this glorious work, and is therefore called *The word of life*, *Phil. 2. 16.* this word hath not yet been made a regenerating quickning word to their souls. Possibly it hath enlightened them, and convinced them: It hath wrought upon their minds in the way of common illumination, and upon their consciences in the way of conviction, but not upon their hearts and wills by way of effectual conversion: To this day the Lord hath not given them an heart opening it self in the way of faith to receive Jesus Christ.

Secondly, The effects and signs of spiritual life do not appear in them: for

First, They have no feeling or sense of misery and danger. I mean, no such sense as throwly awakens them to apply Christ their remedy. That spiritual judgment lies upon them, *Isa. 6. 9, 10.* *And he said, go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not; make the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes.*

Secondly, They have no spiritual motions towards Christ, or after things that are spiritual; all the Arguments in the World cannot pervade their wills to move one step towards Christ in the way of faith, *John 5. 40.* *Ye will not come unto me:* Were there a principle of

of spiritual life in their souls, they would move Christ-ward, and Heaven-ward, *John 4. 14.* it would be in them a well of water springing up into eternal life. The natural tendency of the spiritual life is upward.

Thirdly, The unregenerate have no appetite unto spiritual food, they favour not things that are spiritual; they can go from week to week, and from year to year, all their lifetime without any communion betwixt God and their souls, and feel no need of it, nor any hungerings, nor thirstings after it, which could never be if a principle of spiritual life were in them; for then they would esteem the words of Gods mouth more than their necessary food, *Job 30. 12.*

Fourthly, They have no heat, or spiritual warmth in their affections to God, and things above; their hearts are as cold as a stone to spiritual Objects. They are hated indeed by their lusts and affections to the world, and the things of the world; but O how cold and dead are they towards Jesus Christ and spiritual excellencies!

Fifthly, They breathe not spiritually, therefore they live not spiritually: Were there a spiritual principle of life in them, their souls would breathe after God in spiritual prayer, *Acts 9. 11. Behold, be prayer.* The lips of the unregenerate may move in prayer, but their hearts and desires do not breathe and pant after God.

Sixthly, They have no cares or fears for self-preservation, which is always the effect of life; the poorest fly or silliest worm will shun danger: The wrath of God hangs over them in the threatnings, but they tremble not at it: Hell is but a little before them, they are upon the very precipice of eternal ruine; yet will use no means to avoid it. How plain therefore is this sad case which I have undertaken here to demonstrate, viz. that Christless and unregenerate souls are dead souls? The uses follow.

Infer. 1.

Inference 1.

If all Christless and unregenerate souls be dead souls, then how little pleasure can Christians take in the society of the unregenerate?

Certainly 'tis no pleasure for the living to converse among the dead. It was a cruel torment invented by *Mezentius* the Tyrant, to tie a dead and living man together: The pleasure of society arises from the harmony of spirits, and the hopes of mutual enjoyment in the World to come; neither of which can sweeten the society of the godly with the wicked in this World. 'Tis true, there is a necessary civil converse which we must have with the ungodly here; or else (as the Apostle speaks) we must go out of the World. There are affinities of relation which must be faithfully and tenderly paid even to the unregenerate: But certainly, where we have our free election, we shall be much wanting both to our duty and comfort, if we make not the people of God our chosen companions. Excellently to this purpose speaks a Modern Author, 'Art thou a godly master? when thou takest a Servant into thine house, choose for God, as well as thyself. A godly servant is a greater blessing than we think on: He can work, and set God on work also for his

masters good, *Gen. 24. 12. O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master: And sure he did his master as much service by his prayer, as by his prudence, in that journey. Holy David observed while he was at Sauls Court, the mischief of having wicked and ungodly servants, (for which such was that unhappy King so compassed, that David compares his Court to the prophane and barbarous heathens, among whom there was scarce more wickedness to be found, *Psal. 120. 6. Wo is me, that I sojourn in Mesheck, that I dwell in the Tents of Kedar, (i. e.) among those who were as prodigiously wicked as any there*) and no doubt but this made this gracious man in his banishment before he came to the Crown (having seen the evil of a disordered house) to resolve what he would do when God should make him the head of such a Royal Family, *Psal. 101. 7. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies, shall not tarry in my sight.**

'Art thou godly? shew thyself so in the choice of husband, or wife. I am sure, if some (and those godly also) could bring no other testimonial for their godliness than the care they have taken in this particular, it might justly be called into question both by themselves and others. There is no one thing that gracious persons (even those recorded in scripture as well as others) have shewn their weakness, yea, given offence and scandal more in, than in this particular. The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair, *Gen. 6. 2.* One would have thought, the sons of God should have looked for grace in the heart, rather than beauty in the face; but we see, even they sometimes turn in at the fairest sign, without much enquiring what Grace is to be found dwelling within. Look to the rule O Christian, if thou wilt keep the power of holiness! That is clear as a Sun-beam written in the Scripture; be not unequally yoked together with Unbelievers, *2 Cor. 6. 14.*

Infer. 2:

Inference 2.

How great and wholly supernatural, marvellous and wonderful is that change which Regeneration makes upon the Souls of Men! It is a change from death to life, *Luke 15. 24. This my Son was dead, and is alive again.* Regeneration is life from the dead. The most excellent life from the most terrible death. 'Tis the life of God re-inspired into a soul alienated from it by the power of Sin, *Eph. 4. 18.* There are two stupendious changes made upon the souls of Men, which justly challenges highest Admiration, viz. That,

1. From sin to Grace.
2. From Grace to Glory.

The Change from Grace to Glory is acknowledged by all, and that justly, to be a wonderful change; for God to take a poor Creature out of the Society of sinful Men, yea from under the burden of many sinful Infirmities which made him groan from day to day in this world; and in a Moment to make him a compleat and perfect Soul, shining in the Beauties of Holiness, and filling him as a Vessel of Glory with the unspeakable and unconceivable Joys of his presence, to turn his groanings into triumphs, his sighings into Songs of Praise: This I say is mar-

Ue solens
vicia alibi
commata in
propinqua
membra
perniciem
suam effu-
re; sic im-
proberum
vicia in o-
s deri-
vantur
quis cum
illis vita
confectu-
dinem.
Tertul.
adver. Va-
lentin.
Gurnals
Christian
armour,
part. 2. p.
257.

marvellous, and yet the former change from sin to grace is no way inferior to it. Nay, in some respects beyond it; for the change which Glory makes upon the regenerate, is but a gradual change, but the change which regeneration makes upon the ungodly, is a *specific* change. Great and admirable is this work of God, and let it for ever be marvellous in our Eyes.

Inference 3.

Infer. 3. If unregenerate souls be dead souls, what a fatal stroke doth Death give to the Bodies of all unregenerate Men? A Soul dead in Sin, and a Body dead by virtue of the Curse for Sin, and both Soul and Body remaining for ever under the Power of eternal Death, is so full and perfect a Misery, as that nothing can be added to make it more miserable: 'Tis the Comfort of a Christian, that he can say when Death comes *non omnis moriar*, I shall not wholly die; there is a Life I live which Death cannot touch, *Rom. 8. 13.* The Body is dead because of Sin, but the Spirit is life because of Righteousness. Blessed and holy is he, that hath part in the first Resurrection, on such the second Death hath no power. As Death takes a Believer from amidst many sorrows and troubles, and brings him to the vision of God, to the general Assembly of all the perfected Saints, to a State of compleat Freedom, and full Satisfaction; so it drags the unregenerate from all his sensitive Delights and Comforts, to the place of Torments. It buries the dead soul out of the Presence of God for ever. 'Tis the King of Terrors, 'tis a Serpent with a deadly sting to every man than is out of Christ.

Inference 4.

Infer. 4. If every unregenerate soul be a dead soul, how sad is the case of Hypocrites, and temporary Believers who are twice dead? These are those cursed trees of which the Apostle Jude speaks, *Jude ver. 12.* Trees whose Fruit withereth, without Fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the Roots. The Apostle alludes unto dying trees. Trees that are dying the first time in the spring, they then fade, decay, and cast their Leaves, when other trees are fragrant and flourishing. But from this first death they are sometimes recovered by pruning and dressing, or watering the roots: But if in Autumn they decay again, which is the Critical and Climacterical time of trees to discover whether their disease be mortal or not; if then, they wither and decay the second time, the Fault is *ab intra*, the root is rotten, there is no hope of it. The Husbandman bestows no more labour about it, except it be to root it up for Fuel to the fire. Just thus stands the Case with false and hypocritical Professors, who though they were still under the power of spiritual death, yet in the beginning of their profession they seemed to be alive: They shewed the World the fragrant Leaves of a fair Profession; many hopeful buddings of Affection towards spiritual things were seen in them, but wanting a root of regeneration, they quickly began to wither, and cast their untimely Fruit. However, by the help of Ordinances, or some rousing and awakening Providences they seem to recover themselves

again; but all will not do, the Fault is *ab intra* from the want of a good root, and therefore at last they who were always *once dead*, for want of a principle of regeneration; are now become *twice dead*, by the withering and decay of their vain profession. Such trees are prepared for the severest flames in Hell. *Mat. 24. 51.* Their Portion is the saddest Portion allotted for any of the Sons of Death. Therefore the Apostle Peter tells us, *2 Pet. 2. 20, 21.* For if after they have escaped the Pollutions of the World through the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the Beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to run from the holy Commandment delivered unto them. Double measures of wrath seem to be prepared from them that die this double death.

Inference 5.

If this be so, then unregenerate persons deserve the greatest Lamentations. And were this truth heartily believed, we could not but mourn over them with the most tender Compassion, and hearty sorrow. If our Husbands, Wives or Children be dying a natural death, how are our hearts rent in pieces with pity and sorrow for them? What Cries, Tears and wringing of Hands discover the deep sense we have of their Misery! O Christians, is all the love you have for your Relations spent upon their Bodies? Are their souls of no value in your Eyes? Is spiritual Death no misery doth it not deserve a tear? The Lord open our Eyes, and duly affect our Hearts with spiritual Death and soul Miseries.

Consider my Friends, and let it move your Bowels, (if there be bowels of affection in you) whilst they remain spiritually dead, they are useless and wholly unserviceable unto God: in the world as to any special and acceptable service unto him, *2 Tim. 2. 21.* They are incapable of all spiritual Comforts from God: they cannot taste the least sweetness in Christ, in duties, or in promises, *Rom. 8. 6.* They have no beauty in their souls; how comely soever their bodies be, 'tis grace, and nothing but grace that beautifies the inner man, *Ezek. 16. 6, 7.* The dead have neither comfort nor beauty in them; they have no hope to be with God in Glory, for the Life of Glory is begun in Grace, *Phil. 1. 6.* Their Graves must shortly be made, to be buried out of the Sight of God for ever in the lowest Hell, the Pit digged by Justice for all that are spiritually dead; the dead must be buried. Can such Considerations as these draw no pity from your Souls, nor excite your Endeavours for their regeneration? Then 'tis to be feared your Souls are dead as well as theirs. O pity them, pity them, and pray for them; in this case only, prayers for the dead are our duty; who knows but at the last God may hear your Cries, and you may say with Comfort as he did, *This my Son was dead, but is alive; was lost, but is found; and they began to be merry,* *Luke 15. 24.*

Infer. 5.

SERMON XXXII.

Serm 32.

JOHN III. 18.

— But he that Believeth not is Condemned already, because he hath not Believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.

Text. The Condemnation of Unbelievers opened and applied.

CHRISt having discoursed *Nicomachus* in the beginning of this Chapter about the necessity of Regeneration, proceeds to shew in this following Discourse the reason and ground why Regeneration and Faith are so indispensably necessary, viz. Because there is no other way to set Men free from the Curse and Condemnation of the Law. The Curse of the Law, like the fiery Serpents in the Wilderness, hath smitten every Sinner with a deadly stroke and sting, for which there is no Cure, but Christ lifted up in the Gospel, as *Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness*, ver. 14. Neither doth Christ cure any but those that believingly apply him to their own Souls. The result and conclusion of all you have in my Text, *He that believeth in him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already*, &c. In this Clause which I have pitched upon, we find these three parts.

1. The Sin threat'ned, viz. Unbelief.
2. The Punishment inflicted, viz. Condemnation.
3. The immediate relation of the one to the other; he is condemned already.

1. *First*, Let us take into consideration the Sin which is here threat'ned, viz. *Unbelief*. The neglecting or refusing of an exalted and offered Jesus. Unbelief is twofold, viz. Negative, or Positive. *Negative* Unbelief is the Sin of the Heathens, who never had the Gospel among them, nor the Offers of Christ made to them; these cannot believe on him, of whom they have not heard. *Positive* Unbelief is the Sin of Men and Women under the Gospel, to whom Christ is actually opened and offered by the preaching of the Gospel, but they make light of it, neglect the great Salvation; receive not Christ into their hearts, nor consent to the severe, and self-denying terms upon which he is offered. This is the Sin threat'ned.

2. *Secondly*, The punishment inflicted, and that is *Condemnation*: A word of deep and dreadful signification, appearing in this Text as the hand-writing upon the plaiser of the wall unto *Belshazzar*, Dan. 5. 5. A word whose deep sense and emphasis is fully understood in Hell. *Condemnation* is the judgment or sentence of God condemning a Man to bear the punishment of his eternal wrath for sin, the most terrible of all sentences.

3. *Thirdly*, The immediate relation, or respect this punishment hath to that sin of Unbelief. The Unbeliever is condemned already (i. e.) he is virtually condemned by the Law of God: *His Adversary* is already made for Hell, he is condemned as a sinner, by the breach of the first Covenant; but that condemnation had never been his ruine, except it had been rati-

fied by the sentence of God, condemning him as an *Unbeliever*, for slighting and rejecting the Grace offered in the second Covenant. So that the Unbeliever is already virtually condemned by both, as he is a sinner, and as he is an Unbeliever, as he hath transgressed the Law, and as he hath refused the Gospel, as he hath contracted sin, the mortal *disease*, and refused Christ, the only effectual remedy. He is virtually condemned now, and will be sententially condemned in the Judgment of the great day. Unbelief is his great sin, and condemnation is his great misery. Hence the observation will be this:

Doct. That all Unbelievers are presently and immediately under the just and dreadful sentence of God's Condemnation. John 12. 48. *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.* John 3. 36. *He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Three Things are to be opened in the Doctrinal part of this point.

1. What Unbelief, or the not receiving of Jesus Christ is.
2. What Condemnation the punishment of this sin is.
3. Why this punishment unavoidably follows that sin.

First, What the sin of Unbelief, or not receiving Christ is. By Unbelief we are not here to understand the reliques or remaines of that sin in the people of God which is mixed with their imperfect Faith, for there is some Unbelief still mingled with Faith in the best hearts. He that can say, *Lord I believe*, hath cause enough to cry out with tears, *help thou my unbelief*. However, this doth not bring the Soul under condemnation, or into the state of wrath. The Word condemns this Unbelief in them, but doth not condemn their persons for this Unbelief. But the Unbelief here spoken of, is the neglecting or refusing to take Christ upon the terms of the Gospel, and so is exclusive of the saving act and effects of Faith.

First, It is exclusive of the saving act of Faith, which (as hath been already declared) is the due receiving of Christ offered in the Gospel, consenting to take him upon his own terms. This the Unbeliever will by no means be persuaded to do. He will be persuaded to accept the promises of Christ, but not to accept the person of Christ: He is willing to accept Christ in part, a divided Christ, but not to accept Christ entirely in all his Offices. He will accept the righteousness of Christ, in conjunction with his own righteousness; but he will not accept the righteousness of Christ, as the sole matter of his justification exclusive of his

his own righteousness; he is willing to wear the Crown of Christ, but cannot be persuaded to bear the Cross of Christ. Thus Christ and Unbelievers part upon terms; God will come down no lower, and the Unbeliever will come up no higher. God will not alter his terms, and the Unbeliever will not alter his resolution, and so Christ is refused, Salvation neglected, and in the effect the Unbeliever chuseth rather to be damned, than to comply with the severe terms of self-denial, mortification, and bearing the Cross of Christ. Thus it excludes the saving Act of Faith.

Secondly, It is exclusive of the saving fruits and effects of Faith. Faith produces love to God, but the Unbeliever doth not truly love him. *But I know you* (saith Christ to Unbelievers) *that the love of God is not in you, Joh. 5. 42.* Faith purifies the heart of a Believer, but the hearts of Unbelievers are full of all impurity. The Believer overcomes the world, the world overcomes the Unbeliever: Faith makes the Cross of Christ sweet and easie to the Believer; Unbelief makes Christ, because of the Cross, bitter and distastful to the Unbeliever. Thus Unbelief excludes both the saving act and fruits of Faith; and consequently bars the Soul from the saving benefits and privileges of Faith, viz. Justification and Peace with God.

2. Secondly, Next let us consider the punishment of this sin, which is condemnation. Condemnation in the general is the sentence of a Judge awarding a mulct, or penalty to be inflicted upon the guilty person. There is a twofold Condemnation.

1. *Respectu Culpe*, in respect of the Fault.
2. *Respectu Pene*, in respect of the Punishment.

First, Condemnation with respect to the fault, is the casting of the person as guilty of the Crime charged upon him. Condemnation with respect to the punishment, is the sentencing of the convicted Offender to undergo such a punishment for such a fault, to bear a penal for a moral evil. This *forensic* word Condemnation, is here applied unto the case of a guilty Sinner cast at the Bar of God, where the Fact is clearly proved, and the Punishment righteously awarded. Thou art an Unbeliever; for this sin thou shalt die eternally. Condemnation with respect to the fault, stands opposed to justification, *Rom. 5. 16.* Condemnation with respect to the punishment, stands opposed to Salvation, *Mar. 16. 16.* More particularly,

First, Condemnation is the sentence of God; the great and terrible God, the omniscient, omnipotent, supreme, and impartial Judge; at whose Bar the guilty sinner stands. 'Tis the Law of God that condemns him now: He hath one that judgeth him; a great and terrible one too. 'Tis a dreadful thing to be condemned at Man's Bar: But the Courts of humane Judicature, how awful and solemn soever they are, are but trifles, and childrens play to this Court of Heaven and Conscience; wherein the Unbeliever is arraigned and condemned.

Secondly, 'Tis the sentence of God adjudging the Unbeliever to eternal death; than which nothing is more terrible. What is a Prison to Hell? What is a Scaffold, and an Ax, to

Go ye cursed into everlasting fire? What is a Gallows and a Halter to everlasting Burnings?

Thirdly, Condemnation is the final sentence of God; the supreme Judge, from whose Bar and Judgment there lies no appeal for the Unbeliever, but Execution certainly follows Condemnation, *Luke 19. 27.* If Man condemn, God may justifie, and save: But if God condemn, no Man can save or deliver. If the Law cast a Man as a sinner, the Gospel may save him as a Believer: But if the Gospel cast him as an Unbeliever, a Man that finally rejects Jesus Christ whom it offers to him, all the world cannot save that Man. O then what a dreadful word is Condemnation! All the evils and miseries of this life are nothing to it: Put all afflictions, calamities, sufferings, and miseries of this world into one scale, and this sentence of God into the other, and they will all be lighter than a feather.

Thirdly, In the next place, I shall shew you that this punishment, viz. Condemnation, must unavoidably follow that sin of Unbelief. So many unbelieving Persons as be in the world, so many condemned persons there are in the world; and this will appear two ways.

1. By considering what Unbelief excludes a Man from.

2. By considering what Unbelief includes a Man under.

First, Let us consider what Unbelief excludes a Man from; and it will be found, that it excludes him from all that may help and save him. For,

First, It excludes him from the pardon of sin, *Joh. 8. 24. If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your Sins.* Now he that dies under the guilt of all his sins, must needs die in a state of wrath and condemnation for ever. *For the wages of sin is death. Rom. 6. ult.* If a Man may be saved without a pardon, then may the Unbeliever hope to be saved.

Secondly, Unbelief excludes a Man from all the saving benefits that come by the sacrifice or death of Christ. For if Faith be the only instrument that applies and brings home to the Soul the benefits of the blood of Christ, as unquestionably it is: Then Unbelief must of necessity exclude a Man from all those benefits, and consequently leave him in the state of death and condemnation. Faith is the applying cause, the instrument by which we receive the special saving benefit of the blood of Christ, *Rom. 5. 25. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. Eph. 2. 8. By grace are ye saved through faith.* So then, if the Unbeliever be acquitted and saved, it must be without the benefit of Christ's Death and Sacrifice; which is utterly impossible.

Thirdly, Unbelief excludes a Man from the saving efficacy and operation of the Gospel, by shutting up the heart against it, and crossing the main drift and scope of it; which is to bring up Men to the terms of Salvation: To persuade them to believe; this is its great design, the scope of all its Commands, *1 Joh. 3. 23. Mark 1. 14, 15. John. 12. 36.* 'Tis the scope of all its Promises; they are written to encourage Men to believe, *Jo. 6. 35, 37.* So then, if the Unbeliever escape condemnation, it must be in a way unknown to us by the Gospel:

Gospel: Yea, contrary to the established order therein. For the Unbeliever obeyeth not the great command of the Gospel, 1 Joh. 3. 17. Nor is he under any one saving promise of it, Gal. 3. 14, 22.

Fourthly, Unbelief excludes a Man from union with Christ, Faith being the bond of that union, Eph. 3. 17. The Unbeliever therefore may as reasonably expect to be saved without Christ, as to be saved without Faith. Thus you see what Unbelief excludes a Man from.

Secondly, Let us next see what guilt and misery Unbelief includes Men under; and certainly it will be found to be the greatest guilt and misery in the world: For,

First, It is a sin which reflects the greatest dishonour upon God, 1 Joh. 5. 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself. He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record which God gave of his Son.*

Secondly, Unbelief makes a Man guilty of the vilest contempt of Christ, and the whole design of Redemption managed by him. All the glorious Attributes of God were signally manifested in the work of Redemption by Christ; therefore the Apostle calls him the *Wisdom of God, and the Power of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. But what doth the careless neglect, and wilful rejection of Christ speak, but the weakness and folly of that design of Redemption by him?

Thirdly, Unbelief includes in it the forest spiritual judgment that is or can be inflicted in this world upon the Soul of Man: Even spiritual blindness, and the fatal darkening of the understanding by Satan, 2 Cor. 4. 4. of which, more hereafter.

Fourthly, Unbelief includes a Man under the curse, and shuts him up under all the threatenings that are written in the Book of God; amongst which, that is an express and terrible one, Mark. 16. 10. *He that believeth not, shall be damned.* So that nothing can be more evident than this; that Condemnation, necessarily follows Unbelief. This Sin, and that Punishment, are fastned together, with Chains of Adamant.

The Uses follow.

Inference 1.

Infer. 1. If this be so, then how great a number of Persons are visibly in the state of Condemnation! So many Unbelievers, so many condemned Men and Women. That's a sad complaint of the Prophet, Isa. 53. 1. *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?* Many there be that talk of Faith, and many that profess Faith; but they only talk of and profess it: There are but few in the world unto whom the Arm of the Lord hath been revealed in the work of Faith with Power: 'Tis put among the great Mysteries and Wonders of the World, 1 Tim. 3. 16. That Christ is believed on in the world. O what a great and terrible Day will the Day of Christ's coming to Judgment be, when so many Millions of Unbelievers shall be brought to his *Tribunal* to be solemnly sentenced! They are (as my Text speaks) *condemned already*; but then that dreadful Sentence will be solemnly pronounced by Jesus Christ, whom they have despised, and rejected: Then shall that Scripture be fulfilled, Luk. 19. 27. *These mine Enemies that*

Vol. I.

would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.

Inference 2.

Hence be informed how great a mercy the least measure of saving Faith is; for the least measure of true Faith unites the Soul to Jesus Christ; and then, *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 1. Not one Sentence of God against them. So Acts 13. 29. *By him all that believe are justified from all things.* The weakest Believer is as free from condemnation as the strongest; the Righteousness of Christ comes upon all Believers without any difference, Rom. 3. 22. *Even the Righteousness of God which is by Faith of Christ Jesus unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference.* 'Tis not in imputed, as it is in inherent righteousness: One Man hath more Holiness than another. The Faith that receives the righteousness of Christ, may be very different in degrees of strength; but the received Righteousness is equal upon all Believers: A piece of Gold is as much worth in the hand of a Child, as it is in the hand of a Man. O the exceeding preciousness of saving Faith!

Infer. 3.

How dreadful a sin is the sin of Unbelief, *Infer. 3:* which brings Men under the condemnation of the great God! No sin startles less, or damns sorer: 'Tis a sin that doth not afflict the Conscience, as some other sins do, but it kills the Soul more certainly than any of those sins could do: For indeed other sins could not damn us, were it not for Unbelief, which fixes the guilt of them all upon our persons. This is the Condemnation. Unbelief is the sin of sins; and when the Spirit comes to convince Men of sin, he begins with this as the capital sin, John 16. 9. But more particularly,

First, Estimate the evil of Unbelief from its Object. It is the slighting and refusing of the most excellent and wonderful Person in Heaven or Earth. The *fiducial* Vision of Christ is the joy of Saints on Earth; the *facial* Vision of Christ, is the happiness of Saints in Heaven. 'Tis a despising of him who is altogether lovely in himself, who hath loved us, and given himself for us.

'Tis the rejecting of the only *Mediator* betwixt God and Man; after the rejecting of whom there remains no Sacrifice for sin.

Secondly, Let the evil of Unbelief be valued by the offer of Christ to our Souls in the Gospel: 'Tis one part of the great Mystery of Godliness, that Christ should be preached to the Gentiles, 1 Tim. 3. 16. That the Word of this Salvation should be sent to us, Acts 13. 26. A Mercy denied to the fallen Angels, and the greatest part of Mankind, which aggravates the evil of this sin beyond all imagination. So that in refusing or neglecting Jesus Christ, is found vile Ingratitude, highest contempt of the Grace and Wisdom of God; and in the event, the loss of the only season and opportunity of Salvation, which is never more to be recovered to all eternity.

Inference 4.

If this be the cause of all Unbelievers, it is *Infer. 4:* not to be admired, that Souls under the first convictions of their miserable condition, are plung'd into such deep distresses of Spirit. It's said

N n a

said of them. *Acts 2. 37. That they were pricked at the heart, and cried out, Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* And so the Jailor, *He came in trembling and astonished, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* Certainly, if Souls apprehend themselves under the Condemnation and Sentence of the great God; all their tears and tremblings, their weary days and restless nights, are not without just cause and reason. Those that never saw their own miserable condition by the light of a clear and full conviction, may wonder to see others so deeply distressed in Spirit. They may misjudge the case, and call it melancholy or madness: But spiritual troubles do not exceed the cause and ground of them. let them be as deep and great as they will: And indeed, it is one of the great mysteries of Grace and Providence; a thing much unknown to Men, how such poor Souls are supported from day to day under such tears and sorrows as are able in a few hours to break the stoutest Spirit in the world. *Luther* was a Man of great natural Courage; and yet, when God let in spiritual troubles upon his Soul, it is noted of him, *ut nec vox, nec calor, nec sanguis superflueret*; he had neither voice, nor heat, nor blood appearing in him.

Inference 5.

Infer. 5. How groundless and irrational is the mirth and jollity of all carnal and unregenerate Men? They feast in their Prison, and dance in their Fetters. O the madness that is in the hearts of Men! If Men did but see their *Aditimus* made for Hell, or believe they are condemned already, it were impossible for them to live at that rate of vanity they do; And is their condition less dangerous, because it is not understood? Surely no; but much more dangerous for that. O poor Sinners, you have found out an effectual way to prevent your present troubles; it were well if you could find out a way to prevent your eternal misery: But 'tis easier for a Man to stifle Conviction, than prevent Damnation. Your Mirth hath a twofold mischief in it; it prevents repentance, and increaseth your future torment. O what an Hell will your Hell be, who drop into it out of all the sensitive and sinful pleasures of this world! If ever Man may say of Mirth, that it is mad; and of Laughter, what doth it? He may say so in this case.

Inference 6.

Infer. 6. Lastly, what cause have they to rejoice, admire and praise the Lord to Eternity, who have a well-grounded confidence that they are freed from God's Condemnation? O give

thanks to the Father who hath delivered you from the power of Darkness, and translated you into the Kingdom of his dear Son, *Col. 1. 13.* Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for if you be freed from Condemnation, you are out of Satan's Power, he hath no more any Dominion over you. The Power of Satan over Men comes in by virtue of their Condemnation, as the Power of the Jailor or Executioner over the Bodies of condemned Prisoners doth, *Heb. 2. 14.* If you be freed from Condemnation, the sting of death shall never touch you: For the sting of death smites the souls of Men with a deadly stroke, only by virtue of God's condemnatory Sentence. *1 Cor. 15. 55, 56. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law.* If you be freed from Condemnation now, you shall stand with Comfort and Boldness at the Judgment-seat of Christ in the great Day; and verily in this thing is the Love of God perfected, *1 Job. 4. 17.* O 'tis a Privilege in which the Grace, Mercy and Love of God doth shine forth as clearly as the Sun when it shineth in its full strength. And certainly you will find cause to lie at the Feet of God astonished, and overwhelmed with the sense of this Mercy, when you shall find your selves freed from the Condemnation of God, whilst many others as good as you were, are still under Condemnation. Yea, your selves freed, and many of your Superiors in the world still under the curse, *1 Cor. 1. 26.* Yea, your selves freed, and others that late under the same means of Grace, and had the same external advantages you had, still in Chains, *2 Cor. 2. 16.* O Brethren! this is a marvellous Deliverance; look on it which way you will, your Ransom is paid, and not a penny of it by you; it cost you nothing to procure your Pardon. Your Pardon is full, and not one sin excepted out of it that you ever committed. You are freed, and Jesus Christ condemned in your stead to procure your discharge; your Pardon is sealed in his Blood, and is irrevocable for ever, so that you shall never any more come into Condemnation. *He that beareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation, but is passed from Death to Life, Joh. 5. 24.*

Let them that are so delivered spend their days on earth in praise and cheerful obedience; and when they die, let them not shrink away from death, nor be afraid to take it by the cold hand, it can do them no harm. Yea, let them close their dying Lips with, *Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.*

SERMON XXXIII.

JOHN III. 19.

And this is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men loved Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds were evil.

OUT of the fore-going Verse it was fully proved in our last Sermon, that all Christless and unregenerate Men are no better than dead Men, being condemned already. Our Saviour proceeds in this Verse

to aggravate the misery of those that refuse and despise him; yet farther, and to let them know, that those who remain in Unbelief, and the State of Unregeneracy, must expect some greater and forer wrath than other Men; not only

Serm. 33. Text. Of the Aggravation of the Sin and Punishment of Unbelief under the Light of the Gospel.

only a simple Condemnation, but an aggravated and peculiar Condemnation. *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come, &c.*

In the Words we find these Three Parts.

1. the Aggravation of Sin, by the abuse of Gospel-light. *Light is come, &c.*
2. The Aggravation of Misery in proportion to that abuse of Light, *This is the Condemnation.*
3. The Cause and Occasion drawing Men into this Sin and Misery, *because their deeds were evil.*

1. *First*, We have here the aggravation of sin by the abuse of Gospel-light, *Light is come.* By Light we are to understand the Knowledge, Discovery and Manifestation of Christ, and Redemption by him in the Gospel. He is the Son of Righteousness that arises in the Gospel upon the Nations, *Mal. 4. 1.* When he came in the flesh, then did the day-spring from on high visit us, *Luke 1. 78.* And the Light may be said to come two ways, either,

First, In the means by which it is conveyed to us; or *Secondly*, in the efficacy of it upon our minds, when it actually shines into our Souls. Light may come among a People in the means, and yet they actually remain in darkness all the while. As it is in nature; the Sun may be up, and a very glorious Morning far advanced, whilst many thousands are drowsing upon their Beds with their Curtains drawn about them. Light in the means, we may call *potential Light*. Light in the mind, we may call *actual Light*. It is but seldom that Light comes in the means, and continues long among Men, but some Light must needs actually shine into their Souls also; but this actual Light is twofold,

1. Communion and intellectual only to Conversion, or,
2. Special and efficacious Light, bringing the Soul to Christ, by real Conversion.

Call'd in *1 Cor. 4. 6.* — God shining into the Heart. Where ever Light comes in this last sense, it is impossible that such Men should prefer darkness before it: but it may come in the means, yea, it may actually shine into the Consciences of Men, by those means, and convince them of their Sins, and yet Men may hate it, and choose Darkness rather than Light. And this is the sense of this place, Light was come in the Gospel-Dispensation among them; yea, it hath shined into many of their Consciences, galled, and reproved them for sin, but they hated it, and had rather be without such a troublesome Inmate. In a word, by the coming of Light, we are here to understand a more clear and open Manifestation of Christ by the Gospel than ever was made to the world before; for we are not to think that there was no Light in the world 'till Christ came, and the Gospel was published in the world by the Apostles Ministry. For *Abraham* saw Christ's day, *John 8. 56.* and all the faithful before Christ saw the Promises (*i. e.*) their accomplishment in Christ afar off, *Heb. 11. 13.* for it was with Christ, the Son of Righteousness, as it is with the natural Sun, which illuminates the Hemisphere before it actually rises, or shews its body above the Horizon; but when it rises and shews it self, the Light is much clearer; so it was in this case. The

greater therefore was their sin, that rebelled against it, and preferred Darkness to Light; this was their sin, with its fearful aggravation.

Secondly, In a most just proportion to this sin we have here the aggravated Condemnation of them who sinned against such clear Gospel-light: *This is the Condemnation*, this is the Judgment of all Judgments, the greatest and most intolerable Judgment; a severer Sentence of Condemnation than ever did pass against any others that sinned in the times of Ignorance and Darkness; they that live and die impenitent and unregenerate, how few soever the means of Salvation have been which they have enjoyed, must be condemned; yea, the Pagan world who have no more but natural Light to help them, will be condemned by that Light; but *this is the Condemnation, (i. e.)* such sinning as this, is the cause of the greatest condemnation, and forest punishment, as it's called, *Heb. 10. 19.*

Thirdly, The Cause and Occasion drawing Men into this sin and misery; *because their deeds were evil, (i. e.)* the convincing Light of Truth put a great deal of vigour and activity into their Consciences which they could not endure. The accusations and condemnations of Conscience are very irksome and troublesome things to Men; to avoid this, they were willing to be ignorant. An enlightened Conscience gives an interruption also unto Men in their sinful courses and pleasures; they cannot sin so easie a rate in the Light, as they did in Darkness; and this made them hate the Light as a very troublesome thing to them. Thus you see what was the Sin, and what the Punishment, and what the Cause of both.

Hence the Observation is.

Doct. That the greater and clearer the Light is, under which the impenitent and unregenerate do live in this World; by so much greater and heavier will their Condemnation and Misery be in the World to come.

Mat. 11. 21, 22. Wo unto thee, Chorazin, wo unto thee, Bethsaida; for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes: but I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. Two things require explication, in the doctrinal part of this point. viz.

1. How Light puts a deeper guilt and aggravation into Sin.
2. Why Sin, so aggravated, makes Men liable to greater Condemnation.

First, We will enquire into the grounds and reasons why greater and clearer Light greatness and aggravates proportionably the sins that are committed under it; and it will appear that it doth so upon divers accounts.

First, All light (especially Evangelical-light) is a great preservative from sin, and an excellent means to prevent it: 'Tis the property of Light to inform the judgment, and rectifie the mistakes and errors of it; and thereby to give check to the affections in the pursuit of sinful delights and courses: 'Tis a plain case, that many Men would never do as they do, if their understandings were better informed, *1 Cor. 2. 8. Which none of the Princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified*

crucified the Lord of Glory: It was want of light and better information which drew them under that horrid and unparallel'd guilt. Our Saviour also supposes in the place before cited, That if *Tyre* and *Sidon* had enjoyed the same light and means of Grace that *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida* did; they would never have been so sinful as they were: Light discovers danger, and thereby overawes and stops Men from proceeding farther in those paths and courses that will run them into it.

Secondly, Sinning under and against the light, supposes and involves in it a greater contempt and despite of God's Authority than sinning in ignorance and darkness doth: Every Man that breaks the Law of God, doth not in the same degree despise and slight the authority of the Law-maker: But when a Man hath light to discover the evil and the danger of what he doth, and yet will dare to do it; what is this but the treading of God's Authority under foot? The casting of his word behind our backs? Wilful sinning is a despiteful sinning against God, *Heb. 10. 26.* it argues a low and vile esteem of the Law of God which is reverent and holy: and by so much the more it maketh sin to be exceeding sinful.

Thirdly, Sinning under, and against the Light admits not of those excuses and pleas to extenuate the offence: which sins of pure ignorance do. Those that live without the sound of the Gospel may say, Lord, we never heard of Christ and the great Redemption wrought by him; if we had, we would never have lived and acted as we did: And therefore Christ saith, *Job. 15. 22.* *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin.*

The meaning is, that if the Gospel-light had not shined among them, their sin had not been of that deep guilt that now it is: For now it is so foul and heinous by reason of the light under, and against which it is committed, that they have no pretence or excuse to extenuate or mitigate it.

Fourthly, Evangelical light is a very rich favour and mercy of God to Men; one of the choicest gifts bestowed upon the Nations of the World; and therefore it's said, *Psal 147. 19, 20.* *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel: He hath not dealt so with any Nation; and as for his judgments they have not known them.* Other Nations have Corn and Wine, Gold and Silver, abundance of earthly delights and pleasures: But they have not a beam of heavenly light shining upon them. We may account this mercy small, but God who is best able to value the worth of it, accounts it great, *Hos. 8. 12.* *I have written unto them the great things of my Law.* Christ reckoned *Capernaum* to be exalted unto Heaven by the Ministry of the Gospel in that place. Now the greater the mercy is which the light of truth brings with it; by so much the more horrid and heinous must the abusing and despising of it be.

Fifthly, Sinning against the light, argues a love to sin, as sin; to naked sin without any disguise or covert. It is nothing so bad for a Man to sin through a mistake of judgment, when he thinks that to be lawful which is indeed sinful; he doth not now close with sin, as sin; but he either closes with it as his duty, or at least his liberty. 'Tis hard for Satan to persuade

many Men to embrace a naked Sin; and therefore he cloaths it in the habit of a duty or liberty, and thereby deceives and draws Men to the commission of it. But if a Man have light shining into his Conscience, and convincing him that the way he is in, is the way of sin quite contrary to the revealed will of God; stripping the sin naked before the eye of his Conscience; so that he hath no covert or excuse, and yet will persist in it: This I say, argues a Soul to be in love with sin, as sin. Now as for a Man to love Grace, as grace, is a solid argument to prove the truth of his Grace; so on the contrary, for a Man to love sin, as sin, doth not only argue him to be in the state of sin, but to be in the fore-front, and among the highest rank of sinners.

Sixthly, The greater and clearer the light is, under and against which Men continue in sin, the more must the Consciences of such sinners be supposed to be wasted and violated by such a way of sinning: For this is a sure rule, that the greatest violation of Conscience is the greatest sin. Conscience is a noble and tender part of the Soul of Man; it is in the Soul as the eye in the body, very sensible of the least injury; and a wound in the Conscience is like a blow in the eye: But nothing gives a greater blow to Conscience, nothing so much wastes it and destroys it as sin against the light do: This puts a plain force upon the Conscience, and gives a dreadful stab to that noble Power, God's Vicegerent in the Soul. And thus you see the first thing made good, that Light puts deep guilt and aggravation into sin.

Secondly, In the next place let us examine why sin so aggravated by the light, makes Men liable to the greater Condemnation: For that it doth so, is beyond all debate or question, else the *Apostle Peter* would not have laid of those sinners against light as he doth, *2 Pet. 2. 21.* *That it had been better for them not to have known the way of Righteousness:* Nor would Christ have told the Inhabitants of *Chorazin*, or *Bethsaida*, that it should be more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* in the day of judgment, than for them. There is a two-fold reason of this.

1. *Ex parte Dei*, on God's part.

2. *Ex parte Peccatoris*, on the Sinners part.

First, *Ex parte Dei*, on God's part, who is the righteous Judge of the whole Earth; and will therefore render unto every Man according as his works shall be: For shall not the Judge of the whole Earth do right? He will judge the World in righteousness, and righteousness requires that difference be made in the punishment of Sinners, according to the different degrees of their sins. Now that there are different degrees of sin is abundantly clear from what we have lately discoursed under the former head; where we have shewed, that the light under which Men sin, puts extraordinary aggravations upon their sins; answerable whereunto will the degrees of punishment be awarded by the righteous Judge of Heaven and Earth. The *Gentiles* who had no other light but that dimm light of Nature, will be condemned for disobeying the Law of God written upon their hearts: But yet the greater wrath is reserved for them who sin both against the light of Nature, and the light of the Gospel also; and therefore it is said, *Rom. 2. 9.* *Tribulation*

Maximo
violento
conscien-
tia est
maximum
peccatum.

2.

and anguish upon every soul of Man that doth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. Impenitent Jews and Gentiles will all be condemned at the Bar of God; but with this difference to the Jew first, (i. e.) principally and especially because the light and mercy which he abused and violated, were far greater than those bestowed upon the Gentiles, *because unto them were committed the Oracles of God*; and God had not dealt with any Nation as with that Nation. Indeed in the rewards of obedience the same reason doth not hold: He that came into the Vineyard at the last hour of the day, may be equal in reward with him that bare the heat and burden of the whole day, because the reward is of grace and bounty, not of debt and merit; but it is not so here, justice observes an exact proportion in distributing punishments according to the degrees, defects and measures of sin; and therefore it is said concerning Babylon, Rev. 18. 7. *How much she had glorified her self, and lived deliciously; so much torment and sorrow give her.*

Secondly, *Ex parte Peccatoris*, upon the account of sinners it must needs be, that the heaviest wrath and most intolerable torments should be the portion of them who have sinned under and against the clearest light and means of Grace; for we find in the Scripture-account, that a principal and special part of the torment of the damned will arise from their own Consciences, Mark 9. 44. *Where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched*: And nothing is more manifest than this, that if Conscience be the Tormentor of the damned, then sinners against Light must needs have the greatest Torments. For,

First, The more knowledge any Man had in this world, the more was his Conscience violated and abused here, by sinning against it: And O what work will these violations and abuses make for a *tormenting Conscience* in Hell! With what rage and fury will it then avenge itself upon the most stout, daring and impudent sinner! The more guilt now, the more rage and fury then.

Secondly, The more knowledge or means of knowledge any Man hath enjoyed in this world, so much the more matter is prepared and laid up for Conscience to *upraid* him with in the place of Torments; and the upbraidings of Conscience are a special part of the Torments of the damned. O what a Peal will Conscience ring in the ears of such sinners! Did not I warn thee of the issue of such sins, undone wretch? How often did I strive with thee, if it had been possible to take thee off from thy course of sinning, and to escape this wrath? Did not I often cry out in thy bosom, stop thy course, sinner? Hearken to my counsel, turn and live; but thou wouldst not hearken to my voice. I forewarned thee of this danger, but thou slightedst all my warnings; thy lusts were too strong for my light; and now thou seest whither thy way tended, but alas too late!

Thirdly, The more knowledge or means of Knowledge any Man hath abused and neglected in this world, so many fair opportunities and great advantages he hath lost for Heaven; and the more opportunities and advantages he hath had for Heaven, the more intolerable will Hell be to that man; as the Mercy was great which

was offered by them, so the Torment will be unspeakable that will arise from the loss of them. Sinners, you have now a wide and open door, many blessed opportunities of salvation under the Gospel, it hath put you in a fair way for everlasting Happiness. Many of you are not far from the Kingdom of God; there will be time enough in Hell to reflect upon this loss. What think you, will it not be sad to think there? O how fair was I once for Heaven, to have been with God and among yonder Saints! My Conscience was once convinced, and my Affections melted under the Gospel. I was almost persuaded to be a Christian indeed, the Bargain was almost made betwixt Christ and my Soul; there were but a few points in difference betwixt us; but wretch that I was, at those points the Bargain I struck, and there the Treaty ended, to my eternal ruine. I could not deny my lusts; I could not live under the strict Yoke of Christ's Government; but now I must live under the insupportable wrath of the righteous and terrible God for ever; and this Torment will be peculiar to such as perish under the Gospel. The Heathen who enjoyed no such means, can therefore have no such reflections; nay, the very Devils themselves, who never had such a Plank after their Shipwreck, I mean a Mediator in their Nature, or such terms of reconciliation offered them, will not reflect upon their lost opportunities of recovering as such Sinners must, and will; this therefore is the condemnation, that light is come into the world; but men loved darkness, rather than light.

Infer. 1. Hence it follows, that neither Knowledge, Infer. 1.
nor the best means of Knowledge are in themselves sufficient to secure men from wrath to come. Light in it self is a choice Mercy, and therefore the means that beget and increaseth it, must be so too; but yet it is a Mercy liable to the greatest abuse, and the abuse of the best Mercies brings forth the greatest Miseries. Alas, Christians, your Duty is but half learnt when you know it; Obedience to Light makes Light a Blessing indeed, Job. 13. 17. *If ye know these things, happy are ye if you do them*. Happiness is not entailed upon simple knowing, but upon doing; upon obedience to our knowledge; otherwise he that increaseth knowledge doth but increase sorrow; for that servant which knew his Lords will, and prepared not himself, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes, Luke 13. 47. *And to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin*, Jam. 4. 17. We are bound with all thankfulness to acknowledge the Bounty of Heaven to this sinful Generation, in furnishing us with so many excellent means of Light beyond many other Nations and Generations that are past; but yet we ought to rejoice with trembling when we consider the abuses of Light in this wanton age, and what a dismal event is like to happen unto many thousands among us. I fear the time is coming when many among us will wish they had never set foot upon English Ground. God hath blessed this Nation with many famous burning and shining Lights; it was once said to the honour of this Nation, that the English Ministry was the World's Wonder; and when a Man of another Nation began to preach methodically and convincingly, they were once wont to say, *We perceive this Man hath been in England*; the greater Anglia.

Clerus Anglicanus
super mundi.

Percepimus
bund
cominem
Anglia.

greater will our account be for abusing such Light and rebelling against it; the clearer our Light is now, the thicker will the mists of Darkness be hereafter; if we thus wantonize under it, and rebel against it. The Devils have more Light than we, and therefore the more Torment; of them it is said, Jam. 2. 19. *The Devils also believe and tremble*; the Horror of their Consciences is answerable to their Illumination, *they tremble*, the word signifies the rote of the Sea, or such a murmuring dreadful noise, as the tempestuous Seas use to make when they break themselves against the rocks.

Infer. 2. *If the abuse of light thus aggravates sin and misery, then times of great temptation are like to be times of deep guilt.* Wo to an enlightened knowing Generation when strong temptations befall them. How do many in such times imprison the known truth, to keep themselves out of Prison? offer violence to their own Consciences, to avoid violence from other hands?

* Plato was convinced of the Unity of God, but durst not own his own convictions; but said it was a truth neither easy to find, nor safe to own. And even *Seneca*, the renowned Moralist, was forced by temptation to dissemble his conviction, of whom *Augustin* saith, he worshipp'd what himself reprehended; and did what himself reprov'd; and even a great *Papist* of latter times, was heard to say as he was going to Mass, *Eamus ad communem errorem*. Let us go to the common Error. O how hard is it to keep Conscience pure and peaceable in days of temptation! doubtless it is a Mercy to many weak and timorous Christians to be removed by a seasonable death out of harms way, to be disband'd by a merciful Providence before the heat of the Battel. *Christ* and *Antichrist* seem at this day to be drawing into the Field, a fiery Trial threatens the Professors of this Age; but when it comes to a close grapple indeed, we may justly tremble to think how many thousands will break their way through the convictions of their own Consciences to save their Flesh. Believe it, Sirs, if *Christ* hold you to himself by no other tie than the slender thread of a single conviction, if he have not Interest in your Hearts and Affections, as well as in your Understandings and Consciences; if you be Men of great Light and strong unmortified Lusts; if you profess *Christ* with your tongues, and worship the world with your hearts; a Man may say of you without the Gift of Prophecy, what the Prophet said of *Hazael*; I know what ye will do in the day of Temptation.

Infer. 3. *If this be so, what a strong Engagement lieth upon all enlightened Persons to turn devoutly to God, and reduce their Knowledge into Practice and Obedience?* The more Men know, the more violence they do to their own Consciences in rebelling against the Light; this is to sin with an high hand, *Nim. 15. 30.* Believe it, Sirs, you cannot sin at so cheap a rate as others do: Knowledge in a wicked man, like high mettle in a blind Horse, doth but the sooner precipitate him into ruin. You may know much more than others; but if ever you come to Heaven, it must be in the same way of Faith and Obedience, Mortification and Self-denial, in which the weakest Christian comes thither; whatever knowledge you have, to be sure you

have no wisdom, if you expect Salvation upon any other or easier terms, than the most illiterate Christian finds it. It was a sad Observation of the Father, *superant indolenti & raptum caelum*, the unlearned rise and take Heaven. What a pity 'tis that Men of such excellent Parts should be enslav'd to their lusts! that ever it should be said, *sapientes sapienter defcendunt in Gehennam*, their Learning doth but hang in their light, it doth but blind them in spiritual things, and prepareth them for the greater misery.

Infer. 4. Hence it also follows, that the work of Conversion is a very difficult work; the soul is scarcely brought to *Christ*, when Satan is cast out of the understanding by illuminations. The Devil hath deeply intrenched himself, and strongly fortified every faculty of the Soul against *Christ*. The Understanding indeed is the first entrance into the Soul, and out of that Faculty he is oftentimes expelled by light and conviction, which seems to make a great change upon a Man. Now he becomes a Professor; now he takes up the Duties of Religion, and passes up and down the World for a Convert; but alas, alas! all the while Satan keeps the Fort royal, the heart and will in his own Possession; and this is a work of more difficulty. The Weapons of that Warfare must indeed be mighty through God, which do not only cast down imaginations, but bring every thought of the heart into Captivity to the obedience of *Christ*, 2 Cor. 10. 4. 5. While the heart stands out, though the understanding be taken in, the Soul remains in Satan's possession; 'tis a greater Work (and we daily find it so) to win one heart, than to convince twenty understandings.

Infer. 5. Hence also we may learn what strength and Infer. 5. power there is in the lusts of Mens hearts, which are able to bear down strong convictions of the Conscience before them; that's a great truth, tho' a very sad one, Eccles. 8. 11. *The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.* O how common is it every day, and in every place to see Men hardening their souls to falsify their lusts! Every Man, saith the Prophet, turneth to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battel: The Horse is a very fierce and warlike Creature, and when his Courage is roused by the found of Trumpets and shouts of Armour, he breaks headlong into the ranks of armed Men, though Death be before him. Such boisterous and headlong Lusts are found in many enlighten'd Persons; though their Consciences represent Damnation before them, onward they will rush, though God be loit, and a precious Soul undone for ever.

Infer. 6. To conclude, At ever you will avoid the deep- Infer. 6. est guilt, and escape the heaviest Condemnation, open your hearts to obey and practise whatsoever God hath opened your Understandings and Consciences to receive of his revealed Will; obey the Light of the Gospel while you have opportunity to enjoy it; this was the great Council given by *Christ*, Joh. 12. 35. 36. *See a little while the light is with you, walk whilst you have the light, lest darkness come upon you.* The manifestation of *Christ* in the Gospel is the Light of the World; all the Nations of the earth that want this Light, are benighted; and those upon whom this Light is risen, have but a short time under it; yet a little while the Light is with you, and whatever Patience God may exercise towards poor ignorant Souls, yet commonly he makes short work with the despisers of this Light; the Light of the Gospel is a shining Lamp, with golden Oil. God will not be at the expence of such Light for them that do not trifle with it. The night is coming when no Man can work: There are many laid upon signs of a setting Sun; a night of Darkness approaching; many burning and shining Lights are extinguished and many put under a bushel; your work is great; your time short; this is the only space you have for Repentance, Rev. 2. 21. If this opportunity of Salvation be loit, it will never come again, Ezek. 24. 13. How pathetic was that lamentation which *Christ* made over Jerusalem, Luke 19. 41. 42. *And when he was come near he beheld the City, and wept over it; saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.* *Christ* is threatening these Nations with the removal of his Gospel presence; he hath found but cold entertainment among us. England hath been unkind to *Christ*; many thousands there are that rebel against the Light; that say unto God, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. *Christ* will not tarry where he is not welcome; who would, that such any whither else he go? Obey the Light therefore lest God put it out in obscure Darkness.

Infer. 4.

Infer. 6.

SERMON XXXIV.

Serm. 34.
Text.

The binding Policies of Satan opened as the cause of Unbelief, and Forerunner of destruction.

2 COR. IV. 3, 4.

But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this World hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them.

THE Averfations of Men from Jesus Christ their only remedy, is as much to be admired, as lamented; one would think the News of Deliverance should make the Hearts of Captives leap for Joy. The tydings of a Saviour should transport the Heart of a lost Sinner. A Man would think a little Rhetorick might suffice to persuade the naked Soul of a Sinner to put on the rich Robes of Christ's Righteousness, which cost him nothing but Acceptance; or the perishing starving Sinner to accept the Bread of God which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth Life unto the World. This is the great Delign I have managed in this whole Discourse; the Centre to which all these lines are drawn; many Arguments have been used; and many Ways attempted to prevail with Men to apply and put on Christ, and I am afraid all too little. I have but laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought; all these Discourses are but the beating of the air, and few if any will be persuaded to come unto Christ, who is clearly opened, and freely offered in the Gospel to them. For alas, whilst I am reasoning, Satan is blinding their minds with false Reasonings and contrary Perswasions; the God of this World turns away the Ears, and draws away the Hearts of almost the whole World from Christ; the God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ who is the Image of God, should shine unto them. Satan is a great and jealous Prince; and is well aware, that so many of his subjects as shall be brought to see the Misery of their Condition, will never endure to abide any longer in Subjection to him; 'tis therefore his great Policy to put out their eyes, that he may secure their Souls; to darken their Understandings, that he may keep his Interest firm and intire in their Wills and Affections; and this makes the effectual Application of Christ so great a Difficulty; that upon the contrary, it is just Matter of Admiration that any Soul is persuaded and prevailed with, to quit the Service of Satan, and come to Christ. And therefore in the last place, to discover the great Difficulty of Conversion, and shew you where it is that all our Endeavours stick and set, so that we can move the design no farther, with all our tugging and striving, reasoning and persuading; as also to mourn over and bewail the Misery of Christless and unregenerate Souls, with whom we must part upon the saddest terms; I have chosen this Scripture, which is of a most awakening nature; if haply the Lord at last may persuade any soul to come over to Christ thereby.

These Words come into the *Apostles* Dis-

course, by way of *Prolepsis*; he had been speaking in the former Chapter of the transcendent Excellency of the Gospel above the Law; and among other respects he prefers it to the Law in point of clearness. The Law was an obscure and cloudy Dispensation, there was a Veil upon the Face of *Moses*, and the Hearts of the people, that they could not see to the end of that which is abolished; but under the Gospel we all with open face behold as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord. Against this Discourse the *Apostle* forelaw and obviated this Objection. If your Gospel be so clear, what is the reason that many who live under the ministration of it (and they none of the meanest neither, for wisdom and understanding) do yet see no Glory nor Excellency in it? To this he returns in the words I have read; if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, whose eyes the God of this World hath blinded, &c. q. d. 'Tis true, multitudes there are who see no Glory in Christ or the Gospel, but the Fault is not in either; but in the Minds of them that believe not. The Sun shines forth in its Glory, but the Blind see no Glory in it; the Fault is not in the Sun but in the Eye. In the words themselves we have three parts to consider.

1. A dreadful Spiritual Judgment inflicted.
2. The wicked Instrument by whom it is inflicted.
3. The politick Manner in which he doth it.

First, We have here a very dreadful Spiritual Judgment inflicted upon the Souls of Men, viz. the hiding of the Gospel from them; if our Gospel be hid. For these words *it is hid* are a Concession, that so it is; a very sad, but undeniable truth. Many there are that see no Beauty in Christ, nor necessity of him; though both are so plainly and evidently revealed in our Gospel; if our Gospel be hid; 'tis called our Gospel; not as if *Paul* and the other Preachers of it were the Authors and Inventors of it; but our Gospel, because we are the Preachers and Dispensers of it. We are put in trust with the Gospel, and though we Preach it in the demonstration of the Spirit and of Power, using all plainness of Speech to make men understand it; yet it is hid from many under our Ministry. 'Tis hid from their Understandings, they see no Glory in it; and hid from their Hearts, they feel no Power in it. Our Gospel notwithstanding all our Endeavours is a hidden Gospel unto some; this is the sorest and most dreadful Judgment.

Secondly, We have here an Account of that wicked Instrument by whom this Judgment is inflicted, viz. *Satan*, called here (by a *Metonymy*)

Almefis) the God of this World; not simply and properly, but because he challenges to himself the Honour of a God; rules over a vast Empire, and hath multitudes of souls, even the far greater part of the World in Subjection, and blind Obedience to his Government.

3. Thirdly, Here also we have an Account of the politick manner of his Government, how he maintains his dominion among men, and keeps the World in quiet Subjection to him; namely, by blinding the Minds of all them that believe not; putting out the Eyes of all his Subjects, darkening that noble Faculty, the Mind or Understanding; the thinking, considering and reasoning Power of the Soul which the Philosophers truly call *τὸ νουνόμοιον*, the leading and directing Faculty; for it is to the Soul what Eyes are to the Body, and it is therefore called the *Eyes of the Understanding*, Eph. 1. 18. These Eyes Satan blinds (*i. e.*) he darkens the Mind and Understanding with ignorance and error; so that when men come to see and consider spiritual things, *they see indeed, but perceive not*, Isa. 6. 9, 10. They have some general confused notions, but no distinct, powerful and effectual apprehensions of those things: And this is the way indeed, none like it, to bar men effectually from Jesus Christ, and hinder the application of the benefits of redemption to their Souls. 'Tis true, the righteous God permits all this to be done by Satan upon the Souls of Men; but whereforever he finally prevails thus to blind them, it is as the Text speaks, *in eis amaranurum in them that are lost*, or appointed of God unto perdition. The elect of God are all blinded for a time, but Christ applieth unto them his *Eye-salve*: Effectually opens the eyes of their understandings, and recovers them thereby out of Satans power and dominion: But as for those who still continue thus blinded, the Symptoms and Characters of eternal death appear upon their Souls; they are a company of lost men.

Doct. That the understandings of all unbelievers are blinded by Satans policies, in order to their everlasting perdition.

Four things must be opened in the Doctrinal part of this point.

First, What the blinding of the understanding, or hiding of the Gospel from the understanding is.

Secondly, I shall demonstrate that the understandings of many are thus blinded, and the Gospel hidden from them.

Thirdly, I shall shew what policies Satan uses to blind the minds of Men.

Fourthly, That this blindness is the foret judgment, and in order to Mens everlasting Perdition.

Fifthly, And then apply the whole.

First, We shall enquire what the blinding of the mind, or hiding of the Gospel from it, is. Two sorts of Men are thus blinded in the World.

1. Those that want the means of illumination.

2. Those that have the means, but are denied the blessing and efficacy of them.

The former is the case of the *Pagan World*, who are in midnight darkness, for want of

the Gospel. The latter is the case of the *Christian World*. The greatest part of them that live within the fount of the Gospel, being blinded by the God of this World, Isa. 6. 9,

10. *And he said, Go, and tell this People; bear ye indeed, but understand not; & see ye indeed, but perceive not: Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy; and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed.* Thus when the Son of Righteousness actually arose in the World, it is said, John 1. 5. *The light shined in darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not.* So we may say of all that light which is in the understanding of all unbelievers, what Job speaks of the Grave, Job 10. 22. *That the light there is as darkness.* But more particularly to open the nature of this Spiritual blindness, I will shew you,

1. What it is not opposed unto.

2. What it is opposed unto.

First, Let us examine what Spiritual blindness, or the hiding of the Gospel from the minds of Men is not opposed unto: And we shall find,

First, That it is not opposed unto natural wisdom: A Man may be of an acute and clear understanding; Eagle eyed to discern the mysteries of Nature, and yet the Gospel may be hidden from him. Who were more sagacious and quick-sighted in natural things, than the heathen Philosophers, renowned for Wisdom in their Generation? Yet unto them the Gospel was but *foolishness*, 1 Cor. 1. 20, 21. *S. Augustine* confesseth that before his Conversion, he was filled with offence and contempt of the simplicity of the Gospel. *Dedignabar esse parvulus*, saith he; I scorn'd to become a Child again. And that great *Bradwardine*, the profound Doctor, who was learned *usque ad stuporem*, even to a wonder; professed that when he first read *Paul's Epistles*, he despised them, because he found not in them *Metaphysicum ingenium*, those Metaphysical Notions which he expected. Upon this account it was that Christ brake forth into that Pathetical gratulation of his Fathers love to the elect, Mat. 11. 25. *At that time Jesus answered, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth; because thou hast hid these things from the Wise and Prudent and hast revealed them unto Bales.*

Secondly, It is not opposed to all light and knowledge in Spiritual truths. A man may have a true understanding of the Scriptures, give an Orthodox exposition of them, and enlighten the minds of others by them; and yet the Gospel may be hidden from himself, Matth. 7. 22. *Many will say unto me in that Day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name? So Rom. 2. 19. And are confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light to them that sit in darkness, &c.* A man may shew others the way to Christ and Salvation, whilst both are hid from himself.

Thirdly, It is not opposed to all kind of influences upon the affections; for it is possible the Gospel may touch the affections themselves, and cause some sweet Motions and Raptures in them; and yet be an hidden Gospel to the Soul, Heb. 6. 5, 9.

Secondly, But if these three things may consist with spiritual blindness, unto what then is it

it opposed? To which I answer, that Spiritual blindness stands only opposed unto that saving Manifestation of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, by the Spirit, whereby the Soul is regenerated, and effectually changed by a real Conversion unto God: Where ever the Gospel thus comes in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power; producing such an effect as this in the Soul; it is no longer an hidden Gospel to that Soul, though such persons do not see clearly all that glory which is revealed by the Gospel; though they know but in part, and see darkly as through a Glass; yet the eyes of their understandings are opened, and the things which belong to their peace are not hidden from them.

Secondly, But though this be the happiness of some Men, yet it is demonstrable, that the eyes of many are blinded by the God of this World, and the Gospel is an hidden Gospel from them; for,

First, Many that live under the Gospel are so entirely swallowed up in the affairs of this World, that they allow themselves no time to ponder the great concerns of their Souls in the World to come; and judge you, what ever the gifts and knowledge of these Men are, whether the God of this World hath not blinded their eyes. If it were not so, it were impossible that ever they should thus waste the most precious opportunities of Salvation, upon which their everlasting well-being depends, and spend time at the door of Eternity, about trifles which so little concern them. Yet this is the case of the greatest number that go under the Christian name. The Earth hath opened her mouth, and swallowed up their time, thoughts, studies, and strength, as it did the bodies of *Corah*, and his accomplices. The first, the freest, and upon the matter, the whole of their time is devoted to the service of the World; for even at that very time when they present their bodies before the Lord in the duties of his worship, their hearts are wandering after vanities, and going after their *counselors*, *Ezek. 33. 31.* Judge whether the God of this World hath blinded these Men or no, who can see so much beauty in the World, but none in Christ, and put such an absolute necessity upon the vanities of this World, but none upon their own Salvation. If this be not spiritual blindness, what is?

Secondly, The great stillness and quietness of Mens Consciences under the most rousing and awakening truths of the Gospel, plainly proves that the God of this World hath blinded their eyes. For did Men see and apprehend the dangerous condition they are in, as the word represents it; nothing in the World could quiet them but Christ. As soon as Mens eyes come to be opened the next enquiry they make, is, *What shall we do to be saved?* It is not possible that a Man should hang over Hell, see Christ and the hopes of Salvation going, and the day of patience ending, and yet be quiet. O it cannot be, that Conscience should let them be quiet in such a case, if it were not blinded and stupified; but whilst the God of this World, that strong man armed keepeth the house, all his goods are in peace, *Luke 11. 21.* If once your eyes were opened by conviction, a Man may then say, Be quiet if you can; sit still, and

Vol. I.

let the hopes and seasons of Salvation pass quietly away if you can. Suppose one should come into the Congregation, and whisper but such a word as this in your ear, your Child is fallen into the fire, and is dying, since you came from home; will it be in the power of all the friends you have, to quiet you, and make you sit still after such an information? much less, when a Man apprehends his own Soul in immediate danger of the everlasting burnings.

Thirdly, The strong confidences and presumptuous hopes Men have of Salvation, whilst they remain in the state of nature and ungeneracy, plainly shews their minds to be blinded by the policy of Satan. This presumption is one of those *magical* false reasonings, by which Satan deludes the understanding, as the *Apostle* calls them, *Jam. 1. 22.* 'Tis the cunning Sophistry of the Devil, farthered by self-love, *Prov. 21. 2.* Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, and partly by self-ignorance, *Rev. 3. 17.* *Thou saidst I am rich, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art poor.* You have no fears, no doubts, no case to propound that concerns your future state; and why so? but because you have no sight, your Consciences are quieted because your eyes are blinded.

Fourthly, The trifling of Men with the duties of Religion, plainly discovers the blinding power of Satan upon their minds and understandings, else they would never play and dally with the serious and solemn Ordinances of God, at that rate they do; if their eyes were once opened, they would be in earnest in prayer, and apply themselves with the closest attention of mind in hearing the Gospel. There are two sorts of thoughts about any Subject of Meditation. Some think at a distance, and others think close to the Subject. Never do the thoughts of Men come so close to Christ, to Heaven and to Hell, as they do immediately upon their Illumination. When *John's* Ministry enlightened the peoples minds, it is said, *Mat. 11. 12.* *From the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.* Surely these Men were more in good earnest that would receive no repulse, take no denial, but even force themselves through all difficulties into Heaven; and so would it be with you. If the God of this World had not blinded your minds, you would never pray with so much unconcernedness, nor hear with so much *Ofitancy* and Carelessness; pray, as if you prayed not, and hear as if you heard not. It is with many of our Hearts, as it was with *Aristotle*, who after a quaint Oration made before him, was asked how he liked it; Truly said he, I did not hear it; for I was thinking all the while of another Matter.

Fifthly, This also is a plain Evidence, that the God of this world hath blinded many mens eyes among us, for that they fear not to commit great sins, to avoid small Hazards and Troubles, which all the World could never persuade them to do, if they were not hoodwink'd by the God of this World. Those that have seen sin as sin in the Glass of God's Law, will choose as *Moses* did, to suffer any Affliction with the people of God, rather than obey the Pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, *1st. 11. 2c.*

O o o

Those

Those that have seen and felt the evil of sin in the deep troubles of their Spirits for it, will account all Reproaches, all Losses, all Sufferings from Men, to be but Flea-bitings to the burthen of sin.

Sixthly, The pride and self-conceitedness of many thousands who profess Christianity, plainly shows their minds to be blinded by the *Sophistry of Satan*, and that they do not understand themselves, and the woful state of their own Souls. Those that see God in the clearest light abhor themselves in the deepest humility, *Isai. 6. 5. Job 42. 5.* If ever the Lord had effectually opened your eyes by a clear discovery of your state by nature, and the course of your life under the efficacy and influence of continual Temptations and Corruptions; how would your plumes fall? None in the World would rate you lower, than your selves would. By all which it appears, that multitudes are blinded by the God of this world.

3. *Thirdly*, In the third place, we are to consider what Policies Satan useth to blind the Minds of them that believe not. and we shall find there are three sorts of Policies practised by the God of this world upon the minds and understandings of Men, which he darkens, By

1. Hindering the Reception of Gospel-light
2. Obstructing the Efficacy of it when received.
3. Making Misapplications of it to other purposes.

First, It is a great Policy of Satan to blind the Understandings of Men, by hindering and preventing the reception of Gospel-light, which he doth especially these five ways.

First, By tempting the Dispensers of the Gospel, to darken the truths thereof in their delivering of them, to shoot over the heads of their Hearers, in lofty Language and terms of Art, so that common Understandings can give no account when the Sermon is done, what the Preacher would have, but however commend him for a good Scholar, and an excellent Orator. I make no doubt but the Devil is very busy with Ministers in their Studies, tempting them by the pride of their own hearts to gratify his Design herein, he teaches them how to paint the glass, that he might keep out the Light.

I acknowledge a proper, grave and comely stile, befits the lips of *Christ's Ambassadors*, they should not be rude and careless in their Language or Method. But this affectation of great swelling words of Vanity, is but too like the proud *Gnosticks*, whom the *Apostle* is supposed to tax for this evil, *Jude* verse 16. *This is to darken Counsel, by words without knowledge, Job 31. 2.* To amuse and bemitt poor ignorant souls, and nullify the design of preaching; for every thing is accounted so far good, as it is good to the end it is ordained for. A Sword that hath an Hilt of Gold, set thick with Diamonds, is no good Sword if it hath no edge to cut; or want a good back to follow home the stroke. O that the Ministers of Christ would chuse rather found than great words, such as are apt to pierce the heart, rather than such as tickle the Fancy, and let people beware of furthering the Design of Satan against their own Souls, in putting a Temptation upon their Ministers, by desisting plain Preaching. The more popular plain, and intelligible our

Discourses are, so much the more probable they are to be successful; that is the most excellent Oratory that persuades Men to Christ.

Secondly, Satan hinders the access of Light to the Understandings of Men, by employing their Minds about impertinent things, while they are attending upon the Ordinances of God. Thus he tempted them in *Ezek. 33. 31, 32.* *And they come unto thee as they people cometh, and they sit before thee, as my people; and they hear thy Words, but they will not do them; for with their Mouth they show much Love, but their heart goeth after their Covetousness. And lo! thou art unto them as a very lovely Song of one that hath a pleasant voice.* The modulation of the Prophet's voice was very pleasing to their ears, but mean while their Fancies and Thoughts were wandering after their Lusts, their hearts were full of earthy Projects.

Thirdly, Satan hinders the access of Light to the Understandings of Men by raising Objections, and picking Quarrels with the Word, on purpose to shake its Authority, and hinder the assent of the Understanding to it, and so the Word makes no more Impression, than a Fable or Romance would do. And never did this design of Satan obtain more than in this Atheistical Age, wherein the main Pillars and Foundation of Religion are shaken in the minds of multitudes. The Devil hath perswaded many, that the Gospel is but a cunningly devised Fable; *Fabula Christi*, as that blaspheming Pope called it: That Ministers must say somewhat to get a Living. That Heaven and Hell are but Fancies, or at most, things of great Uncertainty and doubtful Credit. This being once obtained, the door of the Soul is shut against Truth. And this Design of Satan hath prospered the more in this Generation, by the corrupt Doctrines of seducing Spirits, which have overthrown the Faith of some, 2 Tim. 2. 18. And partly from the scandalous Lives of loose and vain Professors, the Gospel hath been brought into contempt; but especially by Satan's artificial improvement of the corrupt Natures of Men, in an Age wherein Conscience hath been so much debauched, and Atheism thereby spread as a gangreen in the Body polittick.

Fourthly, Satan hinders the access of Light, by helping erroneous Minds to draw false Conclusions and perverse Inferences from the great and precious Truths of the Gospel; and thereby bringing them under Prejudice and Contempt: Thus he assits the Errors of Mens Minds about the Doctrine of Election; when he either perswades them, that it is an unreasonable Doctrine, and not worthy of Credit, That God should chuse some, and refuse others every way as good as those he hath chosen; or if there be any Certainty in that Doctrine, then Men may throw the reins upon the neck of their Lusts, and live at what rate they list. For if God have chosen them to Salvation, their Wickedness shall not hinder it; and if he have appointed them unto Wrath, their diligence and self-denial cannot prevent it.

Thus the Doctrine of Free Grace is by the like Sophistry of Satan turned into lasciviousness. If Grace abound, Men may sin the more freely; and the shortness of our time upon earth, which in its own Nature awakens all Men to diligence, is by the subtilty of Satan turned

qui popu-
lariter,
pueriliter,
triviali-
ter, & sim-
plicissime
docetur, op-
timum ad
vulgum
sunt con-
venientes.
Bucholtz.

turned to a quite contrary purpose, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die.*

Fifthly, Satan darkens the Minds of Men, and shuts them up against the Light, by blowing them up with Pride and Self-conceitiveness, persuading them that they know all these things already, and causing them to contemn the most weighty and precious Truths of God, as trite and vulgar Notions. The Word cannot be received without Meekness, and Humility of Mind, *Jam. 1. 21. Psal. 25. 8, 9.* and Pride is the Nurse of Ignorance, *1 Tim. 6. 4. 1 Cor. 8. 7.* The Devil is aware of this, and therefore blows up the pride and conceitedness of Mens hearts all that he can: And this temptation of his generally prevails where-ever it meets with a knowing head, matched with a graceless and unfaithful heart. And thus we see by what wiles and policies Satan keeps out the Light, and prevents the access of it to the minds of Men.

But if he miss his Design here, and Truth gets into the mind; Then

Secondly, He labours to obstruct the efficacy and operation of the Light, that though it do shine into the understanding, yet it shall be imprisoned there; and send down no converting influences upon the will and affections: And this Design he promotes and manages divers ways.

First, By hastening to quench Convictions betime, and nip them in the bud. Satan knows how dangerous a thing it is, and destructive to his interest, to suffer Convictions to continue long; and therefore it is said of him, *Mat. 13. 19. When any one beareth the word of the Kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart.* Satan is compared in this Scripture to the Fowls of the Air, which pick up the Seed before it take any root in the Earth. The Devil is very jealous of this, and therefore labours all he can to destroy the word before it comes to operate upon the heart; which he doth sometimes by the Cares of the World, and sometimes by vain Companions, who prove meer quench-coals unto the beginning Convictions. One Sinner destroyeth much good.

Secondly, No sooner doth the God of this World observe the Light of Truth begin to operate upon the heart, but he obstructeth that Design by *procrastinations* and delays, which delude and baffle the convinced Soul; he persuades them if they will alter their course, it will be time enough hereafter, when such incumbrances and troubles in the world are over; if he prevail here, 'tis a thousand to one but the work miscarries. *James 1. 23, 24.* If the hearer of the Word be not a doer (*i. e.*) a present doer, while the impressions of it are fresh upon the Soul, he doth but deceive himself. For it is with the heart, as it is with melted wax, if the seal be clapt to it presently, it will receive a fair impression; but if it be let alone but for a little while, you can make none at all; it was therefore David's great Care and Wisdom to set about the work of Religion under the first impetus or vigorous motion of his heart and affections. *Psal. 119. 60. I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandment.* Multitudes of Souls have perished by these delays. 'Tis a Temptation incident to all that are under

beginning Convictions, especially young Persons, whom the Devil persuades that it were no better than madness in them to 'abridge and deny themselves so much delight and pleasure; and steep their youthful thoughts in such a unwholesome Subject as Religion is.

Thirdly, If all this will not do, but Convictions still continue and get ground in the Conscience, then he endeavours to scare and fright them out of their Convictions, by representing to them the inward terrors, troubles, and despairs into which they are about to plunge themselves, and that henceforth they must never expect a pleasant day or comfortable hour. Thus doth the God of this world blind the minds of them that believe not, both by hind'ring the access of light to the mind; and the influence of it upon the heart.

Thirdly, There is yet one policy of Satan to keep Souls in darkness, and that is by the misapplication of Truth; persuading them, that whatsoever they read or hear of the misery and danger of Christless and unregenerate Persons, doth not in the least touch or concern them; but the more notorious and prophane part of the World; and by this policy he blinds the minds of all civil and moral Persons. Thus the Pharisees trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. And so the Laodiceans thought themselves rich, and increased with goods; that is, in a very safe and good condition. Now there are divers things notably improved by Satan's Policy, in order to these misapplications of Truth: As,

First, The freedom of their lives from the most gross pollutions of the World. *Mat. 19. 20. All these things have I kept from my youth up: A civil, sober course of life is a most effectual blind before the eyes of many a Man's Conscience.*

Secondly, It is the Policy of Satan to prevent Conviction by Conviction: I mean effectual Convictions, by Convictions that have been ineffectual, and are now vanished away. Thus the Troubles that some Persons have been under, must pass for their Conversion, though the temper of their heart be the same it was: Their ineffectual Troubles are made use of by the Devil to blind them in the true knowledge and apprehension of their condition. For these Men and Women can speak of the troubles they have had for sin, and the many tears they have shed for it; whereby thorough Conviction is effectually prevented.

Thirdly, Gifts and Knowledge are improved by the Policy of Satan, against the true knowledge of Jesus Christ, and our own estate by nature. As Conviction is improved by Satan's Policy against Conviction so is knowledge against Knowledge. This was the case of them, in *Rom. 2. 17, 18. Thou art called a Jew, and rekest in the Law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are excellent; being instructed out of the Law, and art confident that thou thyself art a guide to the blind, &c.* And this is the temptation and delusion of knowing Persons, who are so far from being blind in their own account, that they account themselves the Guides of the Blind: Yet who blinder than such Men?

Fourthly, External Reformation is improved by the Policy of Satan against true Spiritual Reformation,

3:

See my
Touchy and
thought themselves rich,
and increased with
goods; that is, in a very
safe and good condition.
Now there are divers
things notably improved
by Satan's Policy, in
order to these
misapplications of
Truth: As,
First, The freedom
of their lives from
the most gross
pollutions of the
World. Mat. 19.
20. All these things
have I kept from
my youth up:
A civil, sober
course of life is
a most effectual
blind before the
eyes of many a
Man's Conscience.

Reformation, and passes current up and down the World. For Conversion, tho' it serves only to strengthen Satan's interest in the Soul, *Mat. 12. 44.* and for want of a real change of heart, doth but increase their sin and misery, *2 Pet. 2. 20.* This is the Generation that is pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness. The cleanness of their hands blind them in discovering the foulness of their hearts.

Fifthly, The Policy of Satan improves diligence in some Duties, against the convictions of other Duties. The external Duties of Religion, as hearing, praying, fasting, against the great Duties of repenting and believing. This was their case, *Isai. 58. 2, 3.* *Tet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a Nation that did Righteousness, and forsook not the Ordinances of their God. They ask of me the Ordinances of Justice, they take delight in approaching to God. Wherefore have we justified, say they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our souls, and thou takest no knowledge?* Thus Duty is improved against Duty, the Externals against the Internals of Religion, and multitudes are blinded this way.

Sixthly, The Policy of Satan improves zeal against zeal; and thereby blinds a great part of the World: He allows Men to be zealous against a false Religion, if thereby he may prevent them from being zealous in the true Religion. He diverts their zeal against their own Sins, by spending it against other Mens. Thus Paul was once blinded by his own zeal for the Law, *Acts 22. 3.* And many Men at this day satisfy themselves in their own zeal against the corruptions of God's Worship, and the Superstitions of others, who never felt the power of true Religion upon their own hearts: A dangerous blind of Satan.

Seventhly, The Policy of Satan improves the esteem and respect Men have from the People

of God, against their great Duty and Interest to become such themselves, *Rev. 3. 1.* *Thou hast a name that thou livest, but thou art dead.* It is enough to many Men that they obtain acceptance among the Saints, tho' they be none of that number; the good opinion of others begets and confirms their good opinion of themselves.

Eighthly, The Policy of Satan improves soundness of Judgment, against soundness of Heart. An Orthodox head, against an Orthodox heart and life; Dogmatical Faith, against justifying Faith. This was the case of them before-mentioned, *Rom. 2. 18, 19.* Men satisfy themselves, that they have a sound understanding, tho' mean while they have a very rotten heart. 'Tis enough for them that their heads are regular, tho' their hearts and lives be very irregular.

Ninthly, The Policy of Satan improves the Blessings of God, against the Blessings of God, blinding us by the Blessings of Providence, so as not to discern the want of Spiritual Blessings, persuading Men that the Smiles of Providence in their Prosperity, Success, and thriving Designs in the World, are good evidences of the Love of God to their Souls, not at all discerning how the Prosperity of fools deceive them, and that Riches are often given to the hurt of the Owners thereof.

Tenthly, The Policy of Satan improves comforts against comfort, false and unground comforts under the Word, against the real grounds of comfort, lying in the Souls interest in Christ. Thus many Men finding a great deal of comfort in the Promises, are so blinded thereby, as never to look after Union with Christ, the only solid ground of all true comfort, *Heb. 6. 5, 9.*

And thus you see, how the God of this world blindeth the minds of them that believe not, and how the Gospel is hid to them that are lost.

SERMON XXXV.

Serm. 35.

Text.

2 COR. IV. 3, 4.

But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this World hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them.

Doct.

THE Words have been opened, and this Point observed:

Doct. That the Understandings of all Unbelievers are blinded by Satan's Policies, in order to their everlasting Perdition.

We have shewn already what the blinding of the mind, or hiding of the Gospel from it, is; it hath also been demonstrated that the Gospel is hid, and the minds of many blinded under it; you have also seen what Policies Satan uses to blind the minds of Men, even in the clearest Light of the Gospel. It remains now that I open to you the dreadful Nature of this Judgment of God upon the souls of Men, and then make Application of the whole.

There are many Judgments of God inflicted upon the Souls and Bodies of Men in this World; but none of them are so dreadful as those Spiritual Judgments are, which God inflicts immediately upon the Soul: And among Spiritual Judgments, few or none are of more dreadful Nature and Consequence, than this of Spiritual Blindness; which will appear by considering,

First, the Subject of this Judgment, which is the Soul, and the principal Power of the Soul, which is the Mind and understanding Faculty; the Soul is the most precious and valuable part of Man, and the Mind is the superior and most noble Power of the Soul; it

it is to the Soul, what the Eye is to the Body, the directive Faculty. The bodily Eye is a curious, tender, and most precious part of the Body. When we would exprefs the Value of a thing, we say, we prize it as our Eyes. The Loss of the Eyes is a fore Loss, we lose a great part of the Comfort of this World by it. Yet such an Affliction (speaking comparatively) is but a trifle to this. If our bodily Eyes be blinded, we cannot see the Sun; but if our spiritual Eye be blinded, we cannot see God, we wander in the Paths of Sin, 1 John 2. 11. We are led blindfold to Hell by Satan, as the Syrians were into Samaria, 2 Kings 6. 19, 20. And then our Eyes like theirs will be opened to see our Misery, when it is too late, *The Light of the Body is the Eye*, (saith Christ) *If therefore thine Eye be single, thy whole Body shall be full of Light; but if thine Eye be evil, thy whole Body shall be full of Darkness. If therefore the Light that is in thee be Darkness, how great is that Darkness?* Mat. 6. 22, 23. By the Eye he means the practical Judgment, the understanding Faculty, which is the Seat of Principles, the common Treasury of rules for Practice, according unto which a Mans Life is formed, and his way directed. If therefore this Power of the Soul be darkened, how great must that darkness be! for now the Blind lead the Blind, and both fall into the Ditch. The blind Judgment misjudges the blind affections, and both fall into Hell. O what a sad thing is it, that the Devil should lead that, that leads thee! That he should sit at the Helm, and steer thy course to Damnation! The blinding of this Noble Faculty precipitates the Soul into the most dangerous Courses, Persecution by this means seems to be true zeal for God, John 16. 2. *They that persecute you, shall think that they do God service.* Paul once thought verily with himself, that he ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, Acts 26. 9. (i. e.) He thought he had pleased God, when he was imprisoning and persecuting his people; as many do at this day; it will make a Man to sin conscientiously, which is a very dangerous Way of sinning, and difficult to be reclaimed.

Secondly, It is a dreadful Judgment if we consider the Object about which the Understanding is blinded, which is Jesus Christ, and Union with him; Regeneration and the Nature and Necessity thereof. For this Blindness is not universal, but respective and particular. A Man may have abundance of light and knowledge in things natural and moral; but spiritual things are hidden from his Eyes. Yea, a Man may know spiritual things in a natural way, which increaseth his blindness; but he cannot discern them spiritually; this is a sore Judgment, and greatly to be bewailed. *Thou hast hid these things* (saith Christ) *from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes*, Mat. 11. 25. Learned and knowing Men are ignorant of those things, which very Babes in Christ understand. They are prudent in the Management of earthly affairs; but to save their own Souls they have no Knowledge. They are able with *Berenarius* to dispute *De omni scibili*, of every thing invelligable by the Light of Nature; yea, to open the Scripture solidly, and defend the Doctrines and

Truths of Christ against his Adversaries successfully; and yet blinded in the great mystery of Regeneration. *Blindness in part* (saith the Apostle) *is happened unto Israel*; and that indeed was the principal part of Knowledge; viz. the Knowledge of Jesus Christ and him crucified, we see farther than they. The literal Knowledge of Christ shines clearly in our Understanding. We are only blinded about those things which should give us saving Interest in him, about the *effectual Application* of Christ to our own Souls.

Thirdly, The dreadful Nature of this spiritual Blindness farther appears from the Consideration of the season in which it befalls Men, which is the very time of God's Patience, and the only opportunity they have for Salvation; after these opportunities are over, their Eyes will be opened to see their Misery, but alas, too late, too late. Upon this account Christ shed those Tears over Jerusalem, Luke 19. 42. *O that thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine Eyes.* Now the season of Grace is past and gone; opportunities, are the golden Spots of time, and there is much time in a short opportunity, as there are many pieces of Silver in one piece of Gold. Time signifies nothing, when Opportunities are gone, to be blinded in the very season of salvation, is the Judgment of all Judgments, the greatest Misery incident to Man; to have our Eyes opened, when the seasons of Salvation are past, is but an Aggravation of misery: There is a twofold Opening of Mens Eyes to see their danger: *Viz.*

1. Graciously to prevent danger.

2. Judicially to aggravate misery.

They whose Eyes are not opened graciously in this World to see their disease and remedy in Christ, shall have their Eyes opened judicially in the World to come, to see their disease without any remedy. If God open them now, it is by way of *Prevention*, if they be not opened until then, it will produce *Desperation*.

Fourthly, The horrible Nature of this Judgment farther appears, from the exceeding difficulty of curing it, especially in Men of excellent natural Endowments and Accomplishments, John 9. 40, 41. *And some of the Pharisees which were with him, heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?* Jesus said unto them, *If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say we see, therefore your sin remaineth*, 4. d. The Pride and Conceitedness of your Hearts adds Obstinacy and Incurableness to your Blindness, these are the blind People that have Eyes, Isa. 43. 8. *In seeing they see not.* The Conviction of such Men is next to an impossibility.

Fifthly, The Design and End of this Blindness under the Gospel is most dreadful, so saith my Text, *The God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them which believe not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them.* Answerable sequatur whereunto are those Words, Isa. 6. 10. *Make the Heart of this people fat, and make their Ears heavy, and shut their Eyes; lest they see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Hearts; and convert, and be healed.* *non intellegere delicta, neque poenitere delicta, nec plangere; indignantis Dei major laus est ira, Cyp. Ep. Per cœci sunt cœci, non cœci sunt cœci, nec plangere; indignantis Dei major laus est ira, Cyp. De lapsis*

ed. So that it is plain, this Blinding is a *Pre-ludium* to damnation, as the covering of *Ham*'s Face was to his destruction. When the Lord hath no purpose of Grace and Mercy to a Mans Soul, then to bring about the damnation of that Man by a righteous Permission; many occasions of Blindness befall him, which Satan improves effectually unto his eternal ruine, among which fatal Occasions, blind Guides, and scandalous Professors are none of the least, they shall be fitted with Ministers suitable to their Humours, who shall speak smooth things; if a *Man walk in the Spirit, and Falseness* (i. e. by an *in dñi dñr* ----- the Spirit of Falseness) do lie, saying, *I will prophesy to thee of wine and strong drink, he shall even be the prophet of his people*; and the slips and falls of professors shall do the Devil not a little service in this his fatal design. *Mat. 18. 7. Wo to the World because of offences*: This shall blind them, and harden them to purpose. Thus you see what a dreadful Judgment this is, a stroke of God upon the Soul which cuts off all the present comforts of Christ and Religion from it, takes away the bridle of restraint from sin, and makes way for the final ruine of the Soul. A far greater Judgment it is, than the greatest calamity or affliction, which can befall us in this World. If our names suffer by the greatest reproaches, our bodies by the most painful diseases, our estates by the greatest losses; if God strike every comfort we have in this World dead by affliction: All this is nothing compared with this blinding Judgment of God upon the Soul. For they may come from the tender love of God to us, *Heb. 12. 6*. But this is the effect of his wrath, they may cleanse sin. *Ija. 27. 9*. But this increases it; they often prove occasions of Conversion, *Job 36. 8, 9*. But this is the great obstruction to it. In a word, they only wound the flesh, and that with a curable wound; but this stabs the soul, and that with a mortal wound.

1st. Use of Information.

Infer. 1. If this be the case of the unbelieving world to be so blinded by the God of the world; how little should we value the censures and slanders of the blind World? Certainly they should move no other affection but pity in our souls: if their eyes were opened, their mouths would be shut, they would never traduce Religion and the sincere professors of it as they do, if Satan had not blinded their minds: They speak evil of the things they know not; their reproaches which they let fly so freely, are but so many arrows shot by the blind mans bow, which only stick in our cloaths, and can do us no hurt, except we thrust 'em onward by our own discontent to the wounding of our spirits. I could almost be proud upon it (said Luther) that I have got an ill name among the worst men. Beware Christians that you give them no occasion to blaspheme the name of your God, and then never trouble yourselves however they use your names. If they tread it in the dirt now, God (as one speaks) will take it up, wash off all that dirt, and deliver it you again clear and shining. Should such men speak well of us, we might justly suspect our selves of some iniquity which administers to them the occasion of it.

Infer. 2. How absurd and dangerous must it

be for Christians to follow the examples of the blind world? Let the blind follow the blind but let not those whom God hath enlightened do so. Christians, never let those lead you, who are led blindfolded by the Devil themselves. The holiness and heavenliness of Christians was wont to set the World a wondering that they would not run with them into the same excess of riot, 1 Pet. 4. 4. But sure since God hath opened your eyes, and shewed you the dangerous courses they walk in, it would be the greatest wonder of all, if you should be the companions of such men, and tread in the steps of their examples. Christian, as humble and lowly thoughts as thou hast of thy self, yet I would have thee understand thy self to be too good to be the associate of such men. Discamus san-ctam superbiam, & sciamus nos esse illis meliores. If they will walk with you in the way of duty and holiness, let them come and welcome: Receive them with both arms, and be glad of their company; but beware you walk not in their paths, lest they be a snare unto you. Did they see the end of their way, they would never walk in it themselves, why then will you walk with them, who do see it?

Infer. 3. If this be so, let Christians be exact, and circumspect in their walking lest they lay a stumbling block in the way of the blind. 'Tis a great sin to do so in a proper sense, Lev. 19. 14. Thou shalt not put a stumbling block before the blind. And a far greater to do it in a Metaphorical sense, Rom. 14. 13. 'Tis the express will of God, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brothers way. 'Tis an argument of little regard to the honour of Christ, or the Souls of Men so to do. O professors, look to your steps. The Devil desires to make use of you for such purposes. The sins of thousands of others who make no profession of godliness, will never so fit his purpose for the blinding of those meep eyes, as the least slip or failing of yours will do. 'Tis the living bird that makes the best stale to draw others into the net: The grossest wickedness of prophane sinners passeth away in silence, but all the neighbourhood shall ring with your miscarriages. A righteous man falling down before the wicked is a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring, Prov. 25. 26. The scandalous falls of good men are like a bag of poison cast by Satan into the spring from whence the whole town is supplied with water. You little know what mischief you do, and how many blind sinners may fall into hell by your occasion.

*Infer. 4. How dangerous a thing is zeal in a wicked man? 'Tis a sharp sword in a blind mans hand, or like high mettles in a blind horse: How much hath the Church of God suffered upon this account, and doth suffer at this day? The World hath ever been full of such blind and blustering zeal, which like a hurricane overturns all that stands in its way: Yea, (as we noted before) it makes a man a kind of Confessionary persecutor. I confess it is better for the persecutor himself to do it ignorantly, because ignorance leaves him in a capacity for mercy, and sets him a degree lower than the malicious enlightened persecutor, 1 Tim. 1. 13. Else it were the dreadful case described in *Heb. 10*. But yet as it is, *John 16*. 2. these are the fierce and dreadful enemies of*

Infer. 2.

Infer. 4.

*Use 1.
Infer. 1.*

*Superbus
sio quod
videt no-
men pes-
simum
munda cre-
dere. Lu-
ther. Gra-
tias ago
Deo meo,
quod dig-
nus sum
quem
mundus
odit. Hi-
eron.
Infer. 2.*

of the Church of God. Such a man was Paul, a devout persecutor, and such persecution God afterward suffered to befall himself. *Acts 13. 50.* But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable Women, and the chief Men of that City; and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. An erroneous Conscience binds as well as an informed Conscience, and where-ever God gives such men opportunity to vent the spleen and rage of their hearts upon his people, they will be sure to do it to purpose. With other men Gamaliel's counsel may have some influence, and they may be afraid lest they be found fighters against God; but blind zeal spurs on, and faith as Jesus did, *Come see my zeal for the Lord of Hosts.* O blind sinners, be sure of your Mark before you discharge your Arrows. If you shoot at a wicked man (as you suppose him) and God finds one of his dear children wounded, or destroyed, what account will you give of that fact to God, when you shall come before his Judgment Seat?

2d. Use of Exhortation.

This point is very improveable by way of Exhortation. Both,

1. Unto those, who are blinded by the God of this World.

2. To those that are enlightned in the knowledge of Christ, by the true God.

First, To those who are still blinded by the God of this World, to whom the Lord hath not given unto this day, eyes to see their misery in themselves, or their remedy in Christ, so as to make an effectual Application of him to their own souls. To all such my counsel is,

1. To get a sense of your own blindness.
2. To seek out for a cure, whilst yet it may be had.

First, Labour to get a deep sense of the misery of such a condition; for till you be awakened by conviction, you can never be healed. O that you did but know the true difference betwixt common and saving light; the want of this keeps you in darkness: You think because you know the same things that the most sanctified man doth, that therefore there is no difference betwixt his knowledge and yours; and are therefore ready to say to them as Job to his Friends. *Lo, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard, and understood it: What ye know, the same do I know also; I am not inferior unto you,* *Job 3. 1, 2.* But O that you would be convinced that your knowledge vastly differs from the knowledge of believers. Though you know the same things that they do, it is a knowledge of another kind of nature. You know spiritual things in another way, meerly by the light of reason assisted and improved by the common light of the Gospel: They know the same things by Spiritual Illumination, and in an experimental way. *1 John 2. 20. Ye have an unction from the holy one, and ye know all things.* Their knowledge is practical yours is idle. They are working out their Salvation by that light which God hath given them, *Psal. 111. 10.* Their knowledge of God and Christ produces the fruits of faith, obedience, mortification, and heavenly mindedness in them: It hath no such fruits in you; whatever light there be in your understandings, it makes no alteration at all upon your hearts. The light

brings them to Heaven, *John 17. 3.* Yours shall be blown out by death, *1 Cor. 13. 8.* and your selves left in the mills of eternal darkness: Except your eyes be opened seasonably by the anointing of the Holy Ghost. Conviction is a great part of your cure.

Secondly, Labour to get a remedy for this dangerous disease of your minds: Awake to righteousness and sin not, for some have not the knowledge of God: *I speak this to your shame, 1 Cor. 15. 34.* These things speak encouragement to you: though it be a sore Judgment that lies upon you, and very difficult to be removed: Yet remember Jesus Christ is put into commission by God the Father, to open the blind eyes, *Isa. 42. 6, 7.* and this excellent Physician bespeaks you for his Patients, *Rev. 3. 18. Anoint thine eyes (saith he) with eye-salve that thou mayest see.* Yea, the most enlightned Christians were once as dark and blind in spiritual things as you are, and Christ hath cured them, *Eph. 5. 8. Once were you darkness, now are ye light in the Lord.* Attend therefore upon the Ordinances of the Gospel diligently; that's God's enlightning instrument, by which he conches those *Naturalists* which blind the eyes of mens understandings, *Acts 26. 18.* And if ever you will have your eyes open'd, allow your selves time to ponder, and consider what you hear. The duty of Meditation is a very enlightning duty: Above all, cry to the Lord Jesus Christ as that poor man did, *Lord that mine eyes may be opened, that I may receive my sight.* Say, Lord, this is my disease and danger, that in seeing I see not. Others see natural things in a spiritual way, whilst I see spiritual things only in a natural way: Their light is operative upon their hearts, mine is but an idle impractical notion of Religion, which brings forth no fruit of holiness. Their knowledge sets their hands a work in duties of obedience: mine only sets my tongue a work in discourses of those things which my heart never felt. Lord, open mine eyes and make me to see out of this obscurity: All the light that is in me, is but darkness. O Lord enlighten my darkness, enlighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.

Secondly, Let it be a word of counsel and exhortation to such as once were blind, but do now see.

First, I beseech you bless God for the least degree of Spiritual Illumination. Truly light is sweet, and it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the Sun, *Eccles. 11. 7.* But Oh how sweet is spiritual light! And what a pleasant thing to behold the Son of Righteousness! Blessed are your eyes, for they see God hath brought you out of darkness into marvellous light. And marvellous indeed it must needs be, when you consider how many wise and prudent men are under the power of spiritual darkness, whilst such babes as you, are enlightned. *Mat. 11. 25.* It greatly affected the heart of Christ, O let it affect yours also.

Secondly, Labour to get a clearer sight of spiritual things every day. For all spiritual light is encreasing light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day, *Pro. 4. 18.* O if a little spiritual light be so comfortable, what would more be? The wisdom of God is a manifold wisdom, *Eph. 3. 16.* The best of us see but little

Πνευματολογία.

A
T R E A T I S E
O F T H E
S O U L of M A N.

To the much Honoured his dear Kinsman, Mr. John Flavcl, and Mr. Edward Crispe, of London, Merchants; and the rest of my worthy Friends in London, Ratcliffe, Shadwel, and Lymehouse; Grace, Mercy, and Peace.

Dear Friends,

AMong all the Creatures in this lower World, none deserves to be stiled *Great*, but *Man*; and in *Man* nothing is found worthy of that Epithet, but his *Soul*.

Nihil in terra magnum præter hominem, nihil in homine præter mentem. *Favorin.*

The Study and Knowledge of the *Soul* was therefore always reckon'd a rich and necessary Improvement of Time. All Ages have magnified these two Words, *Know thy Self*, as an *Oracle* descending from Heaven.

E Cælo descendit prædicta. *Juvenal.*

No Knowledge, saith *Bernard*, is better than that whereby we know our selves; leave other matters therefore, and search thy self; run through thy self; make a stand in thy self; let thy thoughts, as it were, circulate, begin and end in thy self. Strain not thy thoughts in vain about other things, thy self being neglected.

Nulla scientia melior illa qua homo novit seipsum: relique ergo cetera, & teipsum discute: per te curre: in te confiste: à te incipiat cogitatio tua, & in te finiatur.

The study and knowledge of *Jesus Christ* must still be allow'd to be most excellent and necessary: But yet the Worth and Necessity of *Christ* is unknown to Men, till the value, wants, and dangers of their own *Souls* be first discovered to them.

The disaffectedness and averfation of Men to the study of their own *Souls*, is the more to be admired; not only because of the weight and necessity of it, but the alluring pleasure and sweetness that is found therein. What * *Cardan* speaks is experimentally felt by many, that scarce any thing is more pleasant and delectable to the *Soul* of Man, than to know what he is, what he may, and shall be; and what those Divine and Supreme things are, which he is to enjoy after Death, and the Vicissitudes of this present World. For we are Creatures conscious to our selves of an immortal Nature, and that we have something about us which must over-live this mortal Flesh; and is therefore ever and anon some way or other hinting and intimating to us its expectations of, and designations for a better Life than that it now lives in the Body, and that we shall not cease to be, when we cease to breathe.

* Quid jucundius quam scire quid finis, quid fuerimus quid erimus, & cum his etiam divina atque superna illa post obitum Mundique vicissitudines.

And certainly, my Friends, Discourses of the Soul and its Immortality; of *Heaven* and of *Hell*, the next and only Receptacles of unbodied Spirits, were never more seasonable and necessary than in this Atheistical Age of the World, wherein all serious Piety and thoughts of Immortality are ridicul'd, and hissed out of the company of many: As if those old condemned *Hereticks* the *Origenists*, who asserted the corruptibility and mortality of the Soul as well as Body, had been again revived in our days.

And as the *Atheism* of some, so the *sepidity* and unconcerned carelessness of the most, needs and calls for such potent Remedies, as Discourses of this kind do plentifully afford. I dare appeal to your charitable Judgments, whether the Conversions and Discourses of the *Many*, do indeed look like a serious *pursuit* of Heaven, and a *flight* from Hell?

Long have my thoughts bended towards this great and excellent Subject, and many earnest desires I have had, (as I believe all thinking Persons must needs have) to know what I shall be when I breath not. But when I had engaged my Meditations about it, two great rubs opposed the farther progress of my thoughts therein: Namely,

I. The difficulty of the Subject I had chosen: And,

II. The distractions of the Times in which I was to write upon it.

I. As for the Subject, such is the subtilty and sublimity of its Nature, and such the knotty Controversies in which it is involv'd, that it much better deserves that *Inscription*, than *Minerva's* Temple at *Saun* did, * *Never did any Mortal reveal me plainly.*

* Τὸ ἴδιον πᾶσι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἀνεκάλυπτον.

Animam præsentem
mentis acie vix, aut ne
vix quidem, assequimur;
sed qualis sit futura, quo-
modo indagabimus? La-
borant hic maxima in-
genia, & caligo conatus
etiam generosos non raro
eludit. *Joh. Stern. de
Morte, cap. 20.*

It is but little that the most clear and sharp-sighted do discern of their own Souls, now in the state of *composition*; and what then can we positively and distinctly know of the Life they live in the state of Separation? The darkness in which these things are involved, doth greatly exercise even the greatest Wits, and frequently elude and frustrate the most generous attempts. Many great *Scholars*, whose natural and acquired abilities singularly furnished and qualified them to make a clearer discovery, have laboured in this Field *usque ad sudorem, & pallorem*, even to sweat and paleness, and done little more but intangle themselves and the Subject more than before. This cannot but discourage new attempts.

And yet without some knowledge of the *hability* and subjective capacity of our Souls to enjoy the good of the World to come, even in a state of absence from the Body, a principal relief must be cut off from them under the great and manifold trials they are to encounter in this evil World.

As for my self, I assure you I am deeply sensible of the inequality of my Shoulders to this Burden; and have often thought (since I undertook it) of that grave and necessary Caution of the *Poet*, to wield and poise the burden as *Porters* use to do, before I undertook it. *Zuinglius* blamed *Caroloſtadius* (as some may do me) for undertaking the Controversie of that Age, because, saith he, *Non habet satis humerorum*; his Shoulders are too weak for it.

And yet I know Men's labours prosper not according to the art and elegancy of the *Composure*, but according to the Divine Blessing which pleaseth to accompany them. *Rufinus* tells us of a learned *Philosopher* at the *Council of Nice*, who stoutly defended his *Thesis* against the greatest Wits and Scholars there, and yet was at last fairly vanquished by a Man of no extraordinary parts; of which Conquest the *Philosopher* gave this candid and ingenuous account, *Against Words* (saith he) *I opposed Words, and what was spoken, I overthrew by the art of speaking: But when instead of Words, Power came out of the Mouth of the Speaker, Words could no longer withstand Truth; nor Man oppose the Power of God.*

O that my weak endeavours might prosper under the like influence of the Spirit upon the Hearts of them that shall read this inartificial, but well-meant Discourse.

I am little concerned about the Contempts and Censures of fastidious Readers. I have resolv'd to say nothing that exceeds Sobriety, nor to provoke any Man, except my dissent from his unproved Dictates must be his provocation.

Perhaps there are some doubts and difficulties relating to this Subject, which will never be fully solved till we come to Heaven. For Man by the Fall being

lets

less than himself; doth not understand himself; nor will ever perfectly do so, until he be fully reformed to himself; which will not be whilst he dwells in a Body of Sin and Death. And yet it is to me past doubt, that this as well as other Subjects might have been much more cleared than it is, if instead of the proud Contending of masterly Wits for Victory, all had humbly and peaceably applied themselves to the impartial search of Truth.

Truth, like an Orient Pearl in the bottom of a River, would have discovered it self by its native lustre and radiancy, had not the Feet of Heathen *Philosophers*, cunning *Arbeits*, and daring School *Divines* disturb'd and foul'd the Stream.

II. And as the difficulties of the Subject are many, so many have been the Interruptions and Avocations I have met with whilst it was under my hand: Which I mention for no other end but to procure a more favourable Censure from you, if it appear less exact than you expected to find it. Such as it is, I do with much respect and affection, tender it to your hands, humbly requesting the Blessing of the Spirit may accompany it to your Hearts. If you will but allow your selves to think close to the matter before you, I doubt not but you may find somewhat in it apt both to inform your Minds, and quicken your Affections. I know you have a multiplicity of business under your hands, but yet I hope your great concern makes all others daily to give place; and that how clamorous and importunate soever the Affairs of this World be, you both can and do find time to sit alone, and bethink your selves of a much more important business you have to do.

My Friends, we are Borderers upon Eternity; we live upon the Confines of the Spiritual and Immaterial World. We must shortly be associated with bodiless Beings, and shall have (after a few days are past) no more concerns for Meat, Drink, and Sleep, buying and selling, Habitations and Relations, than the Angels of God now have. Beside, we live here in a State of Trial. Man (as *Scaliger* fitly calls him) is *Utriusque Mundi nexus*, one in whom both Worlds do meet; his Body participates of the lower, his Soul of the upper World. Hence it is he finds such tugging and pulling, this way, and that way; upward and downward; both Worlds as it were contending for this invaluable prize, the precious Soul. All Christ's Ordinances are instituted, and his Officers ordained for no other use or end, but the Salvation of Souls: Books are valuable according to their Conductibility to this end. How rich a Reward of my Labours shall I account it, if this Treatise of the Soul may but promote the Sanctification and Salvation of any Reader's Soul!

To your hands I first tender it. It becomes your Property, not only as a Debt of Justice, the fulfilling of a Promise made you long since upon your joint and earnest desires for the publication of it; but as an acknowledgment of the many Favours I have receiv'd from you. To one of you I stand oblig'd in the Bond of Relation, and under the sense of many Kindnesses, beyond whatever such a degree of Relation can be supposed to exact.

You have here a succinct account of the Nature, Faculties, and Original of the Soul of Man, as also of its infusion into the Body by God, without intireling himself to the guilt and sin resulting from that their Union.

You will also find the Breath of your Nostrils to be the *Nexus*, *Tie*, or *Bond*, which holds your Souls and Bodies in a personal Union; and that whilst the due Crasis and Temperament of the Body remains, and Breath continues, your Souls hang as by a weak and slender thread, over the state of a vast Eternity in Heaven or in Hell: Which will inform you both of the value of your Breath, and the best way of improving it, whilst you enjoy it.

The Immortality of the Soul is here asserted, proved, and vindicated from the most considerable Objections; so that it will evidently appear to you, by this Discourse, you do not cease to be, when you cease to breathe: And seeing they will over-live all Temporal Enjoyments, they must necessarily perish, as to all their Joys, Comforts, and Hopes, (which is all the Death that can be incident to an Immortal Spirit) if they be not in the proper season secured and provided of that never-perishing food of Souls, God in Christ, their Portion for ever.

Here you will find the Grounds and Reasons of that strong Inclination which you all feel them to have to your Bodies, and the necessity (notwithstanding that) of their divorce and separation from their beloved Bodies; and that it would manifestly be to their prejudice if it should be otherwise. And to overcome the unreasonable Averfations of Believers, and bring them to a more becoming cheerful submission to the Laws of Death, whensoever the Writ of Ejection shall be served upon

upon them; you will here find a representation of that Blessed Life, comely Order, and most delightful Imployment of the incorporeal People inhabiting the City of God; wherein, beside those sweet Meditations which are proper to Feast your hungry *Affections*, you will meet with divers unusual, though not vain or unuseful Questions stated and resolved; which will be a grateful entertainment to your inquisitive and *searching Minds*.

'Tis possible they may be censured by some as undeterminable and unprofitable *Curiosities*; but as I hate a presumptuous intrusion into *unrevealed Secrets*, so I think it a weakness to be discouraged in the search of Truth, so far as it is fit to trace it, by such damping and causeless Censures. Nor am I sensible I have in any thing transgressed the bounds of Christian Sobriety, to gratifie the Palate of a nice and delicate Reader.

I have also here set before the Reader an *Idea* or representation of the state and case of damned Souls, that, if it be the Will of God, a seasonable discovery of Hell may be the means of some Men's recovery out of the danger of it; and closed up the whole with a Demonstration of the invaluable preciousness of Souls, and the several dangerous snares and artifices of *Satan*, their professed Enemy, to destroy and cast them away for ever.

This is the design and general scope of the whole, and of the principal parts of this Treatise. And O that God would grant me my Heart's desire on your behalf in the perusal of it! Even that it may prove a sanctified instrument in his hand both to prepare you for, and bring you in Love with the unbodied Life, to make you look with pleasure into your Graves, and die by consent of *Will*, as well as necessity of *Nature*. I remember Dr. *Stoughton* in a Sermon preached before King *James*, relates a strange story of a little Child in a Ship-wrack fast asleep upon its Mother's lap, as she sat upon a piece of the Wrack amidst the Waves; the Child being awaked with the noise, asked the Mother what those things were; she told it, they were drowning Waves to swallow them up; the Child, with a pretty smiling Countenance, beg'd a stroke from its Mother to beat away those naughty Waves, and chid them as if they had been its *Play-mates*. Death will shortly ship-wrack your Bodies; your Souls will sit upon your Lips, ready to expire, as they upon the Wrack ready to go down: Would it not be a comfortable and most becoming frame of Mind to sit there with as little dread, as this little One did among the terrible Waves? Surely if our Faith had but first united us with Christ, and then loosed our Hearts off from this enchanting and ensnaring World, we might make a fair step towards this most desirable temper; but unbelief and earthly mindedness make us loth to venture.

I blush to think what bold adventures those Men made, who upon the Contemplation of the Properties of a despicable Stone, first adventur'd quite out of sight of Land under its conduct and direction, and securely trusted both their Lives and Estates to it, when all the Eyes of Heaven were veil'd from them, amidst the dark Waters, and thick Clouds of the Sky; when I either start, or at least give an unwilling shrug, when I think of adventuring out of sight of this World, under the more sure and steady direction and conduct of Faith and the Promises. To cure these Evils in my own and the Reader's Heart, these things are written, and in much respect and love tendered to your hands, as a Testimony of my Gratitude, and deep sense of the many Obligations you have put me under. That the Blessing of the Spirit may accompany these Discourses to your Souls, afford you some assistance in your last and difficult work of putting them off at Death with a becoming cheerfulness, saying in that hour, Can I not see God till this Flesh be laid aside in the Grave? Must I die before I can live like my self? Then die my Body, and go to thy dust, that I may be with Christ. With this design, and with these hearty Wishes, dear and honoured Cousin, and worthy Friends, I put these Discourses into your hands, and remain

Your most obliged

Kinsman and Servant,

Jo. Flavell.

THE PREFACE.

Among many other Largeſſes and rich Endowments beſtowed by the Creator's Bounty upon the Soul of Man, the *Sentiments and the Impreſſions of the World to come, and the ability of Reflection and Self-intuition, are peculiar, invaluable, and heavenly Gifts. By the former, we have a very great Evidence of our own immortality, and deſignation for nobler employments and enjoyments than this imbody'd State admits; and by the latter we may diſcern the agreeableneſs, or diſagreeableneſs of our Hearts, and therein the validity of our title to that expected Bleſſedneſs.

corruptibilem & immortalem eſſe; eoque, corrupto corpore, ipſam manere ſuperſtitem; ut in ſempiternum ſit pro benefactis à Deo coronetur, aut pro malefactis puniatur. *Quæſt. de Animarum immortalitate*, p. 653.

*Demonſtrativum à cornu omniū jam inde à condito orbe gentium ac populorum, præſertim bonorum & literatorum, conſenſione, a-niſtam humanam in-

But theſe heavenly Gifts are neglected and abuſed all the World over. Degenerate Souls are every where fallen into ſo deep an Oblivion of their excellent Original, Spiritual and Immortal Nature, and alliance to the Father of Spirits; that (to uſe the upbraiding expreſſion of a great Philoſopher) they ſeem to be buried in their Bodies, as ſo many ſilly Worms that lurk in their bowels, and are loth to peep forth, and look abroad.

ὅτι, οἱ ψυχῶν ἐν τοῖς σώματι, &c. *Max. Tyr. Diſt. 41.*

So powerfully do the Cares and Pleaſures of this World charm all (except a ſmall remnant of regenerate Souls) that nothing but ſome ſmart ſroke of Calamity, or the terrible Meſſengers of Death can ſtarte them; (and even theſe are not always able to do it) and when they do, all the effect is but a tranſient glance at another, and an unwilling ſtrug to leave this World; and ſo to ſleep again: And thus the Impreſſions and Sentiments of the World to come (which are the natural growth and off-ſpring of the Soul) are either ſiſted and ſuppreſt, as in Atheiſts; or born down by impetuous maſtery Luſts, as in Senſual liſts

And for its ſelf-reflecting and conſidering Power, it ſeems in many to be a power received in vain. It is with moſt Souls as it is with the Eye, which ſees not it ſelf, tho' it ſee all other Objects. There be thoſe that have almoſt finiſhed the courſe of a long Life (wherein a great part of their time hath lain upon their hands as a cheap and uſeleſs Commodity, which they knew not what to do with) who yet never ſpent one ſolemn, entire hour in diſcourſe with their own Souls. What ſerious Heart doth not melt into Compaſſion over the deluded multitude, who are mockt with Dreams, and perpetually buſied about Trifles! Who are aſter ſo many fruſtrated attempts both of their own, and all paſt Ages) eagerly purſuing the fleeing Shadows, who torture and rack their Brains to find out the Natures and Qualities of Birds, Beaſts, and Plants; indeed any thing rather than their own Souls, which are certainly the moſt excellent Creatures that inhabit this World. They know the true value and worth of other things, but are not able to eſtimate the dignity of that high-born Spirit which is within them. A Spirit which (without the addition of any more natural Faculties or Powers, if thoſe it hath be but ſanctified and devoted to God) is capable of the higheſt Perfections and Fruitions, even compleat conformity to God, and the ſatisfying Viſions of God throughout eternity. They berd themſelves with Beaſts, who are capable of an equality with Angels. O what compaſſionate tears muſt ſuch a conſideration as this draw from the eyes of all that underſtand the worth of Souls!

As for me, it hath been my ſin, and is now the matter of my Sorrow, that whiſt Myriads of Souls (of no higher Original than mine) are ſome of them beholding the higheſt Maſteſty in Heaven, and others giving all diligence to make ſure their Salvation on Earth; I was carried away ſo many years in the courſe of this World (like a drop with the current of the Tide) wholly forgetting my beſt ſelf, my invaluable Soul; whiſt I prodigally waſted the ſtores of my time and thoughts upon Vanities, that long ſince paſſed away as the waters which are remembered no more. * It ſhall be no ſhame to me to confeſs this folly, ſince the matter of my Confeſſion ſhall go to the glory of my God. I ſtudied to know many other things, but I knew not my ſelf. It was with me as with a Servant to whom the Maſter commits two things, viz. the Child, and the Child's Clothes; the Servant is very careful of the Clothes, waſhes and brightens, ſcarbes and ſtells them, and keeps them uſe and clean; but the Child is forgotten and loſt. My Body which is but the Garment of my Soul, I kept and nouriſhed with exceſſive care; but my Soul was long forgotten, and had been loſt for ever, had not God rous'd it by the Convictions of his Spirit out of that deep Oblivion and deadly Slumber.

Brightman in Cantic. p. 12.

When the God that formed it, out of free Grace to the work of his own hands, had thus recovered it to a ſenſe of its own worth and danger; my next work was to get it united with Chriſt, and thereby ſ.

cured from Wrath to come. Which I found to be a work of difficulty to effect, (if it be yet effected) and a work of time to clear, tho' but to the degree of good hope through Grace.

And since the hopes and evidences of Salvation began to spring up in my Soul, and settle the state thereof, I found these three great words, viz. Christ, Soul and Eternity, to have a far different, and more awful found in my ear than ever they used to have. I looked on them from that time, as things of greatest certainty, and most awful Solemnity. These things have lain with some weight upon my thoughts, and I have felt at certain seasons, a strong inclination to sequester my self from all other Studies and spend my last days and most fixed Meditations upon these three great and weighty Subjects.

I know the subject matter of my Studies and Enquiries (be it never so weighty) doth not therefore make my Meditations and Discourses upon it great and weighty: Nor am I such a vain Opinionator as to imagine my Discourses every way suitable to the dignity of such Subjects; No, no, the more I think and study about them, the more I discern the indistinctness, darkness, crudity, and confusion of my own Conceptions, and expressions of such great and transcendent things as those: But, in magnis voluisse sat est, I resolved to do what I could; and accordingly some years past I finished and published in two parts the Doctrine of Christ; and by the acceptance and success the Lord gave that, be hath encouraged me to go on in this second part of my Work, how unequal soever my Shoulders are to the burden of it.

The Nature, Original, Immortality, and Capacity of mine own Soul, for the present lodged in, and related to this vile Body, destitute to Corruption; together with its Existence, Employment, Perfection, Converse with God, and other Spirits, both of its own, and of a superiour Rank and Order, when it shall (as I know it shortly must) put off this its Tabernacle; These things have a long time been the masters of my limited desires to understand, so far as I could see the Pillar of Fire (God in his Word) enlightening my way to the knowledge of them. Yea, such is the value I have for them, that I have given them the next place in my esteem, to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and my interest in him.

God hath formed me (as be hath other Men) a prospecting Creature. I feel my self yet uncentred, and store of that state of rest and satisfaction to which my Soul in its Natural and Spiritual Capacity hath a Designation, I find that I am in a continual motion towards my everlasting abode, and the expense of my time; and many Infirmities tell me I am no far from it: By all which I am strongly prompted to look forward, and acquaint my self as much as I can with my next place, State, and employment. I look with greedy and inquisitive eye that way.

Yet would I not be guilty of an unwarrantable Curiosity, in reaching into unrevealed things, how willing soever I am to put up my head by Faith into the World above, and to know the things which Jesus Christ hath purchased and prepared for me, and all the rest that are waiting for his Appearance and Kingdom. I feel my Curiosity checked and repressed by that elegant Paronomasia, Rem. 12. 3. Μη υπερβητε τον νοτον των ανων, αλλα ορατε τις ην κατασκευασεν. In all things I would be wise unto Sobriety. I groan under the effects of Adam's wretched Ambition to know, and would not by repeating his Sin increase my own Misery: Nor yet would I be scared by his Example into the contrary evil of neglecting the means God hath afforded me, to know all that I can know of his revealed Will.

The best Philosophy affords in some parts of this Discourse, are too great to be despised, and too small to be admired. I confess I read the Definitions of the Soul given by the ancient Philosophers, with a compassionate smile. When Thales calls it a Nature without Repose; Anaximander, an Exercitation of sense; Heraclitus, a thing composed of Earth and Water; Parmenides, a thing composed of Earth and Fire; Galen saith it is Heat; Hippocrates, a Spirit diffused throughout the Body; Plato, a self moving Substance; Aristotle calls it Entelechia, that by which the Body is moved: If my Opinion should be asked, which of all these Definitions I like best? I should give the same Answer which Theophrastus gave to an ill Poet, repeating many of his Verses, and asking which he liked best Those (said he) which you have omitted. Or if they must have the Garland and the Difficulus est toties non attingere, because it was the greatest difficulty to aim so often at the Mark, and never come near it. One word of God gives me more light than a thousand such laborious trifles. In Christ was best able to write his own Commentaries, so God only can give the best account of this his own Creature, on which he hath impressed his own Image.

Modern Philosophers, assisted by the Divine Oracles, must needs come closer to the Mark, and give us a far better account of the nature of the Soul. Yet I have endeavoured not to cloud this Subject with their Controversies, or abstruse Notions; remembering what a smart, but deserved check Tertullian gives those, Qui Platonismum & Aristotelicum Christianismum procedunt Christiani. Words are but the Servants of Matter. I value them as Merchants do their Ships, not by the gilded Head and Stern, the meanness of their Mould, or curious Flags and Streamers, but by the soundness of their Bottoms, largeness of their Capacity, and richness of their Cargo and Loading. The quality of this Subject necessitates in many places the use of Scholastick Terms, which will be obscure to the vulgar Reader: but apt and proper words must not be rejected for their obscurity, except plainer words could be found that fit the Subject as well, and are as fully expressive of the matter. The unnecessary I have avoided, and the rest explained as I could.

The principal fruits I especially aim at, both to my own and the Reader's Soul, are, That whilst we contemplate the freedom, pleasure, and satisfaction of that Spiritual, Immaterial People who dwell in the Region of Light and Joy, and are hereby forming to our selves a true Scriptural Idea of the blessed state of those disembodied Spirits with whom we are to serve and converse in the Temple worship in Heaven; and come more explicitly and distinctly to understand the Constitution, Order, and delightful Employment of those our everlasting Associates: We may answerably feel the fond and inordinate love of this Animal Life subverted and wrought down; the frightful Vizard of Death drop off, and a more pleasing Aspect appear; that no upright Soul that shall read these Discourses may henceforth be convuls'd at the name of Death, but cheerfully assure, and with a pleasant expectation wait for the blessed season of its transportation to that blessed Assembly. 'Tis certainly our ignorance of the Life of Heaven, and hiding even from the eyes of Believers, the Glory that is there. We send forth our thoughts to penetrate this Cloud, but they return to us without the desired Success. We reinforce them with a jargon of new and more vigorous thoughts, but still they come back in confusion and disappointment, as to any perfect account they can bring us from thence; to the owner and cloister we think still the more we grow up into acquaintance with these excellent things.

Another benefit I pray for, and expect from these Labours, is, that by describing the horrid state of those Souls which go the other way, and stooping to the Living the dismal condition of Souls departed in their unregenerate state, some may be awakened to a reasonable and effectual Consideration of their wretched Condition, whilst they yet continue under the Means, and among the Instruments of their Salvation.

Whatever the fruits of this Discourse shall be to others, I have cause to bless God for the advantages it hath already given me. I begin to find more than ever I have done, in the separate state of sanctified Souls, all that is capable of attracting an intellectual Nature: and if God will but fix my mind upon this state, and cause my pleased thoughts about it to rest like unto a steady flame and temper, I hope I shall daily more and more deprecate and despise this common way of existence in a Corporal Prison; and when the blessed season of my departure is at hand, I shall take a cheerful farewell of the greater and lesser Elementary World, to which my Soul hath been confined, and have an abundant Entrance, through the broad gate of Assurance, unto the blessed unbounded Inhabitants of the World to come.

A Synopsis, or View of the Soul in the state of Composition, in six Particulars, in this first Table of Life, viz.

		Pag.
The Soul of Man is considered in this Treatise two ways, { First, In the state of Composition. Secondly, In the state of Separation.	1. In its general Nature, a Substance proved to be so, {	473
	1. By its Creation.	ibid.
	2. By its single Existence.	ibid.
	3. By its Sustainment of the Body.	ibid.
	4. By the subjecting of Habits and Affections in it.	493
	1. It is a vital Substance, whose Life is not from it self, but {	ibid.
	1. It receives it from God.	496
	2. Communicates it to the Body.	522
	1. The Simplicity of its Nature.	ibid.
	2. The Truth of God in his Promises and Threats.	523
	3. The Consent of all Nations.	524
	4. Its everlasting Habits, which are inseparable.	525
	5. The peculiar Dignity of Man.	526
	6. His desires of Immortality.	ibid.
	7. Its returns after Death.	ibid.
	8. The Absurdities clogging the Negative.	497
	1. Thoughts to the Speculative.	ibid.
	2. Conscience to the Practical Understanding.	ibid.
	1. Its Liberty.	499
	2. Its Dominion, both {	ibid.
	1. Despotical.	ibid.
	2. Political.	ibid.
	1. As to the Body.	500
	2. As to the Thoughts.	ibid.
	3. As to the Conscience.	ibid.
	1. Their rise in the Soul.	501
	2. Their use to the Soul.	ibid.
	1. Errors refuted, {	502
	1. By Seminal Traduction.	503
	2. By Angelical Procreation.	ibid.
	3. By Coetaneous Creation.	ibid.
	2. Its true Original asserted, by immediate Creation.	504
	3. Objections against this Assertion answered.	514
	1. That God infused it, yet infused not sin into it.	515
	2. Knit it to the Body by our Breath, {	ibid.
	1. What Breath is.	ibid.
	2. Its Instrument.	ibid.
	3. Its Feebleness.	ibid.
	4. Its Improvements.	535
	1. Its care about it.	ibid.
	2. Fears of it.	ibid.
	3. Sympathy with it.	ibid.
	4. Retardancies at Death.	536
	5. Inclinations to Re-union.	ibid.
	1. Evidences of it, viz. {	537
	1. Of Pleasure.	ibid.
	2. Of Service.	ibid.
	3. Partnership, both in Redemption and in Glory.	ibid.
	1. Propriety in it, as its Instrument {	546
	1. The Godly.	ibid.
	2. The Ungodly.	ibid.
	3. The Providence of God moulding our frame suitably to the Law of our Mortality.	ibid.

A View of the Soul as separated, considered three ways in this Table of Death.

		Pag.
First, In its general Nature, as a Soul separated, four ways, viz.	1. The Nature of Separation, and that both	552
	2. The Notices and Signs of approaching Death, where	554
	3. The Changes made by separation, both upon	554
	4. The Soul's ability, both to exist and act when separate, proved	557
Secondly, As a Soul in Christ, in eight Particulars, viz.	1. The proper Season of its separation, which is not,	558
	2. The Ministry of Angels at the time of Separation,	558
	3. Their Residence after death opened, both	558
	4. The Life of holy separate Souls, in respect of their	561
	5. The Idea of a Soul in Glory.	562
	6. The Apparitions of departed Souls, where	562
	7. The Discourse and Speech of the Spirits of the just.	562
	8. Their desires of Reunion, where	562
	9. The Idea or Representation of a damned Soul in respect of	562
	10. The various Methods of destroying precious Souls	562
Thirdly, As a damned Soul, in two things.	1. The Idea or Representation of a damned Soul in respect of	562
	2. The various Methods of destroying precious Souls	562

The only season of Salvation noted and pressed upon all

611, &c.

A T R E A T I S E OF THE SOUL of MAN.

GEN. II. *Verf. 7.*

And the Lord God formed Man out of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life; and Man became a living Soul.

Three things (saith * *Athanasius*) are unknown to Men according to their Essence, viz. *God, Angels, and the Souls of Men.*

* *Tria sunt quæ secundum essentiam hominibus sunt ignota, viz. deus, angelus, & anima hominis. Athanasius in Tract. de defin.*

† Quæri facilius est quam intelligi, & melius intelligitur quam explicatur.

‡ Plato doubted, Aristotle denied, and Galen derided the Doctrine of the World's Creation.

• Nilul est in toto opificio naturæ, de quo non scripsit Democritus. And for Aristotle, they stile him, Regula naturæ, Nature Miraculum, Ipse Eruditio, Sol Scientiarum, Amisus litterarum & sapientie. *Lactantius*, lib. 3. cap. 17, 18.

Of the Nature of the divine and high-born Soul, we may say as the learned † *Whitaker* doth of the way of its Infection by *Original Sin*; It is easier sought than understood, and better understood than explicated: And for its *Original*, the most sagacious and renowned for Wisdom amongst the ‡ ancient Philosophers understood nothing of it. It is said of *Democritus*, that there is * nothing in the whole Workmanship of Nature of which he did not write; and in a more lofty and swelling *Hyperbole*, they stile their Eagle-eyed *Aristotle*, the Rule, yea, and Miracle of Nature; Learning it self, the very Sun of Knowledge: Yet both these

are not only said, but proved by *Lactantius* to be learned Ideots. How have the Schools of *Epicurus*, and *Aristotle*, the *Cartesians*, and other Sects of *Philosophers*, abused and troubled the World with a kind of *Philosophical Enthusiasm*, and a great many ridiculous fancies about the Original of the Soul of Man! And when all

is done, three words of God by the Pen of his inspired *Moses*, enlightens us more than all their subtil Notions of the accidental concretion of *Atoms*, their *matæria subtilis*, and *Anima Mundi*, and the rest of their unintelligible fancies, could ever do.

The account *Moses* gives us in this Context of the *Origin* of the World, and of Man the *Epitome* of it, is full of Sense, Reason, Congruity, and Clearness; and such as renders all the Essays of all the Heathen Philosophers to be vain, inevident, self-repugnant, and inexplicable Theories.

The inspired Penman gives us in this Context a compendious Narrative of the World's Creation, relating more generally the rude,

inform, and indigested *Chaos*; and then more particularly the specifying and diversifying of the various beautiful Beings, thence educed by the motion of the Spirit of God upon the face of the Waters.

When the first Matter was (strictly) created out of Nothing, the Spirit (as *Moses* excellently expresses it, chap. i. v. 2.) hovered, or moved over it as a Bird over her Eggs, and, as it were by way of *Incubation* cherishing and influencing it, did thereby draw forth all the Creatures into their several Forms, and distinct particular Natures, wherein we now with delight and admiration behold them.

In this manner and order was the stately Fabrick of the World produced and erected; but as yet it remained as a fair and well-furnished House without an *Inhabitant*. God had employed Infinite Wisdom and Power about it, and engraven his Name upon the meanest Creature in it; but there was no Creature yet made (except Angels, the Inhabitants of another City) to read the Name, and celebrate the Praises of the Almighty Creator.

He therefore thought the World imperfect till there was a Creature made to contemplate, praise and worship the Maker of it: For this very use and purpose was Man created, not only to see, but consider the things he saw; discourse, and rationally collect out of them the things he saw not; and both praise and love the Maker for, and in, them all.

The Palaces of Princes are not beautified and adorned to the intent Men should pay their respects and honours to the Walls, but to shew the Grandeur and Magnificence of the King, to whose Person their Honour is due, as *Athenagoras* in his excellent *Apology* for the Christians speaks. The World is a glorious and magnificent Pile, raised designedly to exhibit the Wisdom and Power of its Creator to the reasonable Creature Man, that from him God might receive the glory of all

R r r

his

* Est sine pulcherrimus hic mundus, non ipse tamen mundus, sed artificiosus ille conditor adorandus est. Ut neque vestro Imperio subditi, cum aliqua re indigent, ut affequantur; cum vos adierint; omnia vobis Dominis ac Principibus, nulloque affectu honoris; ad Palatii vestri magnificentiam se convertant: sed Aedificii regii tam elegantem structuram phibere prætercunt, admittit vos ipsos ante, suprague omnia honorant. Athen. Apol.

his other Works *. Of this creature Man, the Master-piece of all the visible World, (and therefore crowned King over it the first moment he was made, Psal. 8. 5.) Moses in the next place gives us the account, both of his Original whence he came, and of his Dignity what he is. *The Lord God formed Man out of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life; and Man became a living Soul.* Where we find,

The Original { I. Of the Body } of Man.
II. Of the Soul

I. The Original of the Body of Man: Formed out of the Dust of the Ground. Dust was its Original Matter: of Dust it was made, and into Dust it must be resolved, Gen. 3. 19. The consideration is humbling, and serves to tame the Pride of Man, who is apt to dote upon his

עפר סין האדמה
Pulverem tenuissimum, ad domandam superbiam. Fagius.

own Beauty. Man's Body was not made of heavenly Matter, as the radiant Sun, and sparkling Stars: No, nor yet of the most precious and orient earthly Matter; God did not melt down the pure and splendid Gold and Silver, or powder the precious Pearls and sparkling Diamonds; but he formed it of the vile and despicable Dust.

We find that the sprinkling of Dust upon new Writing prevents many a foul blot: I am sure, the sprinkling of our Original Dust upon our minds by serious consideration, is the way to prevent many a proud boast.

However, the baseness of the Matter, and coarseness of the Stuff, serves to set off the admirable skill of the most wise and powerful Architect, who out of such mean and despicable Materials, has fashioned so exact and elegant a Piece. *The Lord God formed Man out of the Dust.*

* יהוה אלהים

Dominus Deus. Nomen Dei hic plenum est, propter hominis dignitatem. Nacbm.

Prefixit
Com-
preffit, &
per Metalepsin, pre-
mendo &
comprimendo
formavit.

Imaginem
mente divina
conceptam,
quali manu
formatam.
Fagius.

The Lord God. The Name of God is here set down at full, * to set forth the Dignity of man, the subject-matter wrought upon, as some conceive. *Formed.* Fashioned, or curiously moulded, and figured it. The Hebrew Verb primarily signifies to press, compress, or squeeze together; and by a Metalepsis, by pressing and compressing to mould or fashion, as the Potter doth his Clay. The Psalmist useth another word to express the artificial elegance of the Body of Man, Psal. 139. 15, 16. *אָפּוּלְטוּסִי סִמָּה*, I am embroidered, painted, or flourished as with a Needle: We render it, *curiously wrought*. Whatsoever beauty and comely proportion God hath bestowed by Creation upon it, 'tis all answerable to that excellent Idea, or Model before conceived in his Mind and Purpose. All this care and cost was bestowed upon the Body of Man, which, when all is done, is but the Case in which that inestimable Jewel, the Soul, was to be lodged. This therefore I must lay aside, and come to the more noble Subject,

II. The Soul of Man: About which we have before us four things to ponder in this Text, viz.

- (1.) The Nature and Property,
- (2.) The Descent, and Original,
- (3.) The manner of Infusion,
- (4.) The Nexus or Bond that unites

} the Soul, of Man.

(1.) The Nature and Property of it, a living Soul. The word *נֶפֶשׁ*, as also the Chaldee *Naphsa*, and the Greek *Ψυχη* have one and the same Erymology, all signifying to breathe, or respire; not that the breath is the Soul, but denoting the manner of its Infusion by the Breath of God, and the means of its continuation in the Body, by the Breath of our Nostrils. God's Breath infused it, and our Breath continues its union with the Body. It signifies here the the rational Soul: and the Hebrew word *נֶפֶשׁ*, a Soul, hath a very near affinity with the word *נֶפֶשׁ* the Heavens; and indeed there is a nearer affinity betwixt the things, viz. Soul and Heaven, than there is betwixt the Names.

The Epithet *נֶפֶשׁ* which we translate *Living*, the Arabick renders a *rational Soul*; and indeed none but a Rational deserves the name of a living Soul: for all other Forms or Souls which are of an earthly Extract, do both depend on, and die with the matter out of which they were educed, But this being of another nature, a spiritual and substantial Being, is therefore rightly stiled a *living Soul*.

The Chaldee renders it a *speaking Soul*. And indeed it deserves a remark, that the Ability of Speech is conferred on no other Soul but Mans. Other Creatures have apt and excellent Organs; Birds can modulate the Air, and form it into sweet delicious Notes, and charming Sounds; but no Creature except Man, whose Soul is of an heavenly Nature and Extraction, can articulate the Sound, and form it into Words, by which the Notions and Sentiments of one Soul are in a noble, apt, and expeditious manner conveyed to the Understanding of another Soul. And indeed, what should any other Creature do with the faculty or power of Speech, without a Principle of Reason to guide and govern it? It is sufficient to them that they discern each others meaning by dumb Signs, much after the manner that we traded at first with the *Indians*: But Speech is proper only to the rational or living Soul; however we render it a *living*, a *rational*, or a *speaking Soul* it distinguishes the Soul of Man from all other Souls.

(2.) We find here the best account that ever was given of the Origin of the Soul of Man, or whence it came, and from whom it derives its Being. O what a dust and pudder have the Disputes and Contexts of Philosophers raised about this matter! which is cleared in a few words in this Scripture; * *God breathed into his Nostrils the breath of Life, and Man became a living Soul*: which plainly speaks it to be the immediate effect of God's creating power. Not a result from the Matter; no, no, results flow *ex sensu materia*, out of the Bosom of Matter; but this comes *ex halitu divino*, from the Inspiration of God. That which is born of the Flesh,

* Sufficit ad ostendendum animam hominis ab extrinseco esse per creationem, simulque creando corpori infusam. Poli Synop. in locum.

Flesh, is Flesh; but this is a Spirit descending from the Father of Spirits. God formed it, but not out of any pre-existent Matter, whether *Celestial* or *Terrestrial*; much less out of

* The Stoicks, *saib* Simplicius, *call* the Soul *Mis* & *h* *pa* & *u* *hu*, *pars* vel *membrum* Dei: and Seneca, *Deum* in *humano* corpore *hospitantem*; *which* comes near to *God*; *is* our *paragoge*.

himself, as the * *Stoicks* speak; but out of nothing. An high-born Creature it is, but no Particle of the Deity. The indivisible and immutable Essence of God is utterly repugnant to such Notions: and therefore they speak not strictly or warily enough, that are bold to call it a *Ray*, or an *Emanation* from God.

A Spirit it is, and flows by way of creation, immediately from the Father of Spirits; but yet 'tis a Spirit of another, inferiour rank, and order.

(3.) We have also the account of the way and manner of its *infusion* into the Body, viz. by the same Breath of God which gave it its Being. It is therefore a rational, scriptural, and justifiable exprellion of S. *Augustine*, *Credo infunditur, & infundendo creatur*; It is infused in creating, and created in infusing;

* Religio Medici, *Scd.* 36.

though Dr. *Brown* * too lightly calls it a meer *Rhetorical Antimetathesis*. Some of the Fathers, as *Justin*, *Irenaeus*, and *Tertullian*, were of Opinion, That the Son of God assumed a humane shape at this time, in which afterward he often appeared to the Fathers, as a *Prelude* to his true and real Incarnation; and took Dust or Clay in his hands, out of which he formed the Body of Man, according to the Pattern of that Body in which he appeared: And that being done, he afterwards by breathing infused the Soul into it. But I rather think, it's an *Anthropopathy*, or usual figure in speech, by which the Spirit of God roops to the imbecility of our understandings. *He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*; Heb. *lives*. But this plural word *רוח* notes rather the twofold Life of Man, in this World, and in that to come; or the several Faculties and Powers belonging to one and the same Soul, viz. the *intellective*, *sensitive*, and *vegetative* Offices thereof; than that there are more Souls than one, essentially differing, in one and the same Man; for

* *Impossibile est in uno homine esse plures animas per essentiam diferentes; sed una tantum est anima, quae vegetativa, & sensitiva, & intellectiva, officis fungitur.* Aquin. 12. Q. 25. Art. 2.

that, as * *Aquinas* truly saith, is impossible. We cannot trace the way of the Spirit, or tell in what manner it was united with this Clod of Earth. But it is enough, that he who formed it, did also unite or marry it to the Body. This is clear, it came not by way of natural resupply from the Body, but by way of Inspiration from the Lord; but from the warm Bosom of the Mother, but from the Breath of its Maker.

(4.) Lastly, we have here the *Nexus, Copula, Tie* or *Band*, by which it is united with the Body of Man, viz. *the breath of his* (i. e. of Man's) *nostrils*. It is a most astonishing Mystery, to see Heaven and Earth married together in One Person; the Dust of the ground and an immortal Spirit clasping each other with such dear embraces and tender love; such a noble and divine Guest, to take up its residence within the Mud-walls of Flesh and Blood. Alas!

how little Affinity, and yet what dear Affection is found betwixt them!

Now that which so sweetly links these two different Natures together, and holds them in Union, is nothing else but the Breath of our Nostrils as the Text speaks: It came in with the Breath; whilest Breath stays with us, it cannot go from us; and as soon as the Breath departs, it departs also. All the rich *Elixirs* and *Cordials* in the World cannot persuade it to stay one minute after the Breath is gone. One puff of Breath will carry away the wisest, holiest and most desirable Soul that ever dwelt in Flesh and Blood. When our Breath is corrupt, our Days are extinct, Job 17. 1. *Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust*, Psal. 104. 29.

Out of the Text thus opened arise two Doctrinal Propositions, which I shall insist upon, viz.

Doct. I. That the Soul of Man is of Divine Original, created and inspired immediately by the Lord.

Doct. II. That the Souls and Bodies of Men are link'd or knit together by the feeble Band of the Breath of their Nostrils.

In the Prosecution of these two Propositions many things will come to our hands, of great use in Religion; which I shall labour to lay as clearly and orderly in the Reader's Understanding, and press as warmly upon his heart as I can. And first of the first;

That the Soul of Man is of Divine Original, Doct. I: created and inspired immediately by the Lord.

In this first Proposition two things are to be distinctly pondered, viz.

I. The Nature
II. The Original } of the Soul.

Or what it is, and from whence it came.

I. The first thing which arrests our thoughts, and requires their immoration and exercise, is The Nature of the Soul, or what kind of Being it is. I. The Nature of the Soul, or what kind of Being it is.

Those that are most curiously inquisitive into all other Beings, and put Nature upon the rack to make her confess her Secrets, are in the mean time found shamefully slight and negligent in the study of themselves. Few there are that can prevail with themselves to sit down and think close to such Questions as these are: *What manner of Being is this Soul of mine? Whence came it? Why was it infused into this Body? And where must it abide, when Death hath dislodg'd it out of this frail Tabernacle?* There is a natural aversion in Man to such Exercises of Thoughts as these, although in the whole Universe of Beings in this lower World, a more noble or desirable Creature is not to be found *.

* Cui igitur de Anima unquam disputarunt, si crete non de re inani, & quae nihil praeter nomen habeat, sed de re gravissima, maximeque momenti, quae nihil subterlo praestantius, disputasse iudicant (sunt). Zanch. de Anima, lib. 2. pag. 555.

The Soul is the most wonderful and astonishing piece of Divine Workmanship: 'Tis no Hyperbole to call it the Breath of God, the beauty of Man, the Wonder of Angels, and the Envy

of Devils. One Soul is of more value than all the Bodies in the World

The Nature of it is so spiritual and sublime, that it cannot be perfectly known by the most acute and penetrating Understanding, assisted in the search by all the aids Philosophy can contribute.

It is not my design in this Discourse to treat of the several Faculties and Powers of the Soul, or to give you the Rise, Natures, or Numbers of its Affections and Passions: but I shall confine my Discourse to its general Nature, and Original. And seeing none can so well discover the Nature of it, as He who is the Author of it, as * Tertullian speaks,

* Si quid de Anima examinandum est, ad Dei regulas dirigat: certe nullum alium potius animæ Demonstratorem, quam Autorem, &c. Tertul. de Anima.

* Dum vivificat Corpus, anima est; dum vult, animus; dum scit, mens; dum recollit, memoria; dum rectum iudicat, ratio; dum spirat, Spiritus. Hier. Etym. v.

I therefore justly expect the best Light from his Word, though I will not neglect any other aid he is pleased elsewhere to afford.

† The Soul is variously denominated from its several Powers and Offices, as the Sea from the several Shoars it washes. I will not spend time about the several names by which it is known to us in Scripture,

but give you that Description of it, with which my Understanding is most satisfied, which take thus:

The Description of the Soul.

The Soul of Man is a vital, spiritual, and immortal Substance, endowed with an Understanding, Will, and various Affections; created with an inclination to the Body, and infused therein by the Lord.

IN this Description we have the two general parts into which I distributed this Discourse; viz. its general Nature, and Divine Original. The Nature of the Soul is expressed to us in these following Terms.

1. A Sub-stance.

I. It is a Substance.

That is to say, not a Quality, or an Accident inhering in another Being, or Subject; as whiteness doth in the Snow: but a Being

† Anima est Ens per se, (i. e.) non est in aliquo per modum partis, aut formæ, a quo in suo esse dependeat. Colleg. Conimb. in lib. 11.

† by it self. Qualities and Accidents have no existence of their own, but require another Being or Subject to their existence; but the Soul of Man is a substantial Being of it self, which will evidently appear upon the following grounds.

(1.) Because it is in a strict and proper sense created by God. He formeth or createth the Spirit in Man, Zech. 12. 1. To him we are advised to commit it, as to a faithful Creator, 1 Pet. 4. 19. The substantial Nature of the Soul is implied in the very Notion of its Creation;

¶ Quicquid a Deo proprie creatum est, substantia est: accidentia enim non dicuntur creati, sed concretari. Polani Syntag. p. 319.

for || whatsoever is created, is a Substance, an Ens per se. Accidents are not said to be created, but concreted; the crasis of Humours, and results of Matter, are not Substances created, but things rising in a natural way from created Substances. They flow from, and, as to their very Essence, depend upon pre-existent Mat-

ter; but the Soul was created out of nothing, and infused into the Body after it was formed, and organized; which evidenceth its substantial Nature.

(2.) This evidenceth the Soul to be a Substance, that it can and doth exist and subsist by it self alone, when separated from the Body by death. Luke 23. 43. To day shalt thou (i. e. thy Soul) be with me in Paradise; and Mat. 10. 28. Fear not them that kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul. Were the Soul but an Accident, a Quality, a Result, he that kills the Body must needs kill the Soul too; as he that casts a Snow-ball into the fire, must needs destroy the whiteness with the Snow. Accidents fail and perish with their Subjects: but seeing it's plain in these and many other Scriptures, the Soul doth not fail with the Body; nothing can be more plain and evident, than that it is of a substantial Nature.

When the Spaniards came first among the poor Indians, they thought the Horse and his Rider to be one Creature; as many ignorant ones think the Soul and Body of Man to be nothing but Breath and Body: whereas indeed they are two distinct Creatures, as vastly different in their Natures, as the Rider and his Horse, or the Bird and his Cage. While the Man is on Horseback, he moves according to the motion of the Horse; and whilest the Bird is incaged, he eats, and drinks, and sleeps, and hops, and sings in his Cage. But if the Horse fail, and die under his Rider, or the Cage be broken, the Man can go on his own feet, and the Bird enjoy himself as well, yea better, in the open Fields and Woods, than in the Cage: Neither depend, as to Being or Action, on the Horse or Cage.

(3.) Both Scripture and Philosophy consent in this, that the Soul is the chief, most noble, and principal part of Man, from which the whole Man is, and ought to be denominated. So Gen. 46. 26. All the Souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, (i. e.) all the Persons; as the Latins say, tot capita, so many Heads, or Persons. The Apostle in 2 Cor. 5. 8. seems to exclude the Body from the Notion of Personality, when he saith, We are willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord: That We, a Term of Personality, is there given to the Soul exclusively of the Body; for the Body cannot be absent from it self: but We, that is, the Souls of Believers, may be both absent from it, and present with Christ.

To this we may add 2 Cor.

4. 16. where the Soul is called the Man, and the inner Man too, the Body being but the external face or shadow of the Man. And to this Philosophy agrees. The best Philosophers are so far from thinking that the Body is the substantial part of Man, and the Soul a thing dependent on it; that contrarily they affirm, that the Body depends upon the Soul, * and that it is the Soul that conserves and sustains it; and that the Body is in the Soul, rather than the Soul in the Bo-

* Anima corpus animatum conservat & sustentat; ubi autem illa reliquit corpus, perit animatum corpus, & animalis ratio. Anima non est in corpore, tanquam in loco, cum à loci circumscriptibili nequeat; tota per totum me corpus, & non est pars in qua non tota addit: non enim à corpore tenetur, sed ipsa tenet corpus. Neque est in corpore ut in vase, vel in utero, sed potius in ipsa est corpus. Nysien. de Anima lib. 2. c. 11. ubi dicitur: Anima est quæ sustinet corpus. Anima cuiusque est quæque.

dy,

dy. And that which is seen is not the Man, but that is the Man which is invifible. That the Body might be killed, and the Man not hurt; meaning the Soul, which only deferves the name of Man. Now if it be the chief Part of Man, and that which is only worthy the name of a Man, and from which therefore the whole is and ought to be denominated a Man: If it be fo far from depending on the Body, or being contained within the Body, that the Body rather depends on it, and is in it; then furely the Soul muft be what we defcribe it to be, a Subftantial Being.

(4.) It is paff all controverfie, that the Soul is a Subftance, becaufe it is the Subject of Properties, Affections, and Habits; which is the very ftrict and formal Notion of a Subftance. All the Affections and Paffions of Hope, Defire, Love, Delight, Fear, Sorrow, and the reft, are all rooted in it, and fpring out of it; and fo for Habits, Arts, and Sciences*;

* Anima fubjectum eft
omnium virtutum
& vitiarum, fcientiarum &
artium. Euchar. loc. com. p.
86.

'tis the Soul in which they are lodged and feated. Having once gotten a promptitude to act, either by fome ftrong, or by fome frequently repeated actings, they abide in the Soul, even when the Acts are intermitted; as in fleep, a Navigator, Scribe, or Mufician, are really Artists, when they are neither failing, writing, or playing; becaufe the Habits ftill remain in their Minds, as is evident in this, that when they awake they can perform their feveral Works, without learning the Rules of their Art anew.

2. A Vital Subftance.

II. The Soul is a vital Subftance; i. e.

A Subftance which hath an effential Principle of Life in it felf; a living, active Being. A living Soul, faith *Moses* in the Text; and hereby it is diftinguifhed from, and oppofed to Matter or Body. The Soul moves it felf and the Body too; it hath a felf-moving Virtue or Power in it felf; whereas the Matter or Body is wholly paffive, and is moved and acted, not by it felf, but by this vital Spirit. *Jam. 2. 26* The Body without the Spirit is dead. It acts not at all, but as it is acted by this invifible Spirit. This is fo plain, that it admits of fenfible Proof and Demonftration. Take meer Matter, and compound or divide it, alter it and change it how you will, you can never make it fee, feel, hear, or act vitally without a quickning and actuating Soul: Yet we muft ftill remember, that this active, vital Principle, the Soul, tho' it hath this vital Power in it felf, it hath it not from it felf, but in a conftant receptive dependence upon God, the firft Caufe both of its Being and Power.

III. It is a Spiritual Subftance.

All Subftances are not grofs, material, vifible and palpable Subftances, but there are fpiritual and immaterial, as well as corporal Subftances difcernable by fight or touch. To deny this, were to turn a downright Sadducee, and to deny the exiftence of Angels and Spirits, *Acts 23. 8*. The word Subftance, as it is applied to the Soul of Man, puzzles and con-

found the dark Underftandings of fome, that know not what to make of an immaterial Subftance; whereas in this place it is no more

than * *substantia accidentibus*, (i. e.) to be a Subject in which Properties, Affections and Habits are feated and fubjected. This is a fpiritual Subftance, and is frequently in Scripture called a Spirit; *Into thy hands I commit my Spirit. Luke 23. 46. Lord Jefus receive my Spirit, Acts 7. 59.* and fo frequently all over the Scriptures. And the Spirituality of its Nature appears, (1.) By its defcent in a peculiar way from the Father of Spirits. (2.) In that it rejoiceth in the effential Properties of a Spirit. (3.) That at Death it returns to that great Spirit who was its Efficient and Former.

* A Subftance in this fenfe of the word, is that which depends upon any other fellow Creature, as Accidents and Qualities do, whofe Being is by having their in-being in another fellow Creature as their Subject; but this Being, the Soul, exifts in it felf.

(1.) It defcends in a peculiar way from the Father of Spirits, as hath been fhewn in the opening of this Text: God ftiles himfelf its Father, *Heb. 12. 9.* its Former, *Zech. 12. 1.* 'Tis true, he giveth to all living things *Body & Soul*, Life and Breath, *Acts 17. 25*. Other Souls are from him, as well as the rational Soul; but in a far different way and manner. They flow not immediately from him by Creation, as this doth. It is faid, *Let the Earth Gen. 1. 24; bring forth the living Creature after its kind; but 27. God created Man in his own Image*: Which feems plainly to make a fpecific difference betwixt the reasonable and all other Souls.

(2.) It rejoiceth in the effential Properties of a Spirit: for it is an incorporeal Subftance, as Spirits are. It hath not *partes extra partes*, extension of Parts; nor is it dividible, as the Body is. It hath not Dimenfions and Figures, as Matter hath; but is a moft pure, invifible, and (as the acute and judicious Dr. *Morfe* exprefseth it) indifcernible Subftance. It hath the Principle of Life and Motion in it felf, or rather, it is fuch a Principle it felf, and is not moved as the dull and fluggifh Matter is, *per aliud*, by another. Its efficacy is great, though it be unfeen, and not liable to the Teft of our Touch, as no fpiritual Subftances are. A Spirit (faith Chrift) hath not Flefh and Bones, *Luke 24. 39*. We both grant and feel, that the Soul hath a love and inclination to the Body, (which indeed is no more than it is neceffary it fhould have;) yet can we no more infer its Corporeity from that love to the Body, than we can infer the Corporeity of Angels from their affection and benevolent love to Men. It is a Spirit of a Nature vaffly different from the Body in which it is immerfed. There is (faith a learned Author) no greater Myftery in Nature, *Mr. How's* *than the Union betwixt the Soul and Body: That P. 9. 10. a Mind and Spirit fhould be fo tied and linked to a Clod of Clay, that while that remains in a due temper, it cannot by any art or power free it felf!—What fo much a-kind are a Mind and a piece of Earth, a Clod and a Thought, that they fhould be thus affixed to one another?*

Certainly, the heavenly pure Bodies do not differ fo much from a Dung-hill, as the Soul and Body differ: they differ but as more pure and lefs pure Matter; but thefe, as material and imma-

3. A Spiritual Subftance.

immaterial. If we consider wherein consists the Being of a Body, and wherein that of a Soul, and then compare them, the matter will be clear.

We cannot come to an apprehension of their Beings, but by considering their primary Passions and Properties, whereby they make discovery of themselves. The first and primary affection of a Body * (as is rightly observed) is that extension of Parts whereof it is compounded, and a capacity of division, upon which, as upon the fundamental mode, the particular Dimensions (that is, the Figures) and the local motion do depend.

Again, for the Being of our Souls, if we reflect upon our selves, we shall find that all our knowledge of them resolves into this, that we are Beings conscious to our selves of several kinds of Cogitations; that by our outward senses we apprehend bodily things present, and by our imagination we apprehend things absent; and that we oft recover into our apprehension things past and gone, and upon our perception of things, we find our selves variously affected.

Let these two Properties of a Soul and Body be compared, and upon the first view of a considering mind it will appear, that Divisibility is not Apprehension, or Judgment, or Desire, or Discourse : That to cut a Body into several parts, or put it into several shapes, or bring it to several motions, or mix it after several ways, will never bring it to apprehend, or desire. No man can think the combining of Fire, and Air, and Water, and Earth, should make the lump of it to know or comprehend what is done to it, or by it. We see manifestly, that upon the division of the Body, the Soul remains entire and undivided. It is not the loss of a Leg, or Arm, or Eye, that can impair the Understanding, or the Will, or cut off the Affections.

Nay, it pervades the Body it dwells in, and is whole in the whole, and whole in every

* part, which it could never do if it self were material. Yea, it comprehends in its Understanding, the Body or Matter in which it is lodged; and more than that, it can and doth

form conceptions of pure spiritual and immaterial Beings, which have no Dimensions or Figures; all which shews it to be no corporeal, but a spiritual and immaterial Substance.

(3.) As it derives its Being from *the Father of Spirits* in a peculiar way, and rejoiceth in its *Spiritual Properties*: so at death it returns to *that great Spirit* from whence it came. It is not annihilated, or resolved into soft Air, or suck'd up again by the Element of Fire, or catch'd back again into the Soul of the World, as some have dream'd; but it returns to God who gave it, to give an account of it self to him, and receive its Judgment from him. *Then shall the Dust return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit shall return to God who gave it*, Eccles. 12. 7. Each part of Man to his like, *Dust to Dust, and Spirit to Spirit*. Not that the Soul is resolved into God, as the Body is into Earth; but as God created it a rational Spirit. consci-

ous to it self of moral good and evil, so when it hath finish'd its time in the Body, it must appear before the God of the Spirits of all Flesh, its Arbitr and final Judge.

By all which we see, that as it is elevated too high on the one hand, when it is made a *Particle of God himself*; not only the Creature, but

a part of God, as **Plurarch*, and †*Philo-Judæus*, and others have term'd it; (a Spirit it is, but of another and inferiour kind :) So it is degraded too low, when it is affirmed to be Matter, tho' the purest, finest, and most subtle in Nature; which approacheth nearest to the Nature of a Spirit. A Spirit it is, as much as an Angel is a Spirit, tho' it be a Spirit of another *species*. This is the name it is known by throughout the Scriptures. In a word, it is void

IV. *It is an Immortal Substance.*

The simplicity and spirituality of its Nature, of which I spake before, plainly shews us, that it is in its very Nature designed for Immortality; for such a Being or Substance as this hath none of the seeds of Corruption and Death in its Nature, as all material and compounded Beings have. It hath nothing within it tending to diffolution: No jarring Elements, no contrary Qualities are found in Spirits, as there are in other Creatures of a mixed Nature. *Physicians* and *Philosophers* have disputed and con-

* Anima autem mentis
particeps facta, non solum
Dei opus est, verum etiam
pars, neque ab eo, sed de
eo & ex eo facta. *Plat. de
Qu. Platon.*

† Quomodo credibile videtur tam exigua mentem humanam membrana cerebri, aut corde, haud amplis spaciis inclusam, tantam Caeli mundique magnitudinem capere, nisi illius divinae felicitisque animae particula esset indivisibilis? *Philo.*

- Litigamus de via, interim ad terminum rapimur.

† Δὴ γὰρ λαβὼν ὅτι τὸ
ζῶον ὅτι εὐσεβὲς ὄντων καὶ
θεοφάνων, καὶ τὸ ζῆν τοῦ αἵματος.
Τὸ γὰρ ὅτι λαβὼν, καὶ
ἐκείνους, καὶ τὸ πρῶτον.
φαίνεται γὰρ ὅτι. Arist. de
long. & brev. vit.

† natural Moisture, or radical Balsam, as others call it, which is as the Oil that maintains natural heat, or the Bridle that restrains that flame of Life from departing (as others express it); this is the cause of natural Death. Others ¶ assign the unequal reparation of the parts of the Body, as the cause of Death. But be it one or other, 'tis evident the Soul, which consists neither of contritariant Qualities, nor of dissimilar Parts, must

* *Philosophical Essay*,
p. 2. §. 2.
p. 39.

* Understand is negatively, what the Soul is not in the parts of the Body per partes, part in one part, and part in another, seeing it is indivisible, and hath no parts.

be above the reach and stroke of Death. For if the Soul die, it must be either from some Seeds and Principles of Death and Corruption within it self, or by some destructive Power without it self. In it self you see there is no seed or principle of Death; and if it be destroyed by a Power without it self, it must be either by the stroke of some Creature, or from the hand of God that first formed and created it: But the hand and power of no Creature can destroy it; Creature-power reaches no farther than the Body, *Matth. 10. 28. they cannot kill the Soul.* And though the Almighty Power of God that created it out of nothing, can as easily reduce it to nothing; yet he will never do so. For besides the designation for Eternity, which is discernible in its very Nature, (as before was observed) and which speaks the intention of God to perpetuate his threatnings of eternal Wrath, and promises of everlasting Life, respectively made to the Souls of Men, as they shall be found in Christ or out of Christ, puts it beyond all doubt that they shall never die; as will be more fully evidenced in the following Discourse.

Well then, I hope so far our way is clear in the search of the Nature of the Soul, that it is a *Substance*, a *spiritual Substance*, and being so, it is also an *immortal Substance*. No doubt remains with me as to either of these. Let us then proceed to the consideration of its Faculties and Powers, by which it may be yet more fully known, and we shall find that,

V. It is a vital, spiritual, and immortal Substance, endowed with an Understanding.

This is the noble leading Faculty of the Soul: we are not distinguished from Brutes by our Senses, but by our Understanding. As Grace sets one Man above another, so Understanding sets the meanest Man above the best of Brutes. Strange and wonderful things are performed by the natural instinct and sagacity of Beasts; but yet, what is said of one, is true of them all, *God hath not imparted Understanding to them, Job 39. 17.* This is a Jewel which adorns none but rational Creatures, Men and Angels.

It is a Faculty of the reasonable Soul, by which a Man apprehends and judgeth all intelligible things.

The Object of its every Being, so far as it is true in it self, and apprehensible by Man. It hath a twofold use in the Life of Man, viz.

(1.) To distinguish Truth from Error and Falshood. By this Candle of the Lord, lighted up in the Soul of Man, he may discern betwixt Duty and Sin, Good and Evil: 'Tis the Eye of the Soul, by which it seeth the way in which we should go, and the dangerous Precipices that are on either side. It is the Soul's Taster, and discerns wholsom Food from baneful Poyson. *Joh 12. 11. Death not the ear (i. e. the Understanding by the ear) try words, as the mouth tasteth meat?* It brings all things, as it were, in the lump before it, and then sorts them, and orderly ranks them into their proper Classes of lawful and unlawful, necessary and indifferent,

expedient and inexpedient, that the Soul may not be damaged by mistaking one for another. And this Judgment of Discretion every Man must be allowed for himself. No Man is obliged to shut the eyes of his own Understanding, and follow another Man blindfold.

(2.) To direct and guide us in our practice. This Faculty is by Philosophers rightly called *ἡ διανοητική, the leading Faculty*, because the Will follows its practical Dictates. It sits at Helm, and guides the Course of the Soul: Not impelling or rigorously enforcing its Dictates upon the Will; for the Will cannot be so imposed upon; but by giving it a directive Light, or pointing as it were with its Finger, at what it ought to chuse, and what to refuse.

To this Faculty belong two other excellent and wonderful Powers of the Soul, viz.

1. Thoughts.
2. Conscience.

1. The power or ability of Cogitation: What a Thoughts are properly the actings and agitation. Thoughts are properly the actings and agitation of the Mind, or any actual Operation of the Understanding. They are the musings of the Mind, which are acted in the speculative part of the Understanding. It is observable that the Hebrew word *רוּחַ שְׂמֵחַ*, which is used for Meditation, or thinking, signifies both to think and to speak in the Mind. When

Διάνοια cogitatio est mentis agitatio, *ἡ διάνοια* vel actio mentis, *Zanch.*

* *רוּחַ* cum puncto finito, locus est ore, aut corde & *שְׂמֵחַ* est sermonari intra se, (i. e.) apud se, in animis suis.

the Understanding or Mind revolves and meditates the things that come into it, that very Meditation is an inward speaking, or a hidden word in the heart. *Dent. 10. 9. Beware lest there be thoughts in thy wicked heart, as some render it: In the Hebrew it is לֵבָבִי עִמָּי, a word in thy Mat. 21. hearts: so Matth. 9. 3, 4. *ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ, they speak within themselves, i. e. they thought in their hearts.* The Objects presented to the Mind are the Companions with whom our Hearts talk and converse.*

Thoughts are the Figments and Creatures of the Mind: they are formed within it in multitudes innumerable. The power of cogitation is in the Mind, yea in the Spirit of the Mind.

* The Fancy indeed, whilst the Soul is embodied, ordinarily and for the most part presents the appearances and likenesses of things to the Mind; but yet it can form thoughts of things which the Fancy can present no Image of, as col.

when the Soul thinks of God, or of it self. This power of cogitation goes with the Soul, and is rooted in it, when it is separated from the Body; and by it we speak to God, and converse with Angels, and other Spirits in the unbodied State, as will be more fully opened in the process of this Discourse.

2. The Conscience belongs also to this Faculty. What Conscience is, for it being the Judgment of a Man upon himself, with respect or relation to the Judgment of God, it must needs belong to the understanding part or faculty. Thoughts are formed in the speculative, but Conscience

Judicium appello conscientiam, ut ad intellectum eam pertinere ostendam. Amm.

ENCE

5. Endued with Understanding.

What the Understanding is.

ance belongs to the practical Understanding. It is a very high and awful Power; it is *solo Deo minor*, and rides (as Joseph did) in the second Chariot; the next and immediate Officer under God. He faith of Conscience with respect to every man, as he once said of Moses with respect to Pharaoh, *See, I have made thee a God to Pharaoh*, Exod. 7. 1. The voice of Conscience is the voice of God, for it is his Vicegerent and Representative. *What it binds on earth, is bound in heaven; and what it looseth on earth, is loosed in heaven.* It observes, records, and bears witness to all our actions; and acquits or condemns as in the name of God for them. Its Consolations are most sweet, and its Condemnations most terrible; so terrible, that some have chosen Death, which is the King of Terrors, rather than to endure the scorching heat of their own Consciences. The greatest defence and obedience is due to its Commands. And a man had better

* Quas non oportet mor-
tes preeligerere, quod non
supplicium potius ferre;
imo in quam profundam in-
ferni Abyssum non intrare,
quam contra conscientiam
attestari? Zuingle.

endure any Rack or Torture in the World, than incur the Torments of it. It accompanies us as our Shadow, wherever we go; and when all others forsake us, (as at Death they will) Conscience is then

Bernard rightly says, † It is both Witness, Judge, Tormentor and Prison; it accuseth, judgeth, punisheth, and condemneth.

† Ipsa iudicat, ipsa imperat,
ipsa observat, ipsa iudicat,
ipsa terret, ipsa carcer.
Bern. lib. de Cons., c. 9.

And thus briefly of the Understanding, which hath many Offices, and as many Names from those Offices.

It is sometimes called *Wit*, *Reason*, *Understanding*, *Opinion*, *Judgment*. And why we bestow so many Names upon one and the same Faculty, the learned *Author* of that small, but excellent † *Traict de Anima* gives us this true and ingenious account.

‡ Notice
Teipium,
p. 43, 49.

*The Wit, the Pupil of the Soul's clear eye,
And in man's world the only shining Star,
Looks in the Mirror of the Phantastie,
Where all the gatherings of the Senses are;
And after by discoursing to and fro,
Anticipating and comparing things,
She doth all universal Natures know,
And all Effects into their Causes brings.*

*(ground,
When she rates things, and moves from ground to
The name of Reason she obtains by this:
But when by Reason she the Truth hath found,
And standeth fix'd, she Understanding is.
When her Assent she lightly doth incline
To either part, she is Opinion light:
But when she doth by Principles define
A certain Truth, she hath true Judgments sight.*

*And as from Senses, Reason's Work doth spring,
So many Reasons Understanding gain;*

*And many Understandings Knowledge bring,
And by much Knowledge Wisdom we obtain.*

VI. God hath endued the Soul of Man not only with an *Understanding* to discern and direct, but also with a *Will* to govern, moderate, and over-rule the actions of Life.

The Will is a Faculty of the rational Soul, whereby a man either chuseth or refuseth the things which the Understanding discerns and knows.

What the
Will is

This is a very high and noble Power of the Soul. The Understanding seems to bear the same relation to the Will, as a grave Councillor doth to a great Prince. It glories in two excellencies, viz.

1. Liberty.
2. Dominion.

1. It hath Freedom and Liberty; it cannot be compelled and forced: Coaction is repugnant to its very Nature. In this it differs from the Understanding, that the Understanding is wrought upon necessarily, but the Will acts spontaneously. This Liberty of the Will respects the choice or refusal of the means for attaining those ends it prosecutes, according as it finds them more or less conducive thereunto. The Liberty of the Will must be understood to be in things natural, which are within its own proper sphere, not in things supernatural. It can move or not move the Body as it pleases, but it cannot move towards Christ in the way of Faith as it pleaseth; it can open or shut the Hand or Eye at its pleasure, but not the Heart. True indeed, it is not compelled or forced to turn to God by supernatural Grace, but in a way suitable to its Nature, it is determined and drawn to Christ, Psal. 110. 3. It is drawn by a mighty Power, and yet runs freely; Cant. 1. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee.*

Efficacious Grace, and victorious Delight, is a thing very different from compulsive force. Pelagius (as a late Author speaks) at first gave all to Nature, acknowledged no necessity of Divine Grace; but when this proud Doctrine found little countenance, he called Nature by the name of Grace; and when that Deceit was discovered, he acknowledged no other Grace but outward Instruction, or the benefit of external Revelation, to discourse and put Men in mind of their Duty. Being yet driven farther, he acknowledged the Grace of Pardon; and before a Man could do any thing acceptably, there was a necessity of the remission of Sin, and then he might obey God perfectly. But that not sufficing, he acknowledged another Grace, viz. the Example of Christ, which doth both secure our Rule, and encourage our Practice. And last of all, his Followers owned some kind of internal Grace, but they made that to consist in some Illumination of the Understanding, or moral Persuasion, by probable Arguments, to excite the Will, and this not absolutely necessary, but only for facilitation, as an horse to a Journey, which otherwise a man might go a-foot. Others grant the secret Influences of God's Grace, but make the Will of Man a co-ordinate cause with God, namely, that God doth propound the

* Dr. Mar-
ton in 1661.
119. v. 36.

'the Object, hold forth inducing Considerations; give some remote Power and Assistance; but still there is an indifference in the Will of Man, to accept or refuse as liketh him best. Thus have they been forced to quit and change their ground; but still the Pride of Nature will not let men see the necessity of divine efficacious Influences upon the Will, and the consistency thereof with natural Liberty.

Its Dignity consists in its *Dominion* as well as in its Liberty. The Will hath an *Empire* and Sceptre belonging to it; yea, a double Empire, for it rules,

Imperium

1. Despotism.
2. Politicum.

1. Over the Body *imperio despotico*, by way of absolute Command.
2. Over the other Powers and Passions of the Soul, *imperio politico*, by way of *suggestion*.

* Homo non agit ex necessitate naturæ, sed libere, sc. modo rationali, hoc est modo imperii. Ad imperium requiritur dictamen ultimum intellectus practici, & stante efficacia imperii, voluntas libere movetur. *Camel, de Volunt. p. 50.*

(1.) The Will, like an absolute Sovereign * reigns over the Body, (i. e.) its external Members, by way of absolute Command. It saith, as the *Centurion* did I am in Authority, and God hath put the many Members of the Body in subjection to me:

I say to one, Move, and it moves; to another, Stop, and it stops; and to a third, Do this, and it doth it. The obsequious Members, like so many servants, have their eyes waiting on the Imperial Commands of the Will, and it is admirable to behold with what dispatch and speed they execute its Commands, as if their obedient motions were rather concomitant than subsequent Acts to the Will's Mandates. Let it but command to have the Windows of the Body open or shut, and it's done in a moment, in the twink of an eye; and so for the rest of the external Senses and Members, they pay it most ready Obedience. Yet when I say, the Will hath a *despotic* and absolute Sovereignty over the Members, it must be understood with a double limitation. *First*, They are only at its beck for use and service, it can use them whilst it will, and rightly disposed; but it cannot perpetuate them, or restore them when indisposed. If the Soul Will the health and life of the Body never so intensely and vehemently, it cannot keep off Death one moment the longer from it. And, *secondly*, Its Sovereignty no way intranches upon, nor interferes with the Dominion of Providence over the Members of the Body, and the various motions of them. God hath reserved a Sovereign *negative voice* to himself, whatever Decrees the Will passes. *Jeroboam* stretches out his hand against the Man of God to smite him, but God puts a *Remora* in the very instant to the loco-motive Faculty, that tho' he would never so fain, he could not pull in his hand again to him, 1 *Kings* 13. 4. The Will commands the service of the Tongue, and chargeth it to deliver faithfully such or such words, in which, it may be, the ruine of good men may be imported; and when it comes to do its Office, the Tongue falters, and contrary to the command of the Will, drops some word that discovers and defeats the design of the Will, according to that in *Job* 12. 20. *He removeth away the speech of the trusty.* This is its despotic

Vol. I.

and sovereign Power over the external Members of the Body.

(2.) It hath a *political* Power over the Faculties and Passions of the Soul, not by way of absolute Command, but by way of *suggestion* and *insinuation*. Thus it can oft-times persuade the understanding and thoughts to lay by this or that subject, and apply themselves to the study of another. It can bridle and restrain the Affections and Passions, but yet it hath no absolute Command over the Inner, as it hath over the outward Man. Its weakness and inability to govern the inner Man, appears in two things more especially remarkable, *viz.* 1. It cannot with all its power and skill command and fetch off the thoughts from some Subjects which are set on at some times with extraordinary weight upon the Soul. However the Thoughts may obsequiously follow its beck at some times, yea, for the most part; yet there are cafes and seasons, in which its Authority and Persuasions cannot disengage one Thought:

As (1.) When God hath to do with the Soul in the work of Conversion, when he convinceth of Sin and Danger, and sets a Man's Evil in order before his eyes: these are terrible representations, and fain would the carnal Will disengage the Thoughts from such sad Subjects, and strives by all manner of Persuasions and Diversions so to do; but all to no purpose. *Psal.* 51. v. 3. *My sin is ever before me.* The Thoughts are fix'd, and there is no removing of them. It may give them a little interruption, but they return with the more impetuous violence. And instead of gaining them off, they at last (or rather God by them) gains over the Will also.

(2.) When *Satan* hath to do with the Soul in the way of *Temptation* and hellish *Suggestion*: Look as the carnal Will opposed it self to the Thoughts in the former case to no purpose; so the sanctified Will opposes it self to them in this case, oft-times with as little effect or success, as he that opposeth his weak Breath to the strong Current of a mighty River. Well were it, if the sanctified Will were now the Master of the Phantasia, and could control the Thoughts of the Heart; but, like a mad Horse, the *Fancy* takes the Bit in its teeth, and runs whither it pleaseth; the Will cannot govern it. Think quite another way, saith the Will; turn thy Thoughts to other things: but much the near, the Soul turneth a deaf ear to its Counsels. 2. It cannot quiet and compose a raging Conscience, and reduce it at its pleasure to Rest and Peace. This is the peculiar Work of God. He only that stills the stormy Seas, can quiet the distressed and tempestuous Soul. The impotence of the Will in this case is known to all that have been in those Deeps of Trouble. And this is the misery of the *Devil* and the *Damned*, that tho' they would never so fain, yet they cannot get rid of those tormenting impressions made upon them by their own trembling and condemning Consciences. There would not be so many pale, sweating, affrighted Consciences on Earth, and in Hell, if the Will had any command or power over them.

Sff

Tam

as our Souls in those houses of Flesh, which we cannot put on and off at pleasure, as they do; but as we walk in our Garments, which we can put off without pain.

(3.) The humane Soul is neither wholly tied to the Body, as the brutal Soul is, nor created without inclination to a Body, as Angels are; but loves, and inclines to it, tho' it can both live and act without it, when it is parted from it at Death. The proof of this Assertion, and the Reasons why God created it with such an inclination, will in their proper place be more fully spoken to in the following Discourse. All that I shall add is, That in this, as well as in some other respects, our Souls are made a little lower than the Angels; but when they are unclothed of the Body, and have received it again in a new Edition, a spiritual body, then they shall be equal unto Angels in the way and manner of life and action.

Thus I have, as briefly as I can, dispatched the first thing propounded, viz. the Nature of the Soul, in the explication of these seven particulars: It is a Substance, a vital, spiritual, and immortal Substance, a Substance endued with Understanding, Will, Affections, and an Inclination to the Body. And now we are come to the

II. Branch, viz. Its Original and Infusion.

I. As to its Original, I have described it to be immediately from God, in the way of Creation: an honour done to no other living Creature except Angels. The World hath been troubled with a great many extravagant and wild Notions about the Original of the Soul of Man: (a certain Mark and Argument of its Apostasy from God).

* Solinus writes of one, who by a wound in the hinder part of his head, fell into such a degree of Ignorance and Oblivion, that he forgot his own Name, and could not tell whether he had any Name at all. But oh! what a stunning blow did Man receive by the Fall, that he should forget the very Author of his Being, and rather claim Alliance, and derive the Being of his Soul from any thing than God; tho' it bears the very Marks and Characters of its divine Author and Father upon it! The principal errors about the Origin of the Soul (for that wild Notion of Epicurus hath been laid so flat by the Pens of many Learned Men, that it is a vanity to strike one blow more at it) may be reduced to these three heads.

(1.) Some affirm it to be by way of † Traduction, or natural generation from the Parents to the Child. This Opinion is very ancient, Terullian and divers of the Western Fathers clofed with it, as judging it the best expedient to solve the difficulties of the Soul's taint and defilement with Original Sin. But Antiquity is no Passport for Errors. The gray Hairs of Opinions (as one well notes) are then honourable, when they are found in the way of Truth. Doctor Brown tells us, He should rather incline to the Creation, than the Traduction of the Soul, tho' either Opinion (saith he) will consist well enough

Vol. I

with Religion, did not one Objection haunt him, and this is a Conclusion from the equivocal and monstrous productions by unnatural Copulations; as of a Man and Beast: for if the Soul of Man (saith he) be not transmitted and transfused in the Seed, why are not those productions merely Beasts, but have also an impression and tincture of Reason in as high a measure as it can evidence it self in those improper Organs?

Which way the Doctor's judgment had inclined in this Controversy, had been of no great consideration to the determination of it; though it is pity we should lose his consent and company, for the sake of such a beastly Objection as this, which haunts his mind: for if there be any such creatures, that seem to have a tincture of Reason, it is but a tincture, and a seeming, not a real tincture neither, which many other Brutes have.

The Doctor is too well acquainted with Philosophy, and a Man of too much Reason to allow himself to think that such a production, as he speaks of, hath two Natures and essential Forms in one Body, as of a Man and a Horse. He knows that every Entity hath but one specific Essence, and can have no more except he will place one and the same thing under divers species in the predicament of Substance. And as there cannot be two distinct forms, so neither can there be a mixture of them in the Centaur or monstrous Birth: For ex duobus entibus per se, non fit unum ens per se. But he confesseth this Objection was bred among the Weeds and Tares of his own Brain, (a rank soil no doubt) and I am pretty confident he had weeded it out in his latter years; for I find this notion of Centaurs (that is, half Horses, half Man) put into its proper Place among his Vulgar Errors, Book 1. chap. 4. And so I suppose that rub being out of the way, he returned again to us.

(2.) A second opinion was, that they were procreated by Angels; and that which gave the ground (such as it is) to this Opinion, or Fancy, is the similitude or resemblance which is found betwixt Angels and the Souls of Men. But this Fancy needs not any industry to overthrow it; for though it be certain there is a similitude and resemblance* betwixt Angels

and Souls, both being immaterial and spiritual Substances, yet Angels neither propagate by generation, nor is it in their power to create the least Fly or Worm in the world, much less the Soul of Man, the highest, noblest, and most excellent Being. Great power they have, but no creating power, that is God's incommunicable property; and procreate our Souls they did not, for they are Spirits, yet Spirits of another species.

(3.) A third sort there are who deny that not that Souls are created Substances, and that they proceeded from God; but affirm withal, that he created them simul, & semel, together and at once, as the Angels were, and reject not one by one, as Men are born into the World. Of this opinion was Plato, who thought

§ ff 2

* all

II. The Soul's Original and Defect.

* Solinus refert de quodam, quod accepto vulnere in occipito, ad tantam devenit ignorantiam, ut nesciret se habuisse nomen. Augustinus dicit de Philosophia Mundi, lib. 4. c. 24.

† Traductionem, or natural generation from the Parents to the Child. This Opinion is very ancient, Terullian and divers of the Western Fathers clofed with it, as judging it the best expedient to solve the difficulties of the Soul's taint and defilement with Original Sin. But Antiquity is no Passport for Errors. The gray Hairs of Opinions (as one well notes) are then honourable, when they are found in the way of Truth. Doctor Brown tells us, He should rather incline to the Creation, than the Traduction of the Soul, tho' either Opinion (saith he) will consist well enough

* Religio Medici, scilicet 36.

* Perfectum est quoddam aliud sibi simile producit, sed immateriales substantie multo perfectiores sunt quam corporatae: ergo cum hic alias sibi secundum speciem similes efficiant, potiori ratione poterunt Angeli substantiam aliquam incorpoream inferioris naturae procreare, id est, Animam humanam. D. Dionysii cap. 4. de divinis nominibus.

* *Plato in Timæo* finxit Deum omnes animas humanas ante corpora simul creare, & in comparibus stellis conficuisse: tum eas celestium rerum cædior, & terrenarum amore captas, ut tanti sceleris pœnas luerent, in corpora tanquam in carcerem conjecissas.

Origen suck'd in this notion of the preëxistence of Souls. And upon this supposition it was that *Porphyry* tells us, in the life of *Plotinus*, he blush'd as often as he thought of his being in a Body, as a Man that had lived in reputation and honour, blushes when he is lodged in a Prison. The ground on which the *Stoicks* bottomed their Opinion was, the great dignity and excellency of the Soul, which inclin'd them to think they had never been degraded and abas'd as they are by dwelling in such vile Bodies, but for their faults; and that it was for some former sin of theirs, that they slid down into gross matter, and were caught into a vital union with it: Whereas, had they not finned they had lived in celestial and splendid habitations more suitable to their dignity.

But this is a pure creature of fancy: for, (1.) no Soul in the World is conscious to itself of such a preëxistence, nor can remember when it was owner of any other habitation than that it now dwells in. (2.) Nor doth the Scripture give us the least hint of any such thing. Some indeed would catch hold of that exprellion, *Gen. 2. 2. God rested the seventh day from all the works which he had made:* And it is true, he did so, the work of Creation was finish'd and sealed up, as to any new species or kind of Creatures to be created; no other sort of Souls will ever be created, than that which was at first: But yet God still creates individual Souls (*My father worketh hitherto, and I work*) of the same kind and nature with *Adam's* Soul. And (3.) for their detraction into these bodies as a punishment of their sins in the former state; if we speak of sin in *Individuals*, or particular Persons; the Scripture mentions none, either original, or actual, desiling any Soul in any other way but by its union with the Body. Preëxistence therefore is but a Dream.

But to me it's clear, that the Soul receives not its Being by Tradition or Generation; for that which is generable, is also corruptible: but the spiritual immortal Soul (as it hath been proved to be) is not subject to Corruption. Nor is it imaginable how a Soul should be produced out of matter, which is not endued with Reason: Or how a bodily Substance can impart that to another, which it hath not in it self. If it be said, the Soul of the Child proceeds from the Soul of the Parents, that cannot be; for spiritual Substances are impartible, and nothing can be discind'd from them.

* And it is absurd to think the Soul of *Adam* should spring from one Original, and the Souls of all his Off-spring from another, whilst both his and theirs are of one and the same nature and species. To all which let me add, that

as this assertion of their Creation is most reasonable, so it is most scriptural. It is reasonable to think and say, † that no active Power can act beyond or above the proper sphere of its activity and ability. But if the Soul be elicited out of the power of Matter, here would be an Effect produced abundantly more noble and excellent than its Cause. And as it is most reasonable, so it is most scriptural. To this purpose divers Testimonies of Scripture are cited and produced by our Divines, amongst which we may single out these four, which are of special remark and use; *Heb. 12. 9. Furthermore, we had fathers of our flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to [the Father of Spirits] and live?* Here God is called the Father of Spirits, or of Souls, and that in an emphatical *Antithesis*, or contradistinction to our natural Fathers, who are called the Fathers of our Flesh, or Bodies only. The true scope and sense of this Text is with great judgment and clearness given us by that learned and judicious Divine Mr. * *Pembie*, in these words: [Nothing is more plain and emphatical than this *Antithesis*, We receive our flesh and body from our Parents, but our Souls from God: if then we patiently bear the chastisements of our parents, who are Authors of the vilest part, and have the least right or power over us, with how much more equal a mind should we bear his chastisements, who hath the supreme right to us, as he is the Father and only giver of that which is most excellent in us *viz.* our Souls or Spirits?]

Here it seems evident, that our Souls flow not to us in the material Channel of fleshly generation or descent, as our Bodies do, but immediately from God their proper Father, in the way of Creation. Yet he begets them not out of his own Essence or Substance, as Christ his natural Son is begotten, but *ex nihilo*, out of nothing that had been before, as *Theodore* well exprelleth it. Agreeable hereunto is that place also in † *Zech. 12.*

1. *The Lord which stretcheth forth the Heavens, and layeth the foundations of the Earth, and formeth the spirit of Man within him:* Where the forming of the spirit or soul of Man

is associated with those two other glorious effects of God's creating power, namely, the expansion of the Heavens, and laying the foundations of the Earth; all three are here equally assumed by the Lord, as his remarkable and glorious works of Creation. He that created the one, did as much create the other.

Now the two former we find frequently instanced in Scripture, as the effects of his creating Power, or works implying the Almighty power of God; and therefore are presented as strong props to our Faith, when it is weak and staggering, for want of visible matter of

† Nulla virtus activa agit ultra suum genus, sed Anima intellectiva excedit totum genus corporeæ nature, cum sit substantia spiritalis, &c. *Comnabr.*

* *Pembie* de Origine Animæ p. 59. Nihil apertius & lucidius *negotio* ista Antithesi, Carnem corpuseque a parentibus, animas a Deo accipimus; Quod si villioris parvis Auctores, & qui minus in nos juris habent, patienter castigantes ferimus; quam æquior animo feremus eum qui supremum in nos jus obtinet, utpote parvis, quæ in nobis est præstantissima, unicus Dator, Conditorque?

† Testimonium fidei clarum, quo docemur, pari passu hæc tria ambulare, expansionem coeli, foundationem terræ, & formationem animæ rationalis,

* Absurdum est aliquid esse animam nostram, aliquid animam Adæ, cum omnino sint essentialiter distinctæ. *Zach.*

incouragement *Iſa.* 40. 22. and 42. 5. *Jer.* 10. 12. *Job* 9. 8. *Pſal.* 104. 2. q. d. Are my people in Captivity, and their Faith nonpluſt and at a loſs, becauſe there's nothing in ſight that hath a tendency to their deliverance, no prepared matter for their Salvation? Why, let them conſider who it was that created the Heavens, and the Earth, yea and their Souls alſo, which are ſo perplexed with doubts, out of nothing; the ſame God that did this, can alſo create Deliverance for his People, tho' there be no preexiſtent matter to work it out of.

Add to this that excellent place of *Solomon* in *Eccleſ.* 12. 7. *Then ſhall the duſt return to the*

Earth, as it was; and the Spirit to God who gave it. Where he ſhews us what becomes of Man, and how each part, of which he conſiſts, is beſtowed and diſpoſed of after his Diſſolution, by Death. And thus he ſtates it: Theſe two conſtitutive parts of Man are a *Soul*, and a *Body*: Theſe two parts have two diſtinct Originals: The *Body* as to its material cauſe is *Duſt*; the *Soul* in its nature is a *Spirit*, and as to its

Reſolvit *Solomon* utramque hominis partem in ſua prima principia. Ut ergo corpus in terram unde ſumptum eſt reſolvit; ita etiam ſi anima ex ſubſtantia æreſti, vel ex anima (ut *Plato* ait) mundi eſſet facta, in eam reſolveret *Solomon*. Cum vero ſimpliciter de ipſa dicit, eam redituram ad Deum qui dedit illam; docet eam e nihilo in quod reſolvi non poſſit, creatam eſſe. *Zanch.*

Origin, it proceeded from the *Father of Spirits*: 'tis his own creature in an immediate way. *He gave it*: he gave it the being it hath by Creation, and gave it to us (i. e.) to our Bodies by Inſpiration. Now *qualis Genetiſis, talis Analyſis*: When death diſſolves the union which is betwixt them, each part returns to that from whence it came, duſt to duſt, and the Spirit to God that gave it. The *Body* is expreſſed by its material cauſe, *Duſt*; the *Soul* only by its efficient cauſe, as the gift of God, becauſe it had no material cauſe at all, nor was made out of any preexiſtent matter, as the *Body* was. And therefore *Solomon* here ſpeaks of God, as if he had only to do with the *Soul*, leaving the *Body* to its material and inſtrumental cauſes, with whom he concurs by a general influence. 'Tis God, not Man alone; or God by Man, that hath given us theſe Bodies: but 'tis not Man but God alone, who hath given us theſe Souls. He therefore paſſeth by the *Body*, and ſpeaks of the *Soul* as the gift of God, becauſe that part of Man, and that only flows immediately from God, and at death returns to him that gave it. All theſe expreſſions, The *Father of Spirits*, the former of the Spirit in Man, the Giver of the Spirit, how agreeable are they to each other, and all of them to the point under hand, that the *Soul* flows from God by immediate Creation? You ſee it hath no principle out of which (according to the order of nature) it did ariſe, as the *Body* had: and therefore it hath no principle into which (according to the order of nature) it can be returned, as the *Body* hath: but returns to God its efficient cauſe, if reconciled, to a Father, not only by Creation but Adoption; if unreconciled, as a creature guilty of unnatural Rebellion againſt the God that formed it, to be judged.

II. God created and inſufed it into the *Body* with an inherent inclination and affection to it. The nature of the *Soul* and *Body* are vaſt-

ly different, there is no affinity or ſimilitude betwixt them; but it is in this caſe, as in that of Marriage. Two Perſons of vaſtly different Educations, Conſtitutions and Inclinations, coming under God's Ordinance, into the neareſt relation to each other, find their affections knit and endeared by their Relation to a degree beyond that which reſults from the union of Blood: So it is here. Whence this affection riſes, in what acts it is diſcovered, and for what reaſon implanted, will be at large diſcovered in a diſtinct branch of the following Diſcourſe, to which it is aligned. Mean while I find my ſelf concerned to vindicate what hath here been aſſerted from the Arguments which are urged againſt the immediate creation and inſuſion of the *Soul*, and in defence of the opinion of its Traduſtion from the Parents. To conceal, or diſſemble theſe Arguments and Objections, would be but a betraying of the truth I have here aſſerted, and give occaſion for ſome jealouſy, that they are unanswerable. To come then to an iſſue, and firſt.

It is urged, that it is manifeſt in it ſelf, and generally yielded, that the Souls of all other creatures come by Generation, and therefore it's probable that humane Souls flow in the ſame Channel alſo.

There is a ſpecifick difference betwixt rational Souls, and the Souls of all other Creatures, and therefore no force at all in the conſequence. A material form may riſe out of matter; but a ſpiritual rational Being (as the *Soul* of Man is) cannot ſo riſe, being much more noble and excellent than Matter is.

What Animal is there in the world, out of whoſe Soul the acts of Reaſon ſpring, and flow, as they do out of human Souls? Are they capable of inventing, (or which is much leſs) of learning the Arts and Sciences? Can they correct their ſenſes, and demonſtrate a Star to be far greater than the whole Earth, which to the eye ſeems no bigger than the rowel of a Spur? Do they foreknow the poſitions, and combinations of the Planets, and the eclipses of the Sun and Moon many years before they ſuffer them? And if they cannot perform theſe acts of Reaſon, as it is ſure they cannot, how much leſs can they know, fear, love, or delight in God, and long for the enjoyment of him! Theſe things do plainly evince humane Souls to be of another ſpecies, and therefore of an higher Original than the Souls of Brutes. If all have one common Nature and Original, why are they not all capable of performing the ſame rational and religious Acts?

But tho' it ſhould be granted that the *Soul* of the firſt Man was by immediate Creation and Inſpiration from God, yet it follows not, that the Souls of all his Poſterity muſt be ſo too. God might create him with a power of begetting other Souls after his own Image. The firſt Tree was created with its Seed in it ſelf to propagate its kind, and ſo might the firſt Man.

Anima, quæ eſt corporis organi perfectio, corpus neceſſarium eſt; non eſt enim forma ſeparata (i. e.) propriæ formæ eſt; itaque materiam requirit, ut adeo, ut anima a corpore ſeſuncta, ſed tamen & inclinationem retineat ſuam, quam corporis reſurrectioni conſequitur. *Cameroniſ præſed. in Matth. p. 124. Objeſt. 1.*

Obj. 1.

Sol.

Trees ſol.

Sol. 1. Trees, Animals, and such-like, were not created immediately out of nothing, as the Soul of Man was; but the Earth was the pre-existent Matter out of which they were produced, by the word of God's Blessing and Power; but Man's Soul was immediately breathed into him by God, and had no pre-existent Matter at all: And besides, all humane Souls being of one Species, have therefore one and the same Original: the Soul of the poorest Child is of equal Dignity with the Soul of Adam. And if we consult *Job* 33. 4. we shall find *Elihu* giving us there the same account, and almost in the same words, of the Original of his Soul, that *Moses* in my Text gives us of the Original of Adam's Soul: *The Spirit of God hath formed me, and the Breath of the Almighty hath given me Life.*

Sol. 2. But it is evident, Souls spring not from the Parent, as one Plant or Animal doth from another: for they have their Seed in themselves apt and proper to produce their kind; but the Seed of Souls is not to be found in Man: It is not to be found in his Body; for then (as was said before) a spiritual and nobler Essence must be produced out of a material and baser Matter, (*i. e.*) the Matter must give to the Soul that which it hath not in it self; Nor is it to be found in his Soul; for the Soul being a pure, simple, and indivisible Being, can suffer nothing to be disjoined from it towards the production of another Soul. A Spirit, as the Soul is, is *Substantia simplex & impartibilis*; an uncompounded and indiscerptible or impartible Being. Nor can it spring partly from the Body, and partly from the Soul, as from con-causes; for then it should be partly corporeal, and partly incorporeal, as its causes are. So that there is no Matter, Seed, or Principle of Souls found in Man; and to be sure (as *Baronius* strongly argues) * he cannot produce a Soul without pre-existent Matter; for that were to make him Omnipotent, and assign a creating Power to a Creature. Besides that which is generable is also corruptible, as we see Trees, Animals, &c.

* Pater neque producit animam filii ex aliqua re pre-existente; neque producit eam ex nulla re pre-existente; hoc enim est creare: ergo nullo modo eam producit. *Baronius* dissent. *secunda de Origine Animæ*, p. 120.

which are produced that way, to be; but the Soul is not corruptible, as hath in part been already proved, and will more fully in the following Discourse. So that Adam's Soul and the Souls of his Posterity spring not from each other, but all from God by Creation.

Obj. 3. If the Soul be created and infused immediately by God, either it comes out of his hands pure, or impure, If pure, how comes it to be defiled and tainted with sin? If impure, how do we free God from being the Author of sin?

Sol. If the question be, whether Souls be pure or impure as soon as they are united with their Bodies? the Answer is, They are impure, and tainted as soon as united: For the union constitutes a Child of Adam, and consequently a sinful impure Creature. But if it respect the condition and state in which God created them, I answer with *Baronius* † They are created

neither morally pure, nor impure; they receive neither purity nor impurity from him, but only their naked Essence, and the natural Powers and Properties flowing therefrom. He inspires not any impurity into them; for he cannot be the Author of sin, who is the Revenger of it. Nor doth he create them in their original purity and rectitude; for the sin of Adam lost that, and God justly with-holds it from his Posterity. Who wonders (saith * one) to see *Jenkins on the Children, the Palaces, and Gardens of Jude, Vol. 1. p. 559.* Traitors to droop and decay, and the Arms of his House, and Badge of his Nobility, to be defaced and reversed? That which is abused by Man to the dishonour of God, may justly be destroyed (I add in this case, or with-held) by God, to the detriment of Man. Adam voluntarily and actually deprived himself, and meritoriously deprived all his Posterity of that original Righteousness and Purity in which he was created. As an holy God he cannot inspire any impurity, and as a just and righteous God he may and doth with-hold, or create them void and destitute of that Holiness and Righteousness which was once their Happiness and Glory.

But how come they then to be defiled and tainted with Original Sin? It's confessed God did not impure them, and the Body cannot; for it being Matter, cannot act upon a Spirit; yea, of it self it's a dead lump, and cannot act at all.

What if this be one of those Mysteries reserved for the World to come, about which we cannot in this state solve every difficulty that may be moved? must we therefore deny its Divine Original? What if I cannot understand some Mysteries, or answer some Questions about the Hypothetical Union of the Two Natures in the wonderful Person of our Emmanuel? must I therefore question whether he be

God? *God-Man? God-Man? We must remain ignorant of some things about our own Souls, till we come into the condition of the Spirits of just Men made perfect. Mean time I think it*

Man since the Fall, being less than himself, understands not himself; nor will be fully, till he be fully restored to himself in Glory. Norton's Orth. Evang. p. 337.

much more our concernment to study how we may get Sin out of our Souls, than to puzzle our Brains to find how it came into them.

But that the Objecter may not take this for an handsome slide or go by to this great Objection, I return to it in a few Particulars.

(1.) That I think not Original Sin follows either part singly; it comes in neither by the Soul alone, nor by the Body alone apart from the Soul; but upon the Union and Conjunction of both in One Person. 'Tis the union of these Two which constitutes a Child of Adam, and as such only we are capable of being infected with his Sin.

(2.) And whereas it is so confidently asserted in the Objection, That sin cannot come into the Soul by or from the body, because it being Matter, cannot act upon a Spirit: I say, thus

† Animæ nostræ à Deo create neque accipiunt puritatem, sed justitiam; neque impuritatem & propensionem ad malum: Sed tantum essentiam spirituales, & proprietates ab essentia dimanantes. *Baron. exercit. 1. 103.*

this is *gratis dictum*, easily spoken, but difficultly proved. Cannot the Body act upon, or influence the Soul? Pray then how comes it to pass that so many Souls become foolish, forgetful, injudicious, &c. by their union with ill disposed Bodies? Nothing is more sensibly plain and evident, than that there is a reciprocal Communication betwixt the Soul and Body. The Body doth as really (tho' we know not how) affect the Soul with its dispositions, as the Soul influences it with life and motion. The more excellent any form is, the more intimate is its union and conjunction with the matter. The Soul of Man hath therefore a more intimate and perfect union with the Body, than Light hath with the Air; which is made by some the best Emblem and Similitude to shadow forth this union. But the union betwixt them is too intimate to be conceived by the help of any such Similitudes. That this Infection is by way of *Physical agency*, as a rusty Scabbard infects and defiles a bright Sword when sheathed therein; I will not confidently affirm, as some do. It may be by way of *Natural Concomitancy*, as *Estius* will have it; or to speak, as *Dr. Reynolds* (modestly, and as becomes Men that are conscious of darkness and weakness) by way of ineffable refusal and emanation.

(3.) In sum, Original Sin consists in two things. *viz.*

1. In the privation of that original Rectitude which ought to be in us.
2. In that habitual Concupiscence which carrieth nature to inordinate motions

This Privation and inordinate Inclination, make up that Original corruption, the rife whereof we are searching for: And to bring us as near it as we can come, without a daring intrusion into unrevealed Secrets, our solid *Divines* proceed by these steps in answering this Objection.

(1.) If it be demanded, how it comes to pass that an *Infant* becomes guilty of *Adam's* sin; The answer is, because he is a Child of *Adam* by natural generation.

(2.) But why is he deprived of that Original rectitude in which *Adam* was created! They answer, because *Adam* lost it by his sin, and therefore could not transmit what he had lost to his posterity.

(3.) But how comes he to be inclined to that which is evil? Their answer is, because he wants that Original rectitude: For whosoever wants Original rectitude, naturally inclines to that which is evil. And so the propension of Nature to that which is evil, seems to be by way of Concomitancy, with the defect or want of Original Righteousness.

And thus I have given some account of the Nature and Original of the Soul of Man, tho' alas! my dim eyes see but little of its excellency and glory. Yet by what hath been said, it appears the Masterpiece of all God's works of Creation in this lower World.

But because I suspect the Description I have given to it will be obscure and cloudy to vul-

gar Readers of a plain and low capacity, by reason of divers *Philosophical* terms which I have been forced to make use of; and reckoning my self a Debtor to the weak and unlearned, as well as others, I will endeavour to strip this Description of the Soul, for their sakes; out of those artificial terms which darken it to them, and present it once more in the most plain and intelligible *Eptome* I am capable to give it in; that so the weaker understanding may be able to form a true notion of the Nature and Original of the Soul in this manner.

This Soul of mine is a true and real Being; not a fancy, a conceit, a very nothing. It hath a proper and true Being in it self, whether I conceive it or not. Nor indeed can I conceive of it, but by it. It is not such a thing as whiteness is in Snow, a meer accident, which depends upon the Snow in which it is, for the Being it hath: and must perish as soon as the Snow is dissolved: my Soul doth not so depend upon my Body, or any other fellow-creature for its Being; but is as truly a Substance as my Body is, tho' not of so gross and material a kind and nature. My Soul can and will subsist and remain what it is, when my Body is, separated from it; but my Body cannot subsist and remain what it now is, when my Soul is separated from it. So that I find my Soul to be the most substantial and noble part of me; it is not my Body, but my Soul which makes me a Man. And if this depart, all the rest of me is but a dead log, a lump of inanimate clay, a heap of vile dust and corruption. From this independent subsistence it hath in it self, and the dependence its properties and affections have upon it, I truly apprehend and call it a *Substance*.

But yet when I call it a Substance, I must not conceive of it as a gross material palpable substance, such as my Body is, which I can see and feel: No, there are *Spiritual Substances* as well as gross, visible, *material Substances*. An Angel is a *Spiritual Substance*, a real Creature, and yet imperceptible by my sight or touch; such a substance is my Soul. *Spiritual Substances* are as real, and much more excellent than bodily Substances are. I can neither see, hear, nor feel it; but I both see, hear, and feel by it.

My Soul is also a vital Substance. It is a principle of Life to my Body: It hath a Life in it self, and quickens my Body therewith. My Soul is the spring of all the actions and motions of Life which I perform. It hath been an error taken in from my childhood, That Sense is performed in the outward Organs, or members of my Body, as touching in the Hand, seeing in the Eye, hearing in the Ear, &c. in them, I say, and not only by them; as if nothing were required to make Sense, but an *Object* and an *Organ*. No, no, it is not my Eye that seeth, nor my Ear that heareth, nor my Hand that toucheth, but my Soul in and by them performs all this. Let but an *Apoplexy* hinder the operations of my Soul in the Brain, and of how little use are my Eyes, Ears, Hands or Feet to me? My Life is originally in my Soul, and secondarily by way of communication in my Body. So that I find my Soul to be a *vital*, as well as a *spiritual Substance*. And

The Soul
a Sub-
stance,

but a Spi-
ritual Sub-
stance.

A Vital
Substance.

An Im-
mortal
Substance,

And being both a vital and spiritual Substance, I must needs conclude it to be an immortal Substance. For in such a pure, spiritual Nature, as my Soul is, there can be found no seeds or principles of Death. Where there is no Composition, there will be no Dissolution. My Body indeed, having so many jarring Humours, mixed Elements, and contrary Qualities in it, must needs fail and die at last: But my Soul was formed for Immortality, by the simplicity and spirituality of its Nature. No Sword can pierce it from without, nor Opposition can destroy it from within; Man cannot, and God will not.

endued
with Un-
derstand-
ing, Will,
and Affec-
tions.

And being an immortal Spirit, fitted and framed to live for ever, I find that God hath answerably endued and furnished it with an *Understanding, Will, and Affections*, whereby it is capable of being wrought upon by the Spirit in the way of Grace and Sanctification in this World, in order to the enjoyment of God, its chief happiness in the World to come.

By this its *Understanding*, I am distinguished from, and advanced above all other Creatures in this World. I can apprehend, distinguish, and judge of all other intelligible Beings. By my *Understanding* I discern Truth from Falshood, Good from Evil; it shews me what is fit for me to chuse, and what to refuse.

To this faculty or power of *Understanding*, my Thoughts and Conscience do belong; the former to my *speculative*, the latter to my *practical Understanding*. My Thoughts are all formed in my Mind or Understanding in innumerable multitudes and variety. By it I can think of things present, or absent; visible, or invisible; of God, or my self; of this, or the World to come.

To my *Understanding* also belongs my *Conscience*, a noble, divine, and awful Power: By which I summon and judge my self, as at a solemn Tribunal; bind and loose, condemn and acquit my self and actions, but still with an eye and respect to the Judgment of God. Hence are my best Comforts, and worst Torments.

This *Understanding* of mine is the Director and Guide of my *Will*; That is as the *Councillor*; This as the *Prince*: it freely chuseth and refuseth as my Understanding directs and suggests to it. The Members of my Body, and Passions of my Soul, are under its Dominion: the former are under its absolute Command, the latter under its Suasions and Insinuations, tho' not absolutely and always with effect and success.

And both my *Understanding* and *Will*, I find to have great influence upon my *Affections*.

These Passions and *Affections* of my Soul are of great use and dignity. I find them as manifold as there are considerations of Good and Evil. They are the strong and sensible motions of my Soul, according to my apprehensions of Good and Evil. By them my Soul is capable of Union with the highest Good. By Love and Delight I am capable of enjoying God, and resting in Him as the Centre of my Soul. This noble *Understanding, Thoughts, Conscience, Will, Passions, and Affections*, are the principal Faculties, Acts, and Power of this my

high and heaven-born Soul. And being thus richly endowed and furnished,

I find it could never rise out of Matter, or come into my Body by way of natural Generation; the Souls of Brutes, that rise that way, are destitute of Understanding, Reason, Conscience, and such other excellent Faculties and Powers as I find in my own Soul. They cannot know, or love, or delight in God, or set their Affections on things spiritual, invisible, and eternal, as my Soul is capable to do; it was therefore created and infused immediately into this Body of mine by the Father of Spirits, and that with a strong inclination and tender affection to my Flesh, without which it would be remiss and careles in performing its several Duties and Offices to it, during the time of its abode therein.

Fearfully and wonderfully therefore am I made, and designed for nobler ends and uses, than for a few days to eat, and drink, and sleep, and talk, and die. My Soul is of more value than ten thousand Worlds. *What shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?*

USE I.

FROM the several Parts and Branches of this Description of the Soul, we may gather the choice Fruits which naturally grow upon them in the following *Inferences* and Deductions of Truth and Duty. For we may say of them all, what the *Historian* doth of *Palestine*, that there is *nihil infructuosum, nihil sterile*, no Branch or Shrub is barren, or unfruitful. Let us then search it Branch by Branch; and,

Inference I.

FROM the substantial Nature of the Soul, I which we have proved to be a Being distinct from the Body, and subsisting by it self, we are informed, *That great is the difference betwixt the Death of a Man, and the Death of all other Creatures in the World.*

Their Souls depend on, and perish with their Bodies; but Ours neither result from them, nor perish with them. My Body is not a Body, when my Soul hath forsaken it; but my Soul will remain a Soul, when this Body is crumbled into Dust. Men may live like Beasts, a meer sensual Life; yea, in some sense, they may die like Beasts, a stupid death; but in this there will be found a vast difference: Death kills both parts of the Beasts, destroys Matter and Form; it toucheth only One part of Man; it destroyeth the Body, and only *disleaveth* the Soul, but cannot destroy it.

In some things *Solomon* shews the Agreement betwixt Our Death and Theirs, *Ecclef. 3. 19, 20, 21. That which befalleth the Sons of Men, befalleth the Beasts; even one thing befalleth them. As the one dieth, so dieth the other; all go to one place; all are of the Dust,*

and

and all turn to Dust again. We breathe the same common Air they breathe; we feel the same Pains of Death they feel; our Bodies are reformed into the same Earth theirs are. Oh! but in this is the difference, *The Spirit of Man goes upwards, and the Spirit of a Beast goes downward to the Earth.* Their Spirits go two ways at their dissolution; the one to the Earth, and the other to God that gave it, as he speaks, *Chap. 12. 7.* Tho' our Respiration and Expiration have some agreement, yet great is the odds in the Consequences of Death to the one and the other. They have no Pleasures nor Pains besides those they enjoy or feel now; but so have We; and those eternal and unspeakable too. The Soul of Man, like the Bird in the shell, is still growing and ripening in Sin or Grace, till at last the shell breaks by Death, and the Soul flies away to the place it is prepared for, and where it must abide for ever. The Body, which is but its shell, perisheth; but the Soul lives when it is fallen away.

How doth this Consideration expose and aggravate the folly and madness of the sensual World, who herd themselves with Beasts, tho' they have Souls so near of kin to Angels! The Princes and Nobles of the World abhor to associate themselves with *Mechanicks* in their shops, or to take a place among the foolish Rabble upon an Ale-bench; they know and keep their distance and *decorum*, as still carrying with them a sense of Honour, and abhorring to act beneath it: But we equalize our high and noble Souls in the manner of Life with the Beasts that perish. Our Tables differ little from the *Crib* at which they feed; or our Houses from the *Stalls* and *Stables* in which they lie down to rest, in respect of any Divine Worship, or Heavenly Communication that is to be heard there. Happy had it been for such Men (if so they live and die) that their Souls had been of no higher Extraction, or larger Capacity, or longer Duration than that of a Beast: for then, as their Comforts, so also their Miseries had ended at Death. And such they will one day wish they had been.

A separate Soul immediately capable of Blessedness.

Inference II.

THE Soul of Man being a Substance, and not depending in its being on the Body, or any other fellow-creature; *There can be no reason on the Soul's account, why its Blessedness should be delayed till the Resurrection of the Body.*

'Tis a great mistake (and 'tis well 'tis so) that the Soul is capable only of sociable Glory, or a Blessedness in partnership with the Body; and that it can neither exert its own Powers, nor enjoy its own Happiness, in the absence of the Body. The opinion of a sleeping interval took its rise from this Error, (as it is usual for one mistake to beget another) they conceived the Soul to be so dependent on the Body, at least in all its Operations, that when Death rends it from the Body, it must needs be left as in a swoon, or sleep, unable to exert its proper Powers, or enjoy that felicity which we ascribe to it in its state of separation.

Vol. I:

But certainly its substantial Nature being considered, it will be found, that whatever Perfectionsoever the Body receives from the Soul, and how necessary soever its dependence upon it is,

* the Soul receives not its perfection from the Body, nor doth it necessarily depend on it in its principal Operations, but it can live and act out of a Body,

as well as in it. Yea, I doubt not but it enjoys it self in a much more sweet and perfect liberty than ever it did or could whilst it was clogg'd and fetter'd with a Body of flesh. Doubtless,

† *saith Tertullian*, when it is separated, and as it were strained by Death, it comes out of darkness into its own pure, perfect light, and quickly finds it self a substantial Being, able to act freely in that light. Before the eyes of the dead body are closed, I doubt not but the believing Soul with open eyes beholdeth the face of *Jesus Christ*.

Luke 23. 43. Philip. 1. 23. But this will also be farther spoken to hereafter.

Inference III.

THE Souls of Men being created immediately out of nothing, and not seminally produced; it follows, *That all Souls by nature are of equal value and dignity: One Soul is not more excellent, honourable, or precious than another; but all by nature equally precious.*

The Soul of the poorest Beggar that cries at the door for a Crust, is in its own nature of equal dignity and value with the Soul of the most glorious Monarch that sits upon the Throne. And this appears to be so,

1. Because all Souls flow out of one and the same fountain, *viz.* the creating Power of God. They were not made of better or worse, finer or coarser matter, but *ex nihilo*, out of nothing at all. The same Almighty Power was put forth, to the forming of one, as of another. *All Souls are mine*, saith he that created them, *Ezek. 18. 4.* The Soul of the Child as well as the Father; the Soul of the Beggar as well as the King; those that had no pre-existent Matter, but received their Beings from the same efficient Cause, must needs be equal in their original Nature and Value. The Bodies of Men, that are formed out of Matter, do greatly differ from one another; some are moulded (as we say) *è meliori luto*, out of better and finer Clay; some are more exact, elegant, vigorous, and beautiful than others: but Souls having no Matter of which they consist, are not so differenced.

2. All Souls are created with a capacity of enjoying the infinite and blessed God. They need no other powers, faculties, or capacities than they are by Nature endued with (if these be but sanctified and devoted to God) to make them equally happy and blessed with them that are now before the Throne of God in Heaven, and with unspeakable delight and joy behold his blessed face. We pass through the Fields, and take up an Egg which lies under a Clod, and see nothing in it but a little squalid Matter; yea, but in that Egg is feminally and potentially contained such a melodious Lark,

T t t

as

Cohæ-
rentum, fuit,
& discre-
tum est;
redit in un-
de venerat:
terra de-
orsum,
spiritus
sursum.
Epicurus.

• Anima rationalis nihil perfectionis recipit a materia, quod extra illam non posset recipere. *Conimbr. Disp. 2. Art. 3.*

† Procul dubio cum vi mortis exprimitur de concretionem carnis, & ipsa expressione colatur, certo de opiparulo corpore erumpit in apertum, ad meram & puram, & suam lucem, statim semetipsum in expeditione substantiæ recognoscit, ut de somno emergens ab imaginibus ad veritates. *Tertullianus in lib. de anima.*

II.

Immedi-
ately cre-
ated.

as it may be at the same time we see mounting Heavenward, and singing delicious Notes above. So 'tis here. Those poor despised Souls, that are now lodged in crazy despicable Bodies on Earth, have in their Natures a capacity for the same employments and enjoyments with those in Heaven. They have no higher Original than these have, and these have the same capacity and ability with them. They are Beings improvable by Grace, to the highest Perfections attainable by any Creature. If thou be never so mean, base, and despicable a creature in other respects, yet hast thou a Soul, which hath the same Alliance to the Father of Spirits, the same capacity to enjoy him in Glory, that the most excellent and renowned Saints ever had.

3. All Souls are rated and valued in God's Book and Account at one and the same price, and therefore by nature are of equal worth and dignity. Under the Law, the rich and the poor were to give the same Ransom, *Exod. 30. 15* *The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel.* The Redemption of Souls by the Blood of Christ costs one and the same Price. The poorest and most despised Soul that believes in Jesus, is as much indebted to him for the Ransom of his Soul, as the greatest and most illustrious Person in the World. *Moses, Abraham, Paul, &c.* did not cost Christ one farthing more than poor *Lazarus*, or the meanest among all the Saints did. *The Righteousness of Christ is unto all, and upon all that believe, and there is no difference, Rom. 3. 22.*

But yet we must not understand this parity of humane Souls universally, or in all respects. Tho' being of one Species, or common Nature, they are all equal, and those of them that are purchased by the Blood of Christ are all purchased at one rate; yet there are divers other respects and considerations, wherein there are remarkable differences betwixt Soul and Soul. As (1.) Some Souls are much better lodged and accommodated in their Bodies than others are, tho' none dwell at perfect rest and ease. God hath lodged some Souls in strong, vigorous, comely Bodies, others in feeble, crazy, deformed and uncomfortable ones. The Historian saith of *Galba*, *Anima Galbae male habitat*; The Soul of *Galba* dwelt in an ill Body. And a much better Man than *Galba* was as ill accommodated. *John* wishes in behalf of his beloved *Gaius*, that his Body might but prosper as his Soul did, *Epist. 3. v. 2.* *Timothy* had his often Infirmities. Indeed the World is full of instances and examples of this kind. * If some Souls had the advantages of such Bodies as others have, who make little, or very bad use of them; oh what service would they do for God! (2.) There is a remarkable difference also betwixt Soul and Soul, in respect of natural gifts and abilities of Mind. Some have great advantages above others in this respect. The natural Spirits and Organs of the Body being more brisk and apt, the Soul is more vegete, vigorous, and able to exert it self in its Functions and Operations. How clear, nimble, and firm are the Apprehensions, Fancies, and Memories of some Souls beyond others! What a Prodigy of Memory, Fancy, and Judgment, was *Father Paul the Venetian*! and *Suzarez*, of whom *Sirada* saith, such was the strength

of his Parts, that he had all *S. Augustine's* Works (the most copious and various of all the Fathers) as it were by heart, so that I have seen him (saith he) *† readily pointing with the finger to any place or page he disputed of.* Our Dr. *Reynolds* excell'd this way, to the astonishment of all that knew him,

so that he was a living Library, a third University. But above all, the character given by *Vives* of *Budens* is amazing, *That there was nothing written in Greek or Latin which he had not turned over and examined; that both Languages were alike to him, speaking either with more facility than he did the French, his Mother-tongue; and all by the penetrating force of his own natural parts, without a Tutor: so that † France never brought forth a man of sharper Wit, more piercing Judgement, exact Diligence, and greater Learning, nor in his time Italy its self.* *Felix & fecundum ingenium, quod in se uno invenit, & Doctorem, & Discipulum! A happy and fruitful Wit, which in it self found both a Master and a Scholar!* And yet *Pasquier* relates what is much more admirable of a young Man, who came to *Paris* in the 20th year of his age, and in the year 1445, and shewed himself so excellent and exact in all the Arts, Sciences, and Languages, that if a man of an ordinary good Wit, and sound Constitution, should live an hundred years, and during that time study incessantly, without eating, drinking, sleeping, or any recreation, he could hardly attain to that perfection. (3.) And yet a far greater difference is made betwixt one Soul and another, by the sanctifying Work of the Spirit of God. This makes yet a greater disparity, for it alters and new-moulds the frame and temper of the Soul, and restores the lost Image of God to it; by reason whereof the righteous is truly said to be more excellent than his neighbour, *Prov. 12. 26.* This enobles the Soul, and stamps the highest dignity and glory upon it, that it is capable of in this World. 'Tis true, it hath naturally an excellency and perpetuity in it above other Beings; as *Cedar* hath not only a beauty and fragrancy, but a soundness and durability far beyond other Trees of the Wood: But when it comes under the sanctification of the Spirit, then it is a *Cedar* over-laid with gold, (4.) Lastly, a wonderful difference will be made betwixt one Soul and another, by the Judgement of God in the great day. Some will be blessed, and others cursed Souls, *Matth. 25. mt.* some received into Glory, others shut out into everlasting Misery; *Matth. 8. 11, 12.* *Many shall come from the East, and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* And that which will be the sting and aggravation of the difference which will then be made, will be this parity and equality in the nature and capacity of every Soul: by reason whereof, they that perish will find they were naturally as capable of Blessedness as those that enjoy it; and that it was their own inexcusable negligence and obstinacy that was their ruin.

† Scitum quo loco quaque pagina differunt, ea super re expodice docentem, ac digito commoustrantem ac pe vidimus.

‡ Quo viro, Gallia, acutior ingenio, acutior iudicio, exactior diligentia, maiore eruditione, nullum unquam produxit; hic vero rane nec Italia quidam. *Und. Str. in 17. cap. de Civ. Dei.*

* Tostatus Bishop of Abulium had so strong and firm a constitution to endure severe fasts, that he is said never to have had a body of brass.

Inference IV.

III.
The Soul
created
Substance

IF God be the immediate Creator and Former of the Soul of Man, *Then Sin must needs involve the most unnatural evil in it, as it is an horrid violation of the very law of Nature.* No title can be so full, so absolute, as that which Creation gives. How clear is this in the light of reason? If God created my Soul, then my Soul had once no being at all: That it had still remained nothing, had not the pleasure of its Creator chosen and called it into the Being it hath, out of the millions of meer possible Beings: For as there are millions of possible Beings, which yet are nothing; so there are millions of possible Beings which never shall be at all. So that since the pleasure and power of God was the only fountain of my Being, he needs must be the *rightful owner* of it. What can be more his own, than that whose very Being flowed meely from him, and which had never been at all, had he not called it out of nothing?

And seeing the same pleasure of God which gave it a Being, gave it also a reasonable Being capable of, and fitted for moral Government by Laws, which other inferior natures are incapable of; it must needs follow, that he is the *supreme Governour*, as well as the rightful owner of this Soul.

Moreover it is plain, that he who gave my Soul its Being, and such a Being, gave it also all the good it ever had, hath, or shall have; and that it neither is, nor hath any thing but what is purely from him: And therefore he must needs be my *most bountiful Benefactor*, as well as *absolute Owner and supreme Governour*. There is not a Soul which he hath created, but stands bound to him, in all these ties and titles. Now for such a creature, to turn rebelliously upon its *absolute Owner*, whose only and wholly it is; upon its *supreme Governour*, to whom it owes intire and absolute Obedience; upon its *bountiful Benefactor*, from whom it hath received all, and every mercy it ever had, or hath; to violate his Laws, slight his Sovereignty, despise his Goodness, contemn his Threatnings, pierce his very Heart with grief, darken the glory of all his Attributes, confederate with Satan his malicious enemy; and strike as far as a creature can strike, at his very Being, (for in a sense, *Omne peccatum est Deicidium*, every sin strikes at the life and very existence of God :) Blush O Heavens at this, and be ye horribly afraid! O cursed Sin, the evil of all evils, which no Epithet can match; no name worse than its own can be invented, *sinful Sin*. This is as if some venomous branch should drop poison upon the root that bears it. Love and gratitude to Benefactors, is an indelible principle engraven by nature, upon the hearts of all Men. It teacheth children to love and honour their *Parents*, who yet are but meer instruments of their Beings. O how just must their perdition be, who casting off the very bonds of nature, turn again with enmity against that God, in whom they both live, and move, and have their Being! O think, and think again on what an holy * Man once said, What a sad charge will this be a-

gainst many a Man at the great day, when God shall say, Hadst thou been made a Dog, I never had had so much dishonour as I have had? 'Tis pity God should not have honour from the meanest creature that ever he made, from every pile of grass in the field, or stone in the street; much more that he should not have glory from a Soul more precious and excellent than all the other works of his Hands. Surely, 'tis better for us our Souls had still remained only in the number of possible Beings, and had never had an actual existence in the second rank of Beings, but a very little lower than the Angels; than that we should still be dishonouring God by them. O that he should be put to levy his Glory from us *passively*, that it should be with us as it was with *Nebuchadnezzar*, from whom God had more Glory when he was driven out amongst the beasts of the field, than when he sat on the Throne. In like manner his Glory will rise passively from us, when driven out among Devils, and not actively and voluntarily, as from the Saints.

Inference V.

IF God create and inspire the reasonable Soul immediately, *this should instruct and incite all Christian Parents, to pray earnestly for their Children, not only when they are born into the World, but when they are first conceived in the Womb.*

It is of great concernment both to us, and our Children, not only to receive them from the Womb, with bodies perfectly and comely fashioned; but also with such Souls inspired into them, whereby they may glorify God to all Eternity. 'Tis natural to Parents to desire to have their Children full and perfect in all their bodily members, and it would be a grievous affliction to see them come into the World deformed, monstrous, and mishapen births; should a Leg, an Arm, an Eye be wanting, such a defect would make their lives miserable, and the Parents uncomfortable. But how few are concerned with what Soul they are born into the World!

Good God (saith * *Misculus*) how shall we find, who are equally solicitous to have such Children as may live piously and honestly, as they are to leave them Inheritations, upon which they may live splendidly and bravely? It pleaseth us to see our own Image stamped upon their Bodies; but, O! how few pray, even whilst they are in the Womb, that their Souls may in due time bear the image of the heavenly, and not animate and use the members of their Bodies, as weapons of unrighteousness against the God that formed them?

Certainly, except they be quickened with such Souls, as may in this World be united with Christ, better had it been for them that they had perished in the Womb, whilst they were pure *Embryoes*, and had never come into the number and account of Men and Women; for such *Embryoes* go for nothing in the World, having only the rudiments and rough draughts of Bodies, never animated and informed by a

* Bone Deus! quam paucos reperias qui tam solliciti quomodo pie & honeste vivant filii, quam curant ut amplius relinquunt illis hereditatem, quam post obitum illorum splendide & otiose delibentur? *Misc.* in 8 Gen.

* Mr. Burroughs's Excellency of the Soul of Man, V. 232.

reasonable Soul; *Job* 3. 11, 12. But as soon as such a Soul enters into them, though for never so little a time, it entails Eternity upon them. We also know, that as soon as ever God breathes or infuses their Souls into them, sin presently enters, and death by sin, and that by us, as the Instruments of conveying it to them: Which should have the efficacy of a mighty Argument with us, to lay our prayers and tears for Mercy in the very foundation of that union.

Think on this Particularly, you that are Mothers of Children, when you find the fruit of the Womb quickned within you, that you then bear a Creature within you of more value than all this visible World, a Creature, upon whom, from that very moment, an Eternity of happiness or misery is entailed; and therefore it concerns you to travel as in pain for their Souls, before you feel the sorrows and pangs of travail for their Bodies. O! what a pity is it that a part of your selves should eternally perish! That so rare and excellent a Creature as that you bear, should be cast away for ever, for want of a new Creation super-added to that it hath already! O let your cries and prayers for them, anticipate your kisses and embraces of them. If you be faithful and successful herein, then happy is the Womb that bears them; if not, happy had it been for them, that the knees had prevented them, and the breasts they have sucked. O! you cannot begin your suits for Mercy too early for them, nor continue them too long, though your prayers measure all the time betwixt their Conception and their Death.

Inference VI.

IV.
A vital
Substance.

Moreover, if God have created our Souls vital Substances, to animate and act those bodies, *How indispensably necessary is it that a principle of spiritual Life do quicken and govern that Soul, which quickens and governs our Bodies and all the members of them? Otherwise, should in a natural sense we have living Souls, yet they are dead whilst they live.*

The Apostle in *1 Cor.* 15. 45, 46. compares the animal Life we live, by the union of our Souls and Bodies, with the spiritual Life we live, by the union of our Souls with Jesus Christ. *And so it is written (viz. in my Text) The first Man Adam was made a living Soul, the last Adam was made a quickning Spirit.* He opposes the animal to the spiritual Life, and the two Adams from whom they come; and shews in both respects, the excellency of the Spiritual above the Animal life, nor in point of *Priority*, for that which is natural, is before that which is spiritual, (and it must be so, because the natural Soul is the recipient subject of the Spirit's quickning and sanctifying Operations) but in point of dignity and real excellency. To how little purpose, or rather to what a dismal and miserable purpose, we are made living Souls, except the Lord from Heaven by his quickning power makes us spiritual and holy Souls? The natural Soul rules and uses the Body, as

* Corpus et animi simile est, anima et res est rationem habet. *Irenaeus lib. 2.*

* An Artificer doth his Tools: and except the Lord renew it by Grace, Satan will rule that

which rules thee, and so all thy members will be instruments of iniquity to fight against God. The actions performed by our Bodies, are justly reputed and reckon'd by God to the Soul, † because the Soul is the spring of all its motions, the fountain of its life and operations. What it doth by the Body its instrument, is as if it were done immediately by it self; for without the Soul it can do nothing.

† Omnia quaecunque fecerit corpus, five bonum, five malum, anima reputatur. *Origen. in Job.*

Inference VII.

Moreover, from the immaterial and spiritual nature of the Soul we are informed, *That Communion with God, and the enjoyment of him, are the true and proper intentions and purposes for which the Soul of Man was created.*

Such a Nature as this, is not fitted to live upon gross, material and perishing things, as the Body doth. The food of every Creature is agreeable to its nature, one cannot subsist upon that which another doth: As we see among the several sorts of Animals, what is food to one, is none to another. In the same Plant there is found a root, which is food of *Swine*, a stalk which is food for *Sheep*, a flower which feeds the *Bee*, and a seed on which the *Bird* lives: The *Sheep* cannot live upon the root, as the *Swine* doth; nor the *Bird* upon the flower, as the *Bee* doth; but every one feeds upon the different parts of the *Plant*, which are agreeable to its nature. So it is here, our Bodies being of an earthly material nature, can live upon things earthly and material, as most agreeable to them, they can relish and suck out the sweetness of these things; but the Soul can find nothing in them suitable to its nature and appetite, it must have spiritual food, or perish. It were therefore too brutish, and unworthy of a Man that understood the nature of his own Soul, to clear it up with the fumes of earthly provisions made for it, as he did, *Luke* 12. 20. *I will say to my Soul, Soul, thou hast much Goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* Alas, the Soul can no more eat, drink, and be merry with carnal things, than the Body can with spiritual and immaterial things: It cannot feed upon bread that perisheth, it can relish no more in the best and daintiest fare of an earthly growth, than in the white of an Egg: But bring it to a reconciled God in Christ, to the Covenant of Grace, and the sweet promises of the Gospel; set before it the joys, comforts and earnestness of the Spirit; and if it be a sanctified renewed Soul, it can make a rich Feast upon these. These make it a Feast of fat things, full of Marrow, as it is expressed, *Isaiah* 25. 6. spiritual things are proper food for spiritual and immaterial Souls.

Inference VIII.

THE spiritual nature of the Soul farther informs us, *That no acceptable service can be performed to God, except the Soul be employed and engaged therein.*

The Body hath its part and share in God's worship, as well as the Soul; but its part is incon- siderable

VI.
A Spiritu-
al Sub-
stance.

derable in comparifon: *Prov. 23. 26. My Son, give me thy heart, (i. e.) thy Soul, thy Spirit.* The holy and religious acts of the Soul are fuitable to the nature of the Object of Worfhip: *John 4. 24. God is a Spirit, and they that worfhip him, muft worfhip in Spirit and in Truth.* Spirits only can have Communion with that great Spirit. They were made Spirits for that very end, that they might be capable of converfe with the Father of Spirits. They that worfhip him, muft worfhip in Spirit and in Truth; that is, with inward love, fear, delight, and defires of Soul, that is to worfhip him in our Spirits: And in *Truth (i. e.)* according to the Rule of his Word which prefcribes our Duty. *Spirit* refpects the inward Power; *Truth*, the outward Form. The former ftrikes at Hypocrifie, the latter at Superftition and Idolatry: The one oppofes the inventions of our Heads, the other the loofenefs and formality of our Hearts.

No doubt but the fervice of the Body is due to God, and expected by him; for both the Souls and Bodies of his People are bought with a Price, and therefore he expects we glorify him with our Souls and Bodies, which are his: But the fervice of the Body is not accepted of him, otherwife than as it is animated and enlivened by an obedient Soul, and both fprinkled with the Blood of Chrift. Separate from thefe, bodily Exercife profits nothing, *1 Tim. 4. 8.* What pleafure can God take in the fruits and evidences of Mens Hypocrifie? *Ezek. 33. 31.*

Holy Paul appeals to God in this matter, *Rom. 1. 9. God is my witnefs (faith he) whom I ferve with my Spirit; q. d. I ferve God in my Spirit, and he knows that I do fo. I dare appeal to him, who fearches my heart, that it is not idle and unconcerned in his fervice. The Lord humble us, the beft of us, for our carelefs, dead, gadding, and vain Spirits, even when we are engaged in his folemn fervices. Oh that we were once fo fpiritual, to follow every excufion from his fervice with a groan, and retract every wandering thought with a deep figh! Alas! a cold and wandring Spirit in Duty is the difeafe of moft good Men, and the very temper and confitution of all unfanctified ones. It is a weighty and excellent ex-*

preffion of the Jews in their Eucbologion, or Prayer-book: Wherein fhall I come before his face, unlefs it be with my Spirit? For Man hath nothing more precious to preferre to God than his Soul. Indeed it is the beft Man

*hath; thy Heart is thy reafon poffe, 'tis all that thou art able to prefeat to him. If thou caft thy Soul into thy Duty, thou doft as the poor Widow did, caft in all that thou haft; And in fuch an offering the great God takes more pleafure, than in all the external, coftly, pompous Ceremonies, adorned Temples, and external Devotions in the World. It is a remarkable and aftonifhing expreffion of his own in this cafe; *Ifa. 66. 1, 2. Thus faith the Lord, The Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my Foot-ftool: where is the Houfe that ye build me, and where is the place of my reft? For all thefe things have mine hands made, and all thefe things have**

been, faith the Lord: but unto this Man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word; q. d. Think not to pleafe me with magnificent Temples, and adorned Altars; if I had pleafure in fuch things, Heaven is a more glorious Throne than any you can build me, and yet I have more delight in a poor contrite Spirit, that trembles with an holy awe and reverence at my Word, than I have in Heaven or Earth, or all the Works of my hands in either. Oh! if there had been more trembling at his Word, there had not been fuch trembling as now there is, under fears of the lofs and removal of it. Some can fuperftitiously reverence and kifs the facred Duft of the Sanctuary, as they call it, and exprefs a great deal of zeal for the externals of Religion, but little confider how fmall the intereft of thefe things is in Religion, and how little God looks at, or regards them.

Inference IX.

How much are the Spirits of men furd by Sin, below the dignity and excellency of their nature?

Our Souls are Spirits by Nature, yet have they naturally no delight in things fpiritual: They decline that which is homogeneal and fuitable to Spirits, and relifh nothing but what is carnal and unfuitable to them. How are its affections inverted and misplaced by fin! That noble, fpiritual, heaven-born Creature the Soul, whose Element and Center God alone fhould be, is now fallen into a deep oblivion both of God and it felf, and wholly fpend its ftrength in the purfuit of fenfual and earthly Enjoyments, and becomes a meer drudge and flave to the Body. Carnal things now meafure out and govern its delights and hopes, its fears and fowrws. Oh! how unfeemly is it, to behold fuch an high-born Spirit laqueying up and down the World in the fervice of the perifhing Flefh! *Their heart (faith the Prophet) goeth after their Covetoufnefs, Ezek. 33. 31.* as a fervant at the beck or nod of his Mafter.

Oh! how many are there to be found in every place, who melt down the precious Affections and ftrength of their Souls, in fenfitive brutifh Pleafures and Delights? *James 5. 5. Ye have lived in pleafures upon Earth, as the Fish in the Water, or rather as the Eel in the Mud; never once lifting up a Thought or Defire to the fpiritual and eternal Pleafures that are at God's right hand.*

Our Creation did not fet us fo low; we are made capable of better and higher things.

God did not infpire fuch a noble, excellent, fpiritual Soul into us, merely to falt our Bodies, or carry them up and down this World for a few years, to gaze at the vanities of it. It was a great faying of an Heathen: *"I am greater, and born to greater things, than that I fhould be a flave fum, & ad to my Body.* We have a Spirit about us, that might better underftand its Original, and know it is not fo bafe a Being, as its daily employments fpeak it to be. The Lord raife our apprehenfions to a due value of the dignity of our own Souls, that we may turn from thefe fordid employments with a generous difdain, and fet our affections on what is agreeable to, and worthy of an high-born Spirit.

Infe.

כמה אקרב אני לך
ברוחי אדון כבודי
פניו ע. q. d. re potius
preveniam faciem eius nisi
fpiritu meo? nihil enim
est homini pretiosius ani-
ma sua.

Major
maiora na-
tus, quam
ut corporis
mei sum
mancipi-
um, scilicet.

Inference X.

VII.
The Soul
an immortal
Substance.

IS the Soul of Man a vital, spiritual, and immortal Substance? Then it is no wonder, that we find the resentments and impressions of the World to come, naturally engraven upon the Souls of Men all the World over. These impressions and sentiments of another Life after this, do as naturally and necessarily spring out of an immortal Nature, as branches spring out of the body of a Tree, or feathers out of the body of a Bird. So fairly and firmly are the characters and impressions of the Life to come sealed upon the immortal Spirits of all men, that no man can offer violence to this Truth, but he must also do violence to his own Soul, and unman himself by the denial of it. Who feels not a cheariness to spring from his absolving, and an horror from his accusing Conscience? Neither of which could rise from any other Principle than this. We are Beings conscious to our selves of a future state, and that our Souls do not vanish when our Breath doth; that we cease not to be when we cease to breathe.

And this is common to the most barbarous and salvage Heathens: They shew (saith the Apostle) the work of the Law written in their hearts, their Conscience also bearing them witness, and their Thoughts in the mean time accusing, or else excusing one another. By the work of the Law, understand the sum and substance of the Ten Commandments, comprizing the Duties to be done, and the Sins to be avoided. This work of the Law is said to be written upon the Hearts of the Gentiles, who had no external written Law; upon their Hearts it was written, tho' many of them gave themselves over to all uncleanness: and they shewed, or gave evidence and proof, that there was such a Law written upon their Hearts. They shewed it two ways: (1.) Some of them shewed it in their Temperance, Righteousness, and moral Honesty, wherein they excelled many of us, who have far greater Advantages and Obligations. (2.) In the efficacy of their Consciences, which as it clear'd and comforted them for things well done, so it witnessed against them, yea, judg'd and condemned them for things ill done. And these evidences of a Law written on the Heart are to be found, where-ever Men are to be found. Their ignorance and barbarity cannot stifle these sentiments and impressions of a future state, and a just Tribunal to which all must come. And the universality of it plainly evinces, that it springs not out of Education, but the very nature of an immortal Soul.

Let none say that these universal impressions are but the effects of an universal Tradition, which hath been time out of mind spread among the Nations of the World: For as no such universal Tradition can be proved; so if it could, the very propension that is found in the minds of all Men living to embrace and close with the Proposals of a Life to come, will evince the agreeableness of them to the nature of an immortal Soul. Yea, the natural closing of the Soul with these Proposals, will amount to an evidence of the reality and existence of those invisible things. For as the natural Senses, and

their Organs, prove that there are Colours, Sounds, Savours, and Juices, as well as, or rather because, there are Eyes, Ears, &c. naturally fitted to close with, and receive them: so it is here, if the Soul naturally looks beyond the Line of Time, to things Eternal, and cannot bound and confine its thoughts and expectations within the too narrow limits of present things, surely there is such a future state, as well as Souls made apprehensive of it, and propense to close with the discoveries thereof. So natural are the Notions of a future state to the Souls of Men, that those who have set themselves designedly to banish them, and struggled hard to suppress them, as things irksome and grievous to them, giving interruption to their sensual Lusts and Pleasures; yet still these apprehensions have returned upon them, and gotten a just Victory over all their Objections and prejudices: they follow them wheresoever they go; they can no more flee from them, than from themselves; whereby they evidence themselves to be natural and indelible things.

Inference XI.

HATH God endued the Soul of Man with Understanding, Will, and Affections, whereby it is made capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying God? 'Tis then no wonder to find the malice and envy of Satan engaged against Man more than any other Creature, and against the Soul of Man rather than any thing else in Man.

It grates that Spirit of Envy, to see the Soul of Man adorning and preparing by Sanctification to fill that place in Glory from which he fell irrecoverably. It cut Haman to the very heart, to see the Honour that was done to Mordecai; much more doth it grate and gall Satan, to see what Jesus Christ hath purchased and designed for the Souls of Men. Other creatures being naturally incapable of this Happiness, do therefore escape his fury; but Men shall be sure to feel it, as far as he can reach them; 1 Pet. 5. 8. *Your Adversary the Devil goeth about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour. He walks to and fro, that speaks his diligence; seeking whom he may devour, that speaks his design: his restlessness in doing mischief, is all the Rest and Relief he hath in his own Torments.* 'Tis a mark of pure and perfect Malice, to endeavour to destroy, tho' he knows he shall never be successful in his Attempts. We read of many Bodies possessed by him; but he never takes up his quarters in the Body of any, but with design to mischief the Soul. No room but the best in the house will satisfy him; no Blood so sweet to him as Soul-blood. If he raise Persecution against the Bodies of Men, it is to destroy their Souls: Holiness is that he hates, and Happiness is the Object of his Envy; The Soul being the subject of both, is therefore pursued by him as his Prey.

Inference XII.

UPON the consideration both of its excellent Nature, and divine Original, it follows, That the corruption and defacing of such an excellent Creature by Sin, deserves to be lamented and greatly

VIII.
Endued
with Under-
standing, Will,
and Affec-
tions.

greatly bewailed; and the recovery of it by Sanctification to be studied, and diligently prosecuted, as the great concern of all Men.

What a beautiful and blessed Creature was the Soul of Man at first, whil't it stood in its integrity? His Mind was bright, clear, and apprehensive of the Law and Will of God: His Will cheerfully complied therewith; his sensitive Appetite and inferior Powers stood in an obedient subordination. God made Man upright, *Eccles. 7. 29.* *שׁוֹרֵם* streight, and equal, bending to neither extreme. The Law of God was fairly engraven upon the Table of his Heart. Principles of Holiness and Righteousness were inlayed in the very frame of his Soul, fitting him for an exact and punctual discharge of his Duties both to God and Man. This was the foundness of his Constitution, the healthful temper of his inner Man, whereby it became the very Region of Light, Peace, Purity, and Pleasure. For think how serene, lightsome, and placid the state of that Soul must be, in which there was no obliquity, not a jar with the Divine Will; but Joy and Peace continually transfused through all its Faculties!

But sin hath defaced its beauty, raz'd out the Divine Image which was its glory, and stamp'd the very Image of Satan upon it; turn'd all its noble Powers and Faculties against the Author and Fountain of its Being. Surely, if all the Posterity of *Adam*, from the beginning to the end of the World, should do nothing else but weep and sigh for the sin and misery of the Fall, it could not be sufficiently deplored: Other sins, like single Bullets, kill particular persons; but *Adam's* sin, like a Chain-shot, mowed down all Mankind at once. It murder'd himself *actually*, all his Posterity *virtually*, and Christ himself *occasionally*. Oh! what a black train of doleful consequents attend this sin! It hath darkened the bright eye of the Soul's Understanding, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* made its complying and obedient Will stubborn and rebellious, *Joh. 5. 40.* rendered his tender heart obdurate and senseless, *Ezek. 36. 26.* filled its serene and peaceful Conscience with guilt and terror, *Tit. 1. 15.* The consideration of these things is very humbling, and should cause those that glory in their high and illustrious descents, to wrap their silver Star in *Cypress*, and cover all their Glory with a mourning Veil. But this is but one part of their Duty.

How should this Consideration provoke us to apply our selves with most serious diligence to recover our lost Beauty and Dignity, in the way of Sanctification! This is the great and most proper use of the Fall as *Musculus* excellently speaks; *ut gratiam Christi eo submiximus ambigamus*, to inflame our desires the more vehemently after Grace.

Sanctification restores the beauty of the Soul, which sin defaced, *Ephes. 4. 24. Col. 3. 10.* Yea, it restores it with this advantage, that it shall never be lost again; Holiness is the beauty of God impress'd upon the Soul, and the impression is everlasting. Other beauty is but a fading flower: Time will plough up deep furrows upon the fairest faces, but this will be fresh to Eternity.

All moral Vertues, homilistical qualities,

which adorn and beautifie Nature, and make it attractive and lovely in the eyes of Men, are but separable accidents, which Death discombs and crops off like a sweet flower from the stalk. *Joh. 4. 21.* *Doth not their excellency that is in them go away?* But Sanctification is inseparable, and will ascend with the Soul into Heaven. Oh! that God would set the glass of the Law before us, that we may see what defiled Souls we have by Nature, that we might come by Faith to Jesus Christ, who cometh to us by Water and by Blood, *1 Joh. 5. 6.*

Inference XIII.

TO conclude. Upon the consideration of the whole matter before us, If this excellent Creature the Soul receive both its Being and Excellencies from God; *Then he that formed it must needs have the full and only right to possess and use it, and is therefore most injuriously kept out of the possession of it, by all unsanctified and disobedient persons.*

The Soul of Man is a Building of God, he hath laid out the Treasures of his Wisdom, Power and Goodness in this noble Structure; he built it for an habitation for Himself to dwell in; and indeed such noble Rooms as the Understanding, Will, and Affections, are too good for any other to inhabit. But Sin hath set open the gates of this hallowed Temple, and let in the Abomination that maketh desolate. All the doors of the Soul are barr'd and chain'd up against Christ, by ignorance and infidelity; he seeks for admission into the Soul which he hath made, but findeth none. A forcible entry he will not make, but expects when the Will shall bring him the keys of the Soul, as to its rightful Owner. So he expresseth himself to us in *Rev. 3. 20.* *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.* His standing at the door, denotes his earnest desire, and patient waiting, in the use of all those means that are introductive of Jesus Christ into the Souls of men. His knocking, signifies the various essays he makes by Ordinances and Providences externally and the convictions and persuasions of his Spirit, and the Consciences of sinners internally: every call of the Word, and every conviction of Conscience, is a Call, a Knock from Heaven, at the door of the Soul, for the admission of Christ into it. By the Soul's hearing his voice, and opening of the door, understand its approbation, and consent to the motion and offer of God. By Christ's coming in, is meant his uniting that Soul unto himself that opens to him. And as his coming in denotes union, so his supping with the Soul, and the Soul with him, denotes his sweet Communion; imperfect here, complete and full in Heaven.

Oh the admirable condescension of God to poor sinners! The God that formed you with a Word, and can as easily ruin you with a Frown; yet waits at the gates of your Souls for admission into them. There be many Souls within the sound of this complaint, that have kept God out of his own Right all their days. They have shut out Jesus Christ, and delivered up their Souls to Satan; if he but knock by a slight

slight Temptation, the door is presently opened: but Jesus Christ may wait in vain upon them, from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from Year to Year. But the longest day of his patience hath an end; and there is a refusal of Grace, after which no more tenders of Mercy shall ever be made.

What say you, Souls? will you at last open the door to Jesus Christ, or will you still exclude him? If you will open to him, he will not come in empty-handed, he will bring a feast with him, such a feast, as you never tasted any thing like it in your lives: But if you will not open to him, then I call Heaven and Earth to witness against you this day, that you have once more barr'd the doors of your Souls against him whose pleasure and power gave them their very Beings; against him, who is their Sovereign Lord, and rightful Owner; and consequently, this Act of yours must stop your mouths, and deprive you of all Pleas and Apologies, when you shall knock hereafter at the door of Mercy, and God shall for ever shut it up against you, according to his just, but dreadful threatnings, *Matt. 7. 21. Prov. 1. 24, 25.* And thus much of the Divine Original, and Excellent Nature of the Soul of Man.

Having taken a view of this excellent Creature the Soul, in opening the former Proposition; we come next to the consideration of its union with the Body, in this second Proposition:

Doct. II. *That the Souls and Bodies of Men are knit together by the feeble band of the Breath in their Nostrils.*

Mr. How
in a Funer-
al Sermon,
p. 9, 10

There is (saith a learned Man) no greater Mystery in Nature, than the Union betwixt the Soul and Body: That a Mind and Spirit should be so tied and linked with a Clod of Clay, that while that remains in a due temper, it cannot by any art or power free it self. It can by an act of the Will move an Hand, or a Foot, or the whole Body, but cannot move from it one inch. If it move hither, or thither, or by a leap upward do ascend a little, the Soul still follows; it cannot shake or throw it off. We cannot take our selves out; by any allowable means we cannot; nor by any at all (that are at least within meer humane power) as long as the temperaments lasts. While that remains, we cannot go; if that fail, we cannot stay; though there be so many open avenues (could we suppose any material bounds to hem in, or exclude a Spirit) we cannot go out or in at pleasure. A wonderful thing! and I wonder we no more wonder at our own make and frame in this respect. — What so much a-kind are a Mind and a piece of Earth, a Clod and a Thought, that they should be thus affixed to one another?

My design here is to shew by what ligament, tie, or bond it hath pleased the great and wise Creator, to affix and link these so different parts of Man together: and this *Moses* in the Text tells us, is no other but the Breath of his Nostrils.

The Breath and Soul of Man are two distinct things. His Breath is not his Soul, nor his Soul his Breath, but the *Nexus* or Bond that

couples and unites his Soul and Body in a personal Union. The Body hath no Life in it self, but its Life results from its union with the Soul, *Jam. 2. 26.* This union is maintained by the Breath of our Nostrils, which upon that account is here called the *Breath of Life*. *Breath is an act of Life, proceeding from the Soul's union with its Body, and ending with the dissolution of it.* Life is continued by its respiration, and ended by its expiration. Whilst we live, and whilst Breath is in our Bodies, are terms *synonimus*.

That little quantity of Air, which we thus breathe in and out at our Nostrils, is more to us than all the three Regions of Air, which fill up the vast space between Earth and Heaven. It is in a sense, our Life.

For the use and office of Respiration, the Lungs were formed and placed where they are, not without the most wise counsel and direction of God. They are that Organ in the * Body, which by the help of that Artery called *Arteria trachea*, leading to them as a Channel, for the passage of Air from the Mouth and Nostrils, the Air is transmitted to, and ventilated by them for the refreshment of the Heart, and exhaling the fumes thereof.

The Heart hath continual need of such a vent and refreshment; and therefore the Lungs, like a pair of Bellows, must be kept continually going. Longer than Breath is going, the Heart is dying; that which stops the one, suffocates the other.

And here we may with admiration contemplate the Wonders by which our Lives are continued. These Lungs are the most frail and tender part of the Body, and kept in continual motion and agitation; yet are made serviceable for seventy or eighty years together, which is the wonder of Providence. Were a piece of Brass, Iron, or Steel, kept in continual and incessant use, it would not endure half the time. In a word, the Heart, that noble part of the Body, is the shop wherein the Spirits are laboured and prepared, which therefore is in continual motion and heat; and so needs continual cooling and refreshing. We can live no longer than it labours; it can labour no longer than it is refreshed and cooled by respiration.

sele dilatando aerem attrahunt, inque cor effundunt, ita ut cor perpetuo actans, aere refrigeretur; qui aer, ubi intra cordis meatus incaluit, iterum a corde effunditur in pulmones, qui sele coacta, a hendo foras emittunt. Kiderm. Phys. p. 142.

God hath therefore prepared the Lungs for this service, which being of a thin, porous, and spongy substance, can easily be dilated and contracted. By dilating themselves, they attract and suck in the Air into themselves; first duly to prepare and temper it, and then communicate it to the Heart for its refreshment; which being quickly heated in the Heart, is again breathed out by the Lungs by contracting themselves again. This double motion of Inspiration and Expiration we call *Respiration*; and

and this Respiration is the Bond that holds our Souls and Bodies together.

And indeed, this is but a feeble Bond, a very slender and weak Thread, which holds our Souls and Bodies in union. What more *volatile, evanid and uncertain*, than a puff of breath? The Nostrils are the outer door of the Body, our Breath is continually in our Nostrils; and how soon may that depart, which is day and night at the door, as if it were still taking leave of us? Our Breath is always going; and what is still going, will be gone at last. How small a difference is there betwixt Respiration and Expiration, a breathing and a breathless lump of Clay? Breath cannot continue long, and Life cannot stay a moment behind it. *Psal. 104. 29. Thou takest away their Breath, they die, and return to their Dust.* Life is Breath given, and Death is Breath taken away. The Breath of Man is like a written Sentence, in which there are divers Comma's, or short Pauses, after which speedily follows a full Stop, and there's an end of it.

Pulmones sunt veluti rotæ ad Cisternam: sicut enim rota in fonte situlam modo deprimit aërium, modo sursum attollit; ita & pulmones perpetuo motu aërem attrahunt, & expellunt. *Alsted. Theol. Nat. p. 623.*

Some conceive Solomon points at the continual motion of the Lungs, in that figurative and elegant description of the death of Man, *Eccles. 12. 6. Over the silver Cord be loosed; or the golden Bowl be broken; or the Pitcher be broken at the Fountain, or the Wheel be broken at the Cistern.* The double motion of the Lungs he seems here to compare to the double motion of the Buckets in a Well; the turn of the Wheel sends one down, and draws the other up. But as we use to say proverbially, The Bucket or Pitcher that goes so often to the Cistern or Well, is broken at last: so must we say of these, they will fail at last. One sitting by the bedside of a dying person, sighed out this compassionate expression, *Ah! quid sumus?* His sick friend hearing it, replied, *Pulvis, & umbra, fumus, Duff, a Shadow, a puff of Wind.* The Wind without us is fickle and inconstant to a Proverb, and so is that within us too. Many grudge at the shortness of Life; but considering the feebleness of this Bond, we have more cause to wonder at the slowness of Death. For let us seriously consider the frailty of our Breath on a double account, viz.

1. In respect of our breathing Instruments.
2. Of breath-stopping Accidents.

1. Great is the frailty of our breathing Instruments. What is Flesh, but weakness? even the most solid and substantial; it is as the fading grass, *Isa. 40. 6.* But our Lungs are the most lax, spongy, and tender of all flesh, if that which is so airy, light, and spumous, deserves the name of Flesh. And as it is the most frail of all flesh, so it is in continual motion, labouring night and day, without rest or intermission; and that which wants alternate rest cannot be durable. We see motion wears out the Wheels of a Watch, tho' made of Brass; but our strength (as Job speaks) is not the strength of stones nor our bones (the most solid, much less our Lungs, the most frail and feeble parts) of Brass. Beside,

2. There are a multitude of breath-stopping

Vol. I.

Accidents, which may, and daily do beat the last Breath out of Mens Nostrils, before any decay of Nature cause it to expire.

Many mortal Diseases are incident to these frail and tender parts. Phyticks, Interenations, Ulcers, easily bar the passage of our Breath there; yea, and slighter accidents, which immediately touch not that part, are sufficient to stop our Breath, and dislodge our Souls. A Fly, a Gnat, the stone of a Raisin, a Crum of Bread, have often done it. There is not a Pore in the Body, but is a door large enough to let in Death; nor a Creature so despicably small, but is strong enough (if God commissionate it) to serve a Writ of Ejection upon the Soul. The multitudes of Diseases are so many lighted Candles put to this slender Thread of our Breath, besides the infinite diversity of external accidents, by which multitudes daily perish: So that there are as great and astonishing Wonders in our Preservation as in our Creation.

Inference I.

How admirable then is the Mystery of Providence in the daily continuation of the Breath of our Nostrils!

That our Breath is yet in our Nostrils, is only from hence, that he who breathed it into them at first is our Life, and the length of our Days, as it is *Deut. 30. 20.* It is because our Breath is in his hand, *Dan. 5. 23.* not in our own, or in our Enemies hand. Till he take it away, none shall be able to do it; *Psal. 104. 29. Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their Dust.*

'Tis neither Food nor Physick, but God in and by them, that holdeth our Souls in life, *Psal. 66. 9.* We hang every moment of our Life over the grave; and the gulph of Eternity, by this slender Thread of our Breath: but it cannot break, how feeble soever it be, till the time appointed be fully come. If it be not extinguished and suffocated as others daily are, it is because he puts none of these Diseases upon us, as it is *Exod. 15. 26.* or if he do, yet he is *Jehovah Rapha*, the Lord that healeth us, as it follows in that Text

We live in the midst of cruel enemies, yea, among them that breathe out cruelty, as the *Psalmist* complaineth, *Psal. 27. 12.* Such Breath would quickly suffocate ours, did not He in whose hand ours is wonderfully prevent it. Oh what cause have we to employ and spend that Breath in His Praise, who works so many daily Wonders to secure it!

Inference II.

Is it but a puff of feeble Breath which holds our Souls and Bodies in union? Then every Man is deeply concerned to make all haste, to take all possible care and pains to secure a better and more durable habitation for his Soul in Heaven, whilst yet it sojourns in this frail Tabernacle of the Body.

The time is at hand, when all these comely and active Bodies shall be so many breathless Carcases, no more capable of any use or service for our Souls than the seats you sit on, or the dead bodies that lie under your feet. Your

U u u

Breath

* Est enim substantia most lax, spongy, and tender of all flesh, if that which is so airy, light, and spumous, deserves the name of Flesh. And as it is the most frail of all flesh, so it is in continual motion, labouring night and day, without rest or intermission; and that which wants alternate rest cannot be durable. We see motion wears out the Wheels of a Watch, tho' made of Brass; but our strength (as Job speaks) is not the strength of stones nor our bones (the most solid, much less our Lungs, the most frail and feeble parts) of Brass. Beside,

2. There are a multitude of breath-stopping

breath is yet in your Nostrils, and all the means and seasons of Salvation will expire with it; and then it will be as impossible for the best Minister in the world to help your Souls, as for the ablest *Physician* to recover your Bodies. As *Physick* comes too late for the one, so Counsels and Persuasions for the other.

Three things are worth thinking on in this matter.

1. That you are not without the hopes and possibilities of Salvation, whilst the breath of life is in your Nostrils. A mercy (how lightly soever you value it) that would ravish with joy those miserable Souls that have already shot the gulf of Eternity, and turn the shrieks and groans of the Damned into joyful shouts and acclamations of praise. Poor wretch, consider what thou read'st; that thy Soul is not yet in Christ, is thy greatest misery, but that yet it may be in Christ, is an unspeakable mercy ; though thy Salvation be not yet secured, yet what a mercy is it that it is not desperate ?

2. When this uncertain breath is once expired, the last hope of every unregenerate person is gone for ever: It is as impossible to recover hope, as it is to recover your departed breath, or recal the day that is past. When the breath is gone, the *Compositum* is dissolved; we cease to be what now we are, and our life is as water spilt on the ground, which shall not be gathered up till the Resurrection. Our Life is carried like a precious liquor in a brittle Glass, which death breaks to pieces. The Spirit is immediately presented to God, and fixed in its unalterable State; *Heb. 9. 27.* All means of Salvation now cease for ever; no Ambassadors of peace are sent to the Dead; no more Calls or strivings of the Spirit: no more space for Repentance. O! what an inconceivable weight hath God hanged on a puff of breath!

3. And since matters stand thus, it is to be admired what shift Men make to quiet themselves in so dangerous a state as most Souls live in; quiet and unconcerned, and yet burden'd with a full breath betwixt them and Hell! O the stupifying and befotting nature of Sin! O the efficacy and power of spiritual Delusions! Are our lives such a throng and hurry of busyness, that we have no time to go alone and think where we are, and where we shortly must be? What shall I say? If bodily concerns be so weighty, and the matters of Eternity such trifles; if meat and drink, and trade, and children, be such great things, and Christ, and Soul, and Heaven, Hell, and the World to come, such little things in your eyes, you will not be long in that opinion I dare assure you.

Inference III.

I*s the Tie so weak betwixt our Souls and Bodies? how close and near then do all our Souls confine and border upon Eternity?*

There is no more but a puff of breath, a blast of wind betwixt this World and that to come, a very short step betwixt Time and Eternity : There is a breath which will be our last breath : Respiration must and will ter-

I Regenerate, or

II. Unregenerate.

I. Regenerate Souls should ponder this with pleasure. O 'tis transporting to think how small a matter is betwixt them and their complete Salvation. 'No sooner is your breath gone, but the full deluge of your hearts is come; every breath you draw, draws you a degree nearer to your perfect happiness; *Rom. 13. 11. Now is your Salvation nearer than when you believed*; therefore both your cheerfulness and diligence should be greater than when you were * in the infancy of your Faith. You have run through a considerable part of your Christian course and race, and are now come nearer the Goal and prize of eternal Life. O despond not, loiter not now at last, who were so fervent and zealous in the beginning.

'Tis transporting to think how near you approach the Region of light and joy. O that you would distinctly consider,

1. Where you lately were.

2. Where now you are.

3. Where shortly you shall be.

1. You that are now so near Salvation, were lately very near unto Damnation: there was but a puff of breath betwixt you and Hell. How many nights did you sleep securely in the state of nature and unregeneracy? How quietly did you rest upon the brink of Hell, not once imagining the danger you were in? Had any of those sicknesses you then suffered, been suffered by God, like a candle, to burn asunder this slender thread of life which was so near them, you had been as miserable and as hopeless, as those that now are roaring in the lowest Hell. I have heard of one that rid over a dangerous Bridge in the night, who upon the review of the place next day, fell into a swoon, when he was sensible of that danger which the darkness of the night hid from him. O Reader, shall not an escape from Hell affect thee, as much as such an escape would do?

2. 'Tis no less marvellous to consider where you now are; you that were afar off, are now made nigh, *Ephes. 2. 13.* you that were not beloved, are now beloved, *Rom. 9. 25.* You were in the state of death and condemnation; you are now passed from death to life, by your true justification, *1 John 3. 14.* Your union with Christ hath set you free from condemnation, *Rom. 8. 1.* Die you must tho' Christ be in you, but there is no hazard or hurt in your death. The stopping of your breath can put no stop to your happiness, it will hasten, not hinder it: If the pale Horse come for you, Heaven, not Hell will now follow him; your sins are pardoned, the covenant of your Salvation sealed. Death is disarmed of its fatal sting; and what then should hinder you from a like Triumph even upon your death-bed with that, *1 Cor. 15. 55.* *O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?*

3. And

* Hoc
dicit, quod
in fidei
primordi-
is, ferven-
tiores, &
ad opera
bona alac-
ciores
fuisse fide-
les; tem-
poris ru-
tem pro-
gressu, re-
friguisse.
*Epilus in
for.*

3. And yet you have more room for Joy, whilst you consider where you must and shall be shortly. You are now in *Christ*, but in a few days you shall be *with Christ* as well as in him; 'tis well now, but it will be better e're long. Your sin is now fully *pardoned*, but not fully *piaged* out of your Souls. Your *Persons* are freed from guilt, but your *Hearts* are not either freed from filth or grief: But in a little time you shall be absolutely and eternally freed from both. Your present condition is in Heaven, compared with your former, and your future state will be an Heaven indeed, compared with your present. *The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day, Prov. 4. 18.*

II. But on the other side, what meditation can be more startling and amazing to all the unregenerate and Christless World? Ponder it, thou poor Christless and un sanctified Soul. Get thee out of the noise and clamour of this World, which makes such a continual din in thine ears, and consider how thou hangest over the mouth of Hell it self, by the feeble Thread which is spun every moment out of thy Nostrils; as soon as that gives way, thou art gone for ever. What shift do you make to quiet your fears, and eat, and drink, and labour with any pleasure? 'Tis storied of *Dionysius* the Tyrant, that when *Damocles* would have flattered him into a conceit of the perfection of his happiness, as he was an absolute sovereign Prince, and could do what he pleased with others, as his Vassals; *Dionysius*, to confute his fancy, caused him to be placed at a Table richly furnished, and attended with the most curious Music, but just over his head hang'd a sharp and heavy Sword by one single hair; which when *Damocles* saw, no Meat would go down with him, but he earnestly begged for a discharge from that place. This is the lively Emblem of thy condition, thou unregenerate man.

There are three things in thy state sadly opposed to the former state last described.

1. The state you were born in, was bad.
2. The state you are now in, is worse.
3. The state you shall shortly be in, if you thus continue, will be unspeakably worst of all.

1. The state you were born in, was a sad state; you were born in sin, *Psal. 51. 5.* and under wrath, *Eph. 2. 3.* The Womb of Nature cast you forth into this World defiled and condemned Creatures.

2. The state you are in now, is much worse than that you were born in; for what have you been doing ever since you were born, but treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath? *Rom. 2. 5.* For every Sand of Time which run out of the Glass of God's patience towards you, a Drop of Wrath hath been running into the Vials of his Indignation against you. Oh! what a Treasure of Sin and Wrath then is laid up in so many years as you have lived in sin! Every Sin committed, every Mercy abused, every Call of God neglected and slighted, adds still more and more to this Treasure.

3. It will be much worse shortly than it is now, except preventing renewing Grace step in betwixt you and that Wrath into which you

Vol. I.

are hastning so fast. 'Tis sad to be under the Sentence of Condemnation, but unspeakably worse to be under the Execution of that Sentence. To be a *Christless* man is lamentable, but to be a *hopeless* man is more lamentable. For tho' you be now without Christ, yet whilst the Breath of Life is in your Nostrils you are not absolutely without hope; but when once that Breath is gone, all the World cannot save or help you. Your last Breath and your last Hope expire together. Tho' you be under God's damning Sentence, yet that Sentence through the riches of forbearance is not executed; but as soon as you die, all that Wrath which hang'd over your heads so many years, in the black Clouds of God's threatnings, will pour down in a furious storm upon you, which will never break up whilst God is God. Oh! think, and think again, and let your thoughts think close to this sad and solemn Subject, There is but a Breath betwixt You and Hell.

Inference IV.

DOrb God maintain your Life by Breath? Let not that Breath destroy your Life, which God gave to preserve it.

No man can live without Breath; and yet some might live longer than they do, if their Breath were better employed. * Some mens Throats have been cut by their own Tongues, as the *Arabian Proverb* intimates. Life and Death (saith *Solomon*) are in the power of the Tongue. *Criticks* observe, that a Word and a Plague grow upon the same Root in the *Hebrew* Tongue. 'Tis certain that some Mens Breath hath been baneful Poyson both to themselves and others. It was a Word that cut off the life of *Adonijah*, *1 King. 2. 23.* and thousands since his day have died upon the point of the same Weapon. 'Tis therefore wholsome Advice that is given us, *Psal. 34. 12.* *What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.*

And the more evil the times are, the stricter guard we should keep upon our lips. *It is an evil time, the prudent will keep silence,* *Amos 5. 13.* When wicked men watch to make a man an offender for a word, as it is *Isa. 29. 20, 21.* it behoves us to be upon our watch, that we offend not with our lips. 'Tis good to keep what is not safe to trust. *David* was as a deaf and dumb man, when in the company of wicked men, *Psal. 38. 13.* he thought silence then to be his prudence. It is better they should call you fools, than find you fo.

Inference V.

EMploy not that Breath to the dishonour of God, which was first given, and is still graciously maintained by him for your comfort and good.

'Twere better you had never breathed at all, than to spend your Breath in prophane Oaths, or foolish and idle Chat, whereby at once you wound the Name of God, draw guilt upon your own Souls, and help on the ruin of others. That is a startling Text, *Matt. 12. 36.* *But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak,*

U u u 2

Speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment.

To give an account, is here, by a *Metalepsis* of the Antecedent for the *Consequent*, put for punishment in Hell-fire, without an intervening change of heart, and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus.

And there is more evil in this abuse of our Breath, than we can easily discern, especially upon two Accounts, (1.) Because it is a sin most frequently committed, and seldom repented of. The intercourse betwixt the Heart and Tongue is quick, and the sense of the evil as easily and quickly passeth away. (2.) Because the poisonous and malignant influence thereof abides and continues long after: Our words may mischief others, not only a long time after they are spoken, but a long time after the Tongue that spake them is turned to Dust. How many years may a foolish or filthy word, a prophane scoff, an atheistical expression, stick in the minds of them that heard them, after the speaker's death! A word spoken is *physically* transient, and pass'd away with the breath that delivered it: but it's *morally* permanent; for as to its moral efficacy, no more is required, but its objective existence in the minds and thoughts of them that once heard it: And upon that very ground *Suarez* argues for a general Judgment, after Men have past at death their particular Judgment; because (saith he) long after that, abundance of Good and Evil will be done in this World by the dead, in the persons of others that over-live them. For look, as it was said of *Abel*, that being dead he yet speaketh: so it may be said of *Julian*, *Porphyry*, and multitudes of scoffing *Atheists*, that being dead, they yet speak. Oh therefore get a sanctified Heart, to season your Breath, that it may minister Grace to the hearers.

Inference VI.

Let your Breath promote the spiritual life of others, as well as maintain the natural life in your selves.

Tho' the maintaining of your natural life be one end why God gave you breath, yet it is not the only, or principal end of it. Your Breath must be Food to others, as well as Life to you: *Prov. 10. 21. The lips of the righteous feed many.* It will be comfortable to religion that Breath to God at Death, which hath been instrumental to his Glory in this Life. It was no low Encomium Christ gave of the Church, when he said, *Cant. 4. 11. Thy lips, Oh my Spouse, drop as the Honeycomb, Honey and Milk are under thy tongue.* Sweet, wholsome, and pleasant words, drop from her lips. They drop (saith Christ) as the *Honeycomb*. Some drops ever and anon fall actually, and others hang at the same time prepared and ready to fall. Such a prepared and habitual disposition should every Christian continually have. Your words may stick upon mens hearts to their Edification and Salvation, when you are in your Graves. Your Tongues may now sow that precious Seed, which may spring up to the praise of God, tho' you may not live to reap the comfort of it in this World, *John 4. 36, 37. 'Tis a rich expence of your Breath,*

to bring but one Soul to God, and yet God hath used the Breath of one, as his Instrument, to save, edifie, and comfort the Souls of thousands, *Prov. 11. 30. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that winneth Souls is wise.* The good Lord make all his People wise in this.

Surely, whether we consider the invaluable worth and preciousness of Souls, the benefits you have had from the breath of others your selves, the innate Property of Grace wherever it is, to diffuse and communicate it self; how short a time you have to breathe, and how comfortable it will be, when you breathe your last, to remember how it hath been employed for God: All this should open your lips, to counsel, reprove, and comfort others, as often as opportunity is ministred.

Did Christ spend his Blood for our Souls, and shall not we spend our Breath for them? Oh! let our Lips dispenſe Knowledge. If you will not spend your Breath for God, how will you spend your Blood for him? If you will not speak for him, I doubt you will not die for him. Away with a fullen reservedness, away with unprofitable Chat, all Subjects of Discourse are not fit for a Christian's Lips. 'Tis a grave Admonition God once gave his People by the Pen of a faithful * Minister. *You may rue (saith he) the opportunities you have lost. Here lay a poor Wretch with one foot in Hell, would he not have started back, if he had had light to discover his danger? Well, you are now together, something you must say; the same breath would serve for a compassionate Admonition as for a complacent Impertinency, which will redound to neither of your advantages. You part, the Man dies, and in the midst of Hell cries out against you, One word of yours might have saved me; you had me in your reach, you might have told me my danger; you forbore, I hardened; the Lord reward your negligence.*

Inference VII.

IF Breath be the tie betwixt Soul and Body, How are we concerned to improve, and draw forth the precious Breath of Ministers and Christians whilst it is yet in their Nostrils?

The Breath of many Ministers is judiciously stop't already, their Breath serves to little other use than to preserve their own lives; it will be stop't ere long by Death, and then those excellent Treasures of Gifts and Graces wherewith they are richly furnished, will be gone out of your reach, never to be further useful to your Souls. You should do by them therefore (as one aptly speaks) as Scholars do by some choice Book they have borrowed, and must return in a few days to the Owner: They diligently read it night and day, and carefully transcribe the most useful and excellent Notes they can find in it, that they may make them their own when the Book is called for out of their hands.

But alas! we rather divert, than draw forth these Excellencies that are in them. You may yet converse with them, and greatly benefit your selves by these Converses; but (as one speaks) by the stream of your impertinent talk that season is neglected: afterwards you see your
lack

lack of your Knowledge, but then the Instrument is removed. How must it gall an awakened Jew, to think what discourse he had with Jesus Christ! *Is it lawful to give Tribute to Cesar? Why do not thy Disciples fast?* Oh! had I nothing else to enquire of the Lord Jesus? Would it not have been more pertinent to have asked, What shall I do to be saved? But he is gone, and I dead in my Sins. How many persons have we sent away, that had a word of Wisdom in their hearts, having only learnt from them what a Clock it is, what Weather, or what News; forgetting to ask our own hearts, What is all this to us? and to enquire of them things worthy of their Wisdom and Experience. *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a Fool, seeing he hath no heart to it?* Prov. 17. 16. The expence of one minutes breath in season, may, if God concur with it, be to you the ground of breathing forth Praises to God to all Eternity.

Inference VIII.

ARE Souls and Bodies tack'd together by so frail a thing as a puff of Breath? *How vain and groundless then are all those Pleasures Men take in their carnal Projects and Designs in this World!*

We lay the plot and design of our future earthly Felicity in our own thoughts; we mould and contrive a design for a long and pleasant Life. The Model for raising an Estate is already formed in our thoughts, and we have not patience to defer our pleasure till the accomplishment of it, but presently draw a train of pleasing Consequents from this *Chimera*, and our thoughts can stoop to nothing less than sitting down all the remainder of our days in the very lap of Delight and Pleasure; forgetting that our Breath is all the while in our Nostrils, and may expire the next moment; and if it do, the structure of all our Expectations and Projects comes to nothing in the same moment. *His Breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Dust: and in that very day his thoughts perish,* Psal. 146. 4. The whole frame of his thoughts falls instantly abroad, by drawing out this one pin, his Breath. 'Tis good with all our earthly designs to mingle the serious thoughts of the Dominion of Providence, and our own frailty; *James 4. 15. If the Lord will, and we live.*

'Tis become a common Observation, that as soon as Men have accomplished their earthly designs, and begin to hug and bless themselves in their own Acquisitions. a sudden and unexpected period is put both to their Lives and Pleasures, as you may see *Luke 12. 19, 20. Dan. 4. 32.*

Oh then drive moderately; you will be at the end of all these things sooner than you imagine. We need not vidual a Ship to cross the Channel, as they do that are bound to the Indies. *What is your Life? It is even a Vapor, which appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away,* James 4. 14. In one moment the Projects of many years are overturned for ever.

Inference IX.

IS it but a puff of Breath that holds Man in life? *Then build not too much hope and confidence upon any Man.*

Build not too high upon so feeble a foundation. *Cease ye from Man* (saith the Prophet) *whose Breath is in his Nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Isa. 2. 22. There are two things that should deter us from dependence upon any man, viz. his *falseness*, and his *frailty*. Grace in a great measure may cure the first, but not the last. The best of Men must die, as well as the worst, *Rom. 8. 10.* 'Tis a vanity therefore to rely upon any man. It was the saying of a Philosopher, when he heard how Merchants lost great Estates at Sea in a moment, *Non amo felicitatem è sumibus pendentem*; I love not that happiness (saith he) which hangs upon a Rope. But all the happiness of many men hangs upon a far weaker thing than a Rope, even the perishing Breath of a Creature.

Let not Parents raise their hopes too high, or lean too hard upon their Children. Say not of thy Child, as *Lamech* did of *Noah*, *This Son shall comfort me*, Gen. 5. 29. The World is full of the laments and bitter cries of disappointed Parents. Let not the Wife depend too much on her Husband, as if her earthly comforts were secured in him against all danger. God is often provok'd to stop our friends Breath, that thereby he may stop our way to sin, *1 Tim. 5. 5.* The trust and dependence of a Soul is too weighty to be hang'd upon such a weak and rotten pin as a Creature's breath is.

Inference X.

TO conclude; If this frail Breath be all that differenceth the living from the dead, *Then fear not Man whose Breath is in his Nostrils.* There is as little ground for our fear of Man, as there is for our trust in Man. As Death in a moment can make the best Man *useless*, and put him out of capacity to do us any good; so it can in a moment make the worst Man *harmless*, and put him out of a capacity to do us any injury. Indeed if the Breath of our Enemies were in their power, and ours at their mercy, there would be just cause to tremble at them; but they are neither masters of their own or ours. *Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die?* said God to *Jacob*, Isa. 51. 12. The Breath of the mightiest is no better secured than of the meanest, nor never in more danger to be stop't than when they breathe out Threatnings against the Upright.

Julian's breath was soon stop't after he threaten'd to root out the *Galileans*. *Queen Mary* resigned her breath at the very time when she had fill'd the Prisons with many of Christ's Sheep designed for the slaughter. Read *Isa. 17. 12.* and see what Mushrooms we are afraid of. The best way to continue your Relations and Friends to your comfort, is to give God, and not them, your dependence; and the best way to secure your selves against the rage of Enemies, is to give God your fear, and not them. And thus much of the Nature of the Soul, and its Tie with the Body.

REV. VI. 9, 10, 11.

And when he had opened the Fifth Seal, I saw under the Altar the Souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held.

And they cried with a loud Voice, saying, How long, O Lord! holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our Blood on them that dwell on the Earth?

And white Robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them, That they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their Brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

HAVING from the former Text spoken of the Nature of the Soul, and the Tie betwixt it and the Body; I shall from this Scripture evince the Immortality of the Soul, which is a chief part of its Excellency and Glory; and in this Scripture it hath a firm foundation.

This Book of the Revelation completes and seals up the whole Sacred Canon, Rev. 22. 18. It also comprehends all the great and signal events of Providence, relating either to the Christian Church, or to its Antichristian Enemies, in the several Periods of Time, to the end of the World, Chap. 1. 19. All which the Spirit of God discovers to us in the opening of the seven Seals, the founding of the seven Trumpets, and the pouring out of the seven Vials.

The first five Seals express the State of the Church under the bloody, persecuting Heathen Emperours.

Seal 1. The first Seal opened, ver. 2. gives the Church a very encouraging and comfortable prospect of the *Victories, Successes, and Triumphs* of Christ, notwithstanding the Rage, Subtlety, and Power of all its Enemies. He shall ride on conquering, and to conquer, and his Arrows shall be sharp in the hearts of his Enemies, whereby the People shall fall under him: And this cheering Prospect was no more than was needful. For,

Seal 2. The second Seal opened, v. 3, 4. represents the first bloody Persecution of the Church under Nero, whom Tertullian calls *Dedicator damnationis nostræ*: He that first condemned Christians to the Slaughter. And the Persecution under him is set forth by the Type of a red Horse, and a great Sword in the hand of him that rode thereon. His cruelty is by Paul compared to the mouth of a Lion, 2 Tim. 4. 17. Paul, Peter, Bartholomew, Barnabas, Mark, are all said to die by his cruel hand; and so fierce was his rage

* Adeo ut videret repletas humanis corporibus civitates, jacentes mortuos, simul cum parvulis senes, feminarumque, absque ulla fœdæ reverentia, in publico reperta Cadavera. *Tacit. l. 15. Annal.*

against the Christians, that at that time, as Eusebius * saith, a Man might see Cities lie full of dead Bodies, the old and young, Men and Women, cast out naked, without any reverence of Persons or Sex, in the open street.

And when the day failed, Christians (saith Tacitus) were burnt in the Night instead of Torches, to give them Light in the streets.

The third Seal opened, ver. 5. 6. sets forth Seal 3. the Calamities which should befall the Church by Famine; yet not so much a literal, as a figurative Famine, as a grave and learned Commentator * expounds it, like that mentioned * *Durham* Anos 8. 11, 12. which fell out under Maximian in 100. and Trajan; the former directing the Persecution, especially against Ministers, in which many bright Lamps were extinguished; the latter expressly condemned all Christian Meetings and Assemblies by a Law. The Type by which this Persecution was set forth, is a black Horse. A gloomy and dismal day it was indeed to the poor Saints, when they ate the Bread of their Souls as it were by weight; for he that sat on him had a pair of Ballances in his hand. Then did John hear this sad Voice, *A measure of Wheat for a penny, and three measures of Barley for a penny.* That quantity was but the ordinary Allowance to keep a Man alive for a day; and a Roman Penny was the ordinary Wages given for a day's Work to a Labourer. The meaning is, that in those days all the spiritual food men should get to keep their Souls alive from day to day, with all their Travel and Labour, should be but sufficient for that end.

The fourth Seal opened, ver. 7, 8. represents Seal 4. a much more sad and doleful State of the Church; for under it are found all the former Sufferings, with some new kinds of trouble superadded. Under this Seal Death rides upon the pale Horse, and Hell, or the Grave, follows him. 'Tis conceived to point at the Persecution under Dioclesian, when the Church was mowed down as a Meadow.

The fifth Seal is opened in my Text, under Seal 5. which the Lord Jesus represents to his Servant John, the State and condition of those precious Souls which had been torn and separated from their Bodies by the bloody hands of Tyrants, for his Names sake, under all the former Persecutions. The design whereof is, to support and encourage all that were to come after in the same bloody path. *I saw under the Altar, &c.* In which we have an account,

1. Of what John saw.
2. Of what he heard.

1. We have an account of what he saw: *I saw the Souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held.*

Souls in this place are not put for the Blood, or the dead Carcasses of the Saints who were slain, as some have groundlessly imagined; but are to be understood properly and strictly for those spiritual and immortal Substances which once had a vital Union with their Bodies but were now separated from them by a violent Death; yet still retained a love and inclination to them, even in the State of separation; and are therefore here brought in complaining of the shedding of their Blood, and destruction of their Bodies.

These Souls (even of all that died for Christ, from

John 14. 19. Animæ pro immortalis Spiritu humanis capitur, sicuti Mat. 10. 28. hoc sensu dixit hic Johannes se vidisse animas, &c. Marlorat. in loc.

Animæ
corporibus
excarvatis
invisibilibus
oculis
corporeis;
videtur
ergo
Johannem
Spiritus
Param in
loc.

from *Abel* to that time) *John* saw, that is, in *Spirit*; for these immaterial Substances are not perceptible by the gross external senses. He had the privilege and favour of a spiritual representation of them, being therein extraordinarily assisted, as *Paul* was when his Soul was rapt into the third Heaven, and heard things unutterable, 2 *Cor.* 12. 2. God gave him a transient visible representation of those holy Souls, and that under the *Altar*; he means not any material *Altar*, as that at *Jerusalem* was; but as the holy place figured Heaven, so the *Altar* figured *Jesus Christ*, *Heb.* 13. 10. And most aptly *Christ* is represented to *John* in this figure, and Souls of the Martyrs at the foot or basis of this *Altar*; thereby to inform us (1.) That however Men look upon the Death of those persons, and tho' they kill their Names by Slanders, as well as their persons by the Sword; yet in God's account they die as Sacrifices, and their Blood is no other than a Drink-offering poured out to God, which he highly prizeth, and graciously accepteth. Sutable whereunto *Paul's* expression is, *Philip.* 2. 17. (2.) That the value and acceptance their Death and Blood-shed hath with God, is through *Christ*, and upon his account; for it is the *Altar* which sanctifieth the Gift, *Mat.* 23. 19. And (3.) it informs us that these holy Souls, now in a state of separation from their Bodies, were very near to *Jesus Christ* in Heaven. They lay as it were at his foot.

Once more, they are here described to us by the cause of their Sufferings and Death in this World, and that was, for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held; (i. e.) They died in defence of the Truths, or Will of God revealed in his Word, against the Corruptions, Oppositions, and Innovations of Men. As one of the Martyrs that held up the Bible at the Stake, saying, This is it that hath brought me hither. They died not as Malefactors, but as Witnesses: they gave a threefold Testimony to the Truth, a Lip-testimony, a Life-testimony, and a Blood-testimony; whilst the Hypocrite gives but one, and many Christians but two. Thus we have an account of what *John* saw.

2. Next he tells us what he heard; and that was,

- (1.) A vehement Cry from those Souls to God.
- (2.) A gracious Answer from God to them.

(1.) The Cry which they uttered with a loud voice was this, *How long, O Lord, Holy and True, dost thou not avenge our Blood on them that dwell on the Earth?* A cry like that from the Blood of *Abel*. Yet let it be remembered,

(1.) This Cry doth not imply these holy Souls to be in a restless State, or to want true satisfaction and repose out of the Body; nor yet, (2.) That they carried with them to Heaven any malevolent or revengeful disposition: but that which is principally signified by this Cry, is their vehement desire after the abolition of the Kingdom of Satan, and the completion and consummation of *Christ's* Kingdom in this World: That those his Enemies, which oppose his Kingdom, by slaying his Saints, may be made his footstool; which is the same thing *Christ* waits for in Glory, *Heb.* 10. 13.

(2.) Here we find God's gracious Answer to the cry of these Souls, in which he speaks satisfaction to them two ways:

1. By somewhat given them for present.
2. By somewhat promised them hereafter.

1. That which he gives them in hand; *White Robes were given to every one of them.* It is generally agreed, that these white Robes given them denote heavenly Glory, the same which is promised to all sincere and faithful ones, who preserve themselves pure from the corruptions and defilements of the World, *Rev.* 3. 4. And it is as much as if God should have said to them, *Altho' the time be not come to satisfy your desires in the final ruine and overthrow of Satan's tyrannical Kingdom in the World, and *Christ's* consummate Conquest of all his Enemies, yet it shall be well with you in the mean time; you shall walk with me in white, and enjoy your Glory in Heaven.*

2. And this is not all; but the very things they cry for shall be given them also after a little season; *q. d.* wait but a little while, till the rest that are to follow in the same suffering path be got through the Red Sea of *Martyrdom*, as you are, and then you shall see the foot of *Christ* upon the Necks of all his Enemies, and Justice shall fully avenge the precious innocent Blood of all the Saints, which in all Ages hath been shed for my sake; from the Blood of *Abel* to the last that shall ever suffer for righteousness sake in the World. From all which, this Conclusion is most fair and obvious:

That the Souls of Men perish not with their Bodies, but do certainly over-live them, and subsist in a state of separation from them.
Mat. 10. 28. *Fear not them that kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul.*

The Bodies of these Martyrs of *Jesus* were destroyed by divers sorts of Torments, but their Souls were out of the reach of all those cruel Engines: they were in safety under the *Altar*, and in Glory, clothed with their white Robes, when the Bodies they lately inhabited on Earth were turned to Ashes, and torn to pieces by wild Beasts.

The Point I am to discourse from this Scripture, is the Immortality of the Soul. For the better understanding whereof, let it be noted that there is a twofold Immortality.

- I. Simple, and absolute in its own Nature.
- II. Derived, dependent, and from the pleasure of God.

In the former sense, God only hath Immortality, as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. Our Souls have it as a Gift from him. He that created our Souls out of nothing, can, if he please, reduce them to nothing again; but he hath bestowed Immortality upon them, and produced them in a Nature futable to that his appointment, fitted for an everlasting Life. So that tho' God by his absolute Power can, yet he never will annihilate them, but they shall and must live for ever in endless Blessedness or Misery; Death must destroy these mortal Bodies, but it cannot destroy our Souls. And the certainty of this Assertion is grounded upon these Reasons, and will be cleared by these following Arguments.

Argument

Argument I.

THE first Argument for proof of the Soul's Immortality, may be taken from the Simplicity, Spirituality, and Uncompoundedness of its Nature: It is a pure, simple, unmixed Being. * Death is the dissolution of things compounded; where therefore no composition or mixture is found, no Death or Dissolution can follow.

* Interitus est dissolutio, secretio, & direptus earum partium quæ conjunctæ aliquæ tenebantur. Tull.

Death is the great Divider, but it is of things that are divisible. The more simple, pure, and refined any material thing is, by so much the more permanent and durable it is found to be. The nearer it approacheth to the Nature of Spirits, the farther it is remov'd from the power of Death: but that which is not material, or mixed at all, is wholly exempt from the stroke and power of Death. It is from the contrariant qualities and jarring humours in mixed Bodies, that they come under the Law and Power of Dissolution. Matter and Mixture are the floors at which Death enters naturally upon the Creatures.

But the Soul of Man is a simple, spiritual, immaterial, and unmixed Being, not compounded of Matter and Form, as other Creatures are, but void of Matter, and altogether spiritual; as may appear in the vast capacity of its Understanding Faculty, which cannot be strained by receiving multitudes of Truths into it. It need not empty it self of what it had received before, to make way for more Truth; nor doth it find it self clogg'd or burdened by the greatest multitudes or varieties of Truths; but the more it knows, the more it still desires to know. Its Capacity and Appetite are found to enlarge themselves according to the increase of Knowledge. So that, to speak as the matter is, If the knowledge of all Arts, Sciences, and Mysteries of Nature could be gathered into the Mind of one Man, yet that Mind would thirst, and even burn with desire after more Knowledge, and find more room for it than it did when it first sipp'd and relish'd the sweetness of Truth. Knowledge, as Knowledge, never burdens or cloyes the Mind; but like fire increases and enlarges, as it finds more Matter to work upon. Now this could never be, if the Soul were a material Being. Take the largest Vessel, and you shall find that the more you pour into it, the less room is still left for more; and when it is full, you cannot pour in one drop more, except you let out what was in it before. But the Soul is no such Vessel, it can retain all it had, and be still receptive of more; so that nothing can fill it and satisfy it, but that which is infinite and perfect.

The natural appetite after food is sometimes sharp and eager, but then there is a flat and measure, beyond which it craves not; but the appetite of the Mind is more eager and unlimited; it never saith, till it come to rest in God; it is enough, because the faculty which produceth it, is more active, spiritual, and immaterial. All Matter hath its limits, bounds, and just measures, beyond which it cannot be extended. But the Soul is boundless, and its appetitions infinite; it rests not, but in the spiritual and infinite Being, God alone being its adequate Object, and able to satisfy its desires: which plainly proves it to be a spiritual, immaterial,

Totus exitus prohibet alium.

Appetitus finis est infinitus. There is no end of desiring, till we attain the desired End, which is God.

and simple Being. And being so, two things necessarily follow therefrom.

1. That it is void of any Principle of Corruption in it self.
2. That it is not liable to any stroke of Death, by any adverse power without it self.

1. It cannot be liable to Death from any Seeds or Principles of Corruption within it self; for where there is no Composition, there is no Dissolution: the spirituality and simplicity of the Soul admits of no Corruption.

2. Nor is it liable to Death, by any adverse power without it self; no Sword can touch it, no Instrument of Death can reach it: 'tis above the reach of all Adversaries, *Mat. 10. 28. Fear not them that kill the Body, but cannot kill the Soul.* The bounds and limits of Creature-power are here fixed by Jesus Christ, beyond which they cannot go. They can wound, torment, and destroy the Body, when God permits them: but the Soul is out of their reach; a Sword can no more hurt or wound it, than it can wound or hurt the Light; and consequently it is, and must needs be of an immortal Nature.

But there seems to be a decay upon our Souls *Objct.* in our old Age, and Decays argue and imply Corruption, and are so many steps and tendencies towards the Death and Dissolution thereof. The experience of the whole World shews us how the Apprehensions, Judgments, Wit and Memory of old Men fail, even to that degree, that they become Children again, in respect of the abilities of their Minds: their Souls only serving as it were to salt their Bodies, and keep them from putrefaction for a few days longer.

'Tis a great mistake, there is not the least Sol. decay upon the Soul, no time makes any change upon the Essence of the Soul: all the alteration that is made is upon the Organs and Instruments of the Body, which decay in time, and become inept and unserviceable to the Soul.

The Soul, like an expert and skillful Musician, is as able as ever it was, but the Body, its Instrument, is out of Tune: and the ablest Artist can make no pleasing Melody upon an Instrument whose strings are broken, or so relaxed that they cannot be serv'd up to their due height.

Let Hippocrates the Prince of Physicians decide this matter for us. * The Soul (saith he) cannot be changed or altered as to its essence by the access of Meat or Drink, or any other thing whatsoever; but all the alterations that are made, must be referred either to the Spirits with which it mixeth it self, or to the Vessels and Organs through which it streameth. So that this proves not its corruptibility: and being neither corruptible in it self, nor vulnerable by any Creature without it self; seeing Man cannot, and God will not destroy it, the conclusion is strongly infer'd, that therefore it is immortal.

* Argument II.

THE Immortality of the Souls of Men may be concluded from the promises of everlasting Blessedness, and the threatnings of everlasting

* Anima nostra quoad essentiam mutari non potest, aut alterari, sive cibi, sive potus, sive cuicunque alterius accessu: reiecta est enim omnium alterationum causa, aut ad spiritus, quibus se immiscet, aut ad vasa, sive organa quæ pertinent. *Hip. lib. 1. de diac.*

lasting Miseries, respectively made in the Scriptures of Truth, to the godly and ungodly, after this life, which Promises and Threatnings had been altogether vain and delusory, if our Souls perish without Bodies.

1. God has made many everlasting Promises of Blessedness, yea he hath established an everlasting Covenant betwixt himself and the Souls of the Righteous, promising to be their God for ever, and to bestow endless Blessedness upon them in the World to come. Such a Promise is that, *John 8. 28. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.* And *Joh 4. 14. Whosoever drinketh of the Water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the Water that I shall give him, shall be in him a Well of Water, springing up into everlasting life.* And again *John 11. 26. Whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.* And once more *Rom. 2. 7. To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for Glory and Honour, and Immortality, eternal Life;* with multitudes more of like nature.

Now if these be no vain and delusory Promises, (as to be sure they are not, being the Words of the true and faithful God) then those Souls to whom they are made, must live for ever: for if the Subject of the Promises fail, consequently the performance of the Promises must fail too. For how shall they be made good, when those to whom they are made, are perished?

Let it not be objected here, That the Bodies of Believers are concerned in the Promises, as well as their Souls, and yet their Bodies perish notwithstanding.

For we say, tho their Bodies die, yet they shall live again, and enjoy the fruit of the Promises in eternal Glory: And whilst their Bodies lie in the grave, their Souls are with God, enjoying the covenanted Blessedness in Heaven, *Rom. 8. 10, 11,* and for the Covenant-bond is not loosed betwixt them and God, by Death, which it must needs be, in case the Soul perished when the Body doth. And upon this Hypothesis that Argument of Christ is built, *Mat. 22. 32. proving the Resurrection from the Covenant God made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living.* q. d. If *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, be perished in Soul as well as in Body, how then is God their God; what is become of the Promise and Covenant-relation? for if one Correlate fail, the Relation necessary fails with it. If God be their God, then certainly they are in being; for God is not the God of the Dead, i. e. of those that are utterly perished. Therefore it must needs be, that tho their Bodies be naturally dead, yet their Souls still live; and their Bodies must live again at the Resurrection by virtue of the same Promise.

On the contrary, many threatnings of eternal Misery after this life are found in the Scriptures of Truth against ungodly and wicked Persons. Such is that in *2 Thes. 1. 7, 8, 9. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven in flaming Fire, to render Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and the Glory of his Power.* And speaking of the Torments of the Damned, Christ thus ex-

presseth the misery of such wretched Souls in Hell, *Mark 9. 44. Where their Worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.* But how shall the Wicked be punished with everlasting Destruction, if their Souls have not an everlasting Duration? Or how can it be said, *That their Worm* (viz the remorse and anguish of their Consciences) *dieth not*, if their Souls die? Punishment can endure no longer than its Subject endureth. If the being of the Soul cease, its pains and punishments must have an end.

You see then, there are everlasting Promises and Threatnings to be fulfilled, both upon the Godly and Ungodly, *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life, but the wrath of God abideth on him,* *John 3. 36.* The Believer shall never see Spiritual Death, viz. the separation of his Soul from God; and the Unbeliever shall never see Life, viz. the blessed fruition of God; but the Wrath of God shall abide on him. If Wrath must abide on him, he must abide also as the wretched Subject thereof, which is another Argument of the Immortality of Souls.

Argument III.

THE Immortality of the Soul is a Truth asserted and attested by the universal consent of all Nations and Ages of the World.

We give much (saith Seneca) to the Presumption of all men, and that justly; for it would be hard to think that an Error should obtain the general consent of Mankind, or that God would suffer for all the World, in all Ages of it, to bow down under an universal Deception.

This Doctrine sticks close to the nature of Man; it springs up easily, and without force from his Conscience. It hath been allowed as an unquestionable thing, not only among Christians, who have the Oracles of God to teach and confirm this Doctrine, but among Heathens also, who had no other Light but that of Nature, to guide them into the knowledge and belief of it. Learned Zanchius cites out of Cicero an excellent passage to this purpose:

† In every thing (saith he) the consent of all Nations is to be accounted the Law of Nature; and therefore with all good Men it should be instead of a thousand Demonstrations: and to resist it, (as he there adds) what is it, but to resist the voice of God?

And how much more, when with this consent the Word of God doth also consent? As for the consent of Nations in this point, the learned Author last mentioned hath industriously gathered many great and famous Testimonies from the ancient Chaldeans, Grecians, Pythagoreans, Stoicks, Platonists, &c. which evidently shew they made no doubt of the Immortality of their Souls. How plain is that of *Phocylides*? *Σὺ δὲ 3 ἀθάνατος, ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐν δὲ μὴ σφ* Speaking of the Soul, in opposition to the Body, which must be resolved into dust, he saith, *But for the Soul, that is immortal, and never grows old, but lives for ever.* And *Trismegistus*, the famous and celebrated Philosopher, gives this account

• Multum dare solemus presumptioni omnium hominum; cum de Animæ Aternitate differimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum aut timendum inferos, aut contentum. Seneca Ep. 17.

† In omni re consensus omnium gentium Lex Naturæ putanda est; eoque instar mille demonstrationum talis consensus apud bonos esse debet. Zanch. de Immort. de marum, p. 644.

* *Ανθρώπου ψυχῆς, διὰ τὴν αὐτὴν φύσιν, ἀθάνατος ὡς διὰ τὴν φύσιν, ἢ ἀθάνατος ὡς ἕκαστος*

† *in Job 33, &c. Si enim mors dissolutio esset utriusque (corporis &c. & animæ) lacrum foret malis cum moriantur. Plat. in Ep. ¶ Quid de Turcis, Tartaris, Moschis, Indis, Persis, aliisque omnibus nunc temporis barbaris nationibus dicam? Nemo tam barbarus aut impius est quin sentiat post mortem superesse loca in quibus animæ aut pro malefactis puniantur, aut correntur, delictisq; persequantur pro beneficiis. Zanch. ubi supra.*

of Man * That he consists of two parts, being mortal in respect of his Body, but immortal in respect of his Soul, which is his best and principal part, Plato not only asserts the Immortality of the Souls of Men, but disputes for it, and among other Arguments urges this † *That if it were not so, wicked Men would certainly have the advantage of righteous and good Men, who after they have committed all manner of evils, should suffer none.* But what speak I of Philosophers the most barbarous Nations in the World constantly believe it ‖. The Turks acknowledge it in their *Alchoran*; and tho' they grossly

mistake the nature of Heaven, in fancying it to be a Paradise of sensual Pleasures, as well as the way thither, by their Impostor *Mahomet*; yet 'tis plain they believe the Soul's Immortality, and that it lives in pain or pleasure after this life.

The very salvage and *illiterate Indians* are so fully persuaded of the Soul's Immortality that Wives cast themselves cheerfully into the Flames to attend the Souls of their Husbands; and Subjects, to attend the Souls of their Kings into the other World.

Two things are objected against this Argument.

Obj. 1. 1. That some particular persons have denied this Doctrine, as *Epicurus*, &c. and by Argument maintained the contrary.

Sol. To which I answer, That tho' they have done so, yet (1.) This no way shakes the Argument from the consent of Nations, because some few persons have denied it: we truly say the Earth is Spherical, tho' there be many Hills and Rivings in it. If *Democritus* put out his own eyes, must we therefore say all the World is blind?

(2.) It is worth thinking on, whether they that have questioned the Immortality of the Soul, have not rather made it the matter of their option and desire, than of their Faith and persuasion. We distinguish *Atheists* into three Classes, such as are so in *Pratice*, in *Desire*, or in *Judgment*; but of the former sorts there may be found multitudes, to one that is so in his settled judgment. If you think it strange that any Man should wish his Soul to be mortal, *Hierocles* gives us the true reason of it * *A wicked Man (saith he) is afraid of his Judge, and therefore wishes his Soul and Body may perish together by Death, rather than it should come to God's Tribunal.*

Obj. 2. 2. Nor can the strength of the Argument be eluded by saying, *all this may be but an universal Tradition, one Nation receiving it from another.*

Sol. For as this is neither true in it self, nor possible to be made good, so if it were, it would not invalidate the Argument: for if it were not a Truth agreeable to the light of Nature, and so easily received by all Men upon the proposal of it, it were impossible that all Nations in the World should embrace it so readily, and hold it so tenaciously as they do.

Argument IV.

THE Immortality of the Soul may be evinced from the everlasting Habits which are subjected and inherent in it. If these Habits abide for ever, certainly to must the Souls in which they are planted.

The Souls of good Men are the good Ground, in which the Seed of Grace is sown by the Spirit, *Matth. 13. 23. (i. e.)* the Subjects in which gracious properties and affections do inhere and dwell, (which is the formal notion of a Substance) and these implanted Graces are everlasting things. So, *John 4. 14. It shall be in him a Well of Water, springing up into everlasting Life, (i. e.)* the Graces of the Spirit shall be in Believers permanent Habits, fixed Principles, which shall never decay. And therefore that Seed of Grace which is cast into their Souls at their Regeneration, is in 1 *Per. 1. 23. called incorruptible Seed, which liveth and abideth for ever:* and it is incorruptible, not only considered abstractly, in its own simple nature, but concretely, as it is in the sanctified Soul, its subject: for it is said, 1 *John 3. 9. The Seed of God remaineth in him. It abideth for ever in the Soul.* If then these two things be clear to us, viz.

1. That the Habits of Grace be everlasting;
2. That they are inseparable from sanctified Souls;

It must needs follow that the Soul, their Subject, an everlasting and immortal Soul. And how plainly do both these Propositions lie before us in the Scriptures? As for the immortal and interminable nature of saving Grace, it is plain to him that considers, not only the fore-cited Scriptures speak about it, calling it *incorruptible Seed, a Well of Water springing up into everlasting life*; but add to these what is said of these divine Qualities, in 2 *Per. 1. 4. where they are called the Divine nature*; and *Ephes. 4. 18. The Life of God*, noting the perpetuity of these Principles in Believers, as well as their resemblance of God in Holiness, who are endowed with them.

I know it is a great question among Divines, *An gratia in renat is sit natura & essentia sua interminabilis?* Whether these Principles of Grace in the Regenerate be everlasting and interminable in their own nature and essence? For my own part, I think that God only is naturally, essentially, and absolutely interminable and immortal. But these gracious Habits, planted by him in the Soul, are so by virtue of God's Appointment, Promise and Covenant. And sure it is that by reason hereof they are interminate, which is enough for my purpose if they be not essentially interminable, Tho' Grace be but a Creature, and therefore hath a *posse mori*, yet it is a Creature begotten by the Word and Spirit of God, which live and abide for ever, and a Creature within the Promise and Covenant of God by reason whereof it can never actually die.

And then as for the inseparableness of these Graces from the Souls in whom they are planted, how clear is this from 1 *John 2. 27. where sanctifying Grace is compared to an Unction and this Unction is said to abide in them?*

them? And 1 *John* 3. 9. 'tis called the Seed of God, which remaineth in the Soul. All our natural and moral Excellencies and Endowments go away when we die; *Job* 4. 21. *Doth not their Excellency that is in them go away?* Men may outlive their acquired Gifts, but not their supernatural Graces. These stick by the Soul, as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, and where it goes they go too: so that when the Soul is dislodged by Death, all its graces ascend up with it into Glory; it carries away all its Faith, Love, Delight in God, all its comfortable experiences, and fruits of Communion with God, along with it to Heaven. For Death is so far from divesting the Soul of its Graces, that it perfects in a moment all that was defective in them; 1 *Cor.* 13. 10. *When that which is perfect shall come, then that which is in part shall be done away*, as the Twilight is done away when the Sun is up, and at its Zenith. So then, Grace never dieth, and this never-dying Grace is inseparable from its Subject; by which it is plain to him that considers, that as graces, so Souls abide for ever.

Object.

But this only proves the Immortality of regenerate Souls.

Sol.

It doth so. But then consider, as there be gracious habits in the Regenerate that never die, so there are vicious habits in the Unregenerate, that can never be separated from them in the World to come. Hence *John* 8. 21. *they are said to die in their sins*; and *Job* 20. 11. *Their iniquities lie down with them in the dust*; and *Ezek.* 24. 13. *They shall never be purged*. Remarkable is that place, *Rev.* 22. 11. *Let him that is filthy, be filthy still*. And if guilt sticks so fast, and sin be so deeply engraven in impenitent Souls, they also must remain for ever, to bear the punishment of them.

Argument V.

THE Immortality of the Soul of Man may be evinced from the Dignity of Man above all other Creatures, (Angels only excepted) and his Dominion over them all.

In this the Scriptures are clear, that Man is the Master-piece of all God's other Works; *Psal.* 8. 5, 6. *For thou hast made him a little lower than the Angels, and hast crowned him with Glory and Honour. Thou hast made him to have Dominion over the Works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet*. Other Creatures were made for his service, and he is crowned King over them all. One Man is of more worth than all the inferior Creatures.

But wherein is his Dignity and Excellency above all other Creatures, if not in respect of the Capacity and Immortality of his Soul? Sure it can be found no where else; for as to the Body, many of the Creatures excel Man in the perfections of Sense, greatness of Strength, agility of Members, &c. *Nos aper auditu precellit, aranea tactu, vultus odoratu, linx visu, simia gustu*: And for Beauty, *Solomon* in all his Glory was not arrayed like one of the *Lilies of the field*. The Beasts and Fowls enjoy more pleasure, and live divested of those cares and cumbers which perplex and wear out the Lives of Men. It cannot be in respect of bodily Perfections or Pleasures that Man excels other Creatures.

If you say, He excels them all in respect of that noble Endowment of Reason, which is

Vol. I.

peculiar to Man, and his singular Excellency above them all:

'Tis true, this is his glory: But if you deprive the reasonable Soul of Immortality, you despoil it of all, both of its glory and comfort, and put the reasonable into a worse condition than the unreasonable and brutish Creatures. For if the Soul may die with the Body, and Man perish as the Beast, happier is the life of the Beast, which is perplexed with no cares nor fears about futurities; our Reason serves to little other purpose but to be an Engine of Torture, a meer Rack to our Souls.

Certainly the Privilege of Man doth not consist in that, as abstracted from Immortality. But in this it properly consists, that he enjoys not only a reasonable, but also rejoiceth in an immortal Soul, which shall overlive the World, and subsist separate from the Body, and abide for ever, when all other Souls being but material Forms, perish with that Matter on which they depend. This is the proper Dignity of Man above the Beast that perisheth; and to deprive him of Immortality, and leave him his Reason, is but to leave him a more miserable and wretched Creature than any that God hath put under his feet. For Man is a prospecting Creature, and raiseth up to himself vast hopes and fears from the World to come: by these he is restrained from the sensual Pleasures which other Creatures freely enjoy, and exercised with ten thousand Cares which they are unacquainted with; and to fail at last of all his hopes and expectations of Happiness in the World to come, is to fall many degrees lower than the lowest Creature shall fall; even so much lower as his expectations and hopes had lifted him higher.

Argument VI.

THE Souls of Men must be immortal, or else the desires of Immortality are planted in their Souls in vain.

That there are desires of Immortality found in the Hearts of all Men, is a Truth too evident to be denied or doubted. Man cannot bound

and terminate his desires within the narrow limits of this World, and the time that measures it. Nothing that can be measured by time is commensurate to the desires of Man's Soul. No *Motto* better suits it than this, *Non est mortale quod opto*; I seek for that which will not die, *Rom.* 2. v. 7. And his great relief against Death lies in this, *Non omnis moriar*; That he shall not totally perish. Yea, we find in all Men, even in those that seem to be most drowned and lost in the loves and delights of this present World, a natural desire to continue their Names and Memories to Posterity after Death. Hence it is said, *Psal.* 49. 11. *Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names*.

And hence is the desire of Children, which is, as one saith, *nodosa Aeternitas*, a knotty Eternity; when our thread is spun out and cut

X x x 2

I beseech Men for God's sake, that if as any time there arise in them a desire, or a wish that others should speak well of them rather than evil after their death, then at that time they would seriously consider whether those motions are not from some Spirit, to continue as Spirit after it leaves its earthly Habitation, rather than from an earthly Spirit, a Vapour, which cannot act, or imagine, or desire, or fear things beyond its continuance, Hale de Anim. p. 73.

off, their Thread is knit to it; and so we dream of a continued succession in our Name and Family.

Abraham had no Children to continue his memory; to supply which defect, he reared up a Pillar, 2 *Sam.* 18. 18. Now it cannot be imagined that God should plant the desire of Immortality in those Souls that are incapable of it; nor yet can we give a rational account how these apprehensions of Immortality should come into the Souls of Men, except they themselves be of an Immortal Nature. For, either these Notions and Apprehensions of Immortality are impressed upon our Souls by God, or do naturally spring out of the Souls of Men: If God impress them, those impressions are made in vain, if there be no such thing as Immortality to be enjoyed; and if they spring and rise naturally out of our Souls, that is a sufficient

It forms conceptions of things spiritual and abstract from matter, and discerns Objects which have no dimensions, figure, colour, or affection of matter. Si conceptus de immortalitate solum sit ipsamet anima, est ipsa immortalis; quoniam quod momentaneum est, ideam naturæ perennis fabricare non potest, quemadmodum anima rationis experta, conceptum rationalitatis formare nequit. Suerne de morte, p. 193.

evidence of their Immortality: For we can no more conceive and form to our selves Ideas and Notions of Immortality, if our Souls be mortal, than the Brutes, which are void of Reason, can form to themselves Notions and Conceptions of Rationality. So then the very Apprehensions and Desires that are found in Mens Hearts of Immortality, do plainly speak them to be of an Immortal Nature.

Argument VII.

Moreover, the account given us in Scripture of the return of several Souls into their own Bodies again, after death, and real separation from them, shews us that the Soul subsists and lives in a separate state after death, and perisheth not by the stroke of death: for if it were annihilated or destroyed by death, the same Soul could never be restored again to the same Body. A dead Body may indeed be acted by an assisting Form, which may move and carry it from place to place: So the Devil hath acted the dead Bodies of many; but they cannot be said to live again by their own Souls, after a real separation by death, unless those Souls overlived the Bodies they forsook at death, and had their abode in another place and state. You have divers unquestionable Examples of the Soul's return into the Body recorded in Scripture. As that of the *Shunamite's* Son, 2 *King.* 4. 18, 19, 20, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37. That of the Ruler's Daughter, *Mat.* 9. 18, 23, 24, 25. That of the Widow's Son, *Luke* 7. 12, 13, 14, 15. And that of *Lazarus*, *John* 11. 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45. These were no other

* Non aliam, sed ipsam priorem animam corpori mortuo resuscitantem esse, contra eos qui putaverunt & hodie putant animam post mortem corporis nihil esse.

but the very same Souls, their own Souls, which returned into them again; which, as *Chrysostom* well observes, is a great proof of their Immortality, against them that think the Soul is annihilated after the death of the Body.

'Tis true, the Scripture gives us no account of any sense or apprehension they retained after their re-union, of the place or state they were in during their separation. There seem-

ed to be a perfect *amnesia*, forgetfulness of all that they saw or felt in the state of separation. And indeed it was necessary it should be so, that our Faith might be built rather upon the sure Promises of God, than such Reports and Narratives of them that came to us from the dead, *Luke* 16. 31. And if we believe not the Word, neither would we believe if one came from the dead.

Argument VIII.

Moreover, eighthly, The supposition of the Soul's perishing with the Body, is subversive of the Christian Religion in the principal Doctrines and Duties thereof: Take away the Immortality of the Soul, and all Religion falls to the ground. I will instance in,

1. The Doctrines of Religion.
2. The Duties of Religion.

First, It overthrowes the main Principles and Doctrines of Christian Religion, upon which both our Faith and Comfort is founded; and consequently, it undoes and ruins us, as to all solid hope and true joy. The Doctrines or Principles it overthrowes, are, among many others such as follow.

1. It nullifies and makes void the great design and end of God's eternal Election. The Scriptures tell us, That from all Eternity God hath chosen a certain number in Christ Jesus, to Eternal Life, and to the means by which they shall attain it, out of his meer good Pleasure, and for the Praise of his Grace. This was (1.) an eternal Act of God, *Ephes.* 1. 4. long before we had our Being, *Rom.* 9. 11. (2.) This choice of God, or his purpose to save some, is immutable, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *Jam.* 1. 17. (3.) This choice he made in Christ, *Eph.* 1. 4. Not that Christ is the cause of God's choosing us: for we were not elected because we were, but that we might be in Christ. Christ was ordained to be the Medium of the execution of this Decree: And all the Mercies which were purposed and ordained for us, were to be purchased by the Blood of Christ. He was not the Cause of the Decree, but the Purchaser of the Mercies decreed for us. (4.) This choice was of a certain number of Persons, who are all known to God, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. and all given to Christ in the Covenant of Redemption, *John* 17. 2, 6. So that no Elect person can be a Reprobate, no Reprobate an Elect person. (5.) This number was chosen to Salvation, 1 *Thess.* 5. 9. No less did God design for them than glory and happiness, and that for ever. (6.) The same persons that are appointed to Salvation as the End, are also appointed to Sanctification as the Way and Means by which they shall attain that End, 1 *Pa.* 1. 1, 2. 2 *Thess.* 2. 13, 14. (7.) The impulsive cause of this choice was the meer good pleasure of his Will, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Rom.* 9. 15, 16. *Ephes.* 1. 9. (8.) The end of all this is, the praise of his glorious Grace, *Eph.* 1. 5, 6. to make a glorious Manifestation of the Riches of his Grace for ever. This is the account the Scripture gives us of God's eternal Choice.

But if our Souls be mortal, and perish with our Bodies, all this is a mistake, and we are imposed upon, and our Understandings abused by this Doctrine: For to what purpose are all these Decrees and Contrivances of God from

from everlasting, if our Souls perish with our Bodies? Certainly, if it be so, he loses all the Thoughts and Counsels of his Heart about us; and that Counsel of his Will, which is so much celebrated in the Scriptures, and admired by his People, comes to nought. For this is evident to every Man's consideration, That if the Soul (which is the Object about which all those Counsels and Thoughts of God were employed and laid out) fail in its being, all those Thoughts and Counsels that have been employed about it, and spent on it, must necessarily fail, and come to nothing with it. The Thoughts of his Heart cannot stand fast, as it is said *Psal. 33. 11.* if the Soul slide, about which they are conversant. In that day the elect Soul perisheth, the eternal Consultations and Purposes of God's heart perish with it. *Keckerman* tells us, that

* *Albertus Magnus* statum hominis confitoxit, quæ cum libramenis quibusdam, rotis, atq; alius machinis intra latentibus peritissimè compositis, linguam quadam ratione & disciplina moventibus, articulata verba pronunciarat.

* *Albertus Magnus*, with abundance of Art, and the study of thirty years, made a vocal Statue in the Form of a Man. It was a rare contrivance, and much admired; the cunning Artist had so fram'd it, that by Wheels and other *Machines* plac'd within it, it could pronounce words

articulately. *Aquinas* being surprized to hear the Statue speak, was affrighted at it, and brake it all to pieces; upon which *Albertus* told him he had at one blow destroy'd the work of thirty years. Such a blow would the death of the Soul give to the Counsels and Thoughts, not of Man, but of God, not of thirty years, but from everlasting.

If the Souls of Men perish at death, either God never did appoint any Souls to Salvation, as the Scriptures testify he did, *1 Thess. 5. 9.* or else the foundation of God stands not sure, as his Word tells as it doth, *2 Tim. 2. 19.* So then this supposition overturns the eternal Decrees and Counsels of God, which is the first thing.

2. It overthrows the Covenant of Redemption betwixt the Father and the Son, before this World was made. There was a federal Transaction betwixt the Father and Son from eternity about our Salvation, *2 Tim. 1. 9. Zech. 6. 13.* In that Covenant Christ engaged to redeem the Elect by his Blood; and the Father promised him a reward of those his sufferings, *Isa. 53. 12.* Accordingly he hath poured out his Soul to death for them, finished the work, *Joh. 17. 4.* and is now in Heaven, expecting the full reward and fruits of his sufferings, which consist not in his own personal Glory, which he there enjoys, but in the completeness and fullness of his Mystical Body, *Joh. 17. 24.*

But certainly, if our Souls perish with our Bodies, Christ hath a very bad bargain of it: nor can that promise be ever made good to him; *Isa. 53. 12. He shall see of the travail of his Soul, and be satisfied.* He hath done his Work, but where is his Reward? See how this supposition strikes at the Justice of God, and wounds his faithfulness in his Covenant with his Son. He hath as much Comfort and Reward from the Travail of his Son, as a Mother that is delivered after many sharp pangs of a Child that dies almost as soon as born.

3. It overthrows the Doctrines of Christ's

Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and *Intercession* in Heaven for us. And these are the main Pillars both of our Faith and Comfort: Take away these, and take away our Lives too, for these are the Springs of all Joy and Comfort to the People of God, *Rom. 8. 34.*

His *Incarnation* was necessary to capacitate him for his *Mediatorial Work*: it was not only a part of it, but such a part, without which he could discharge no other part of it. This was the wonder of Men and Angels, *1 Tim. 3. 16.* A God incarnate is the World's wonder; No condescension like this, *Philipp. 2. 6, 7.*

The *Death* of Christ hath the nature and respect of a Ransom, or equivalent Price, laid down to the Justice of God for our Redemption, *Mat. 20. 28. Act. 20. 28.* It brought our Souls from under the Curse, and purchased for them everlasting Blessedness, *Galat. 4. 4, 5.*

The *Resurrection* of Christ from the dead hath the nature both of a Testimony of his finishing the Work of our Redemption, and the Father's full satisfaction therein, *Joh. 6. 10.* and of a Principle of our Resurrection to eternal Life, *1 Cor. 15. 20.*

The *Ascension* of Christ into Heaven was in the capacity and relation of a Foye-runner, *Heb. 6. 20.* It was to prepare places for the Redeemed, who were to come after him to glory in their several generations, *Joh. 14. 2, 3.*

The *Intercession* of Christ in Heaven is for the security of our purchased Inheritance to us, and to prevent any new breaches which might be made by our sins, whereby it might be forfeited, and we divested of it again, *1 Joh. 2. 1, 2.*

All these jointly make up the foundation of our Faith; and hope of Glory: But if our Souls perish, or be annihilated at death, our Faith, Hope, and Comforts, are all Delusions, vain Dreams, which do but amuse our fond Imaginations. For,

(1.) It was not worth so great a stoop and abasement of the blessed God, as he submitted to in his Incarnation, when he appeared in flesh, yea, in the likeness of sinful flesh, *Rom. 8. 3.* and made himself of no reputation, *Philipp. 2. 7.* An act that is, and ever will be admired by Men and Angels: I say, it was not worth so great a Miracle as this, to procure for us the vanishing comfort of a few years, and that short-lived comfort no other than a deluding Dream, or mocking Phantasm: for seeing it consists in hope and expectation from the World to come, as the Scriptures every where speak, *1 Thess. 5. 8.* and *2 Cor. 3. 12. Rom. 5. 3, 4, 5.* if there be no such enjoyments for us there (as most certainly there are not, if our Souls perish) it is but a vanity, a thing of nought, that was the errand upon which the Son of God came from the Father's Bosom, to procure for us.

(2.) And for what, think you, was the Blood of God upon the Cross? What was so vast and inconceivable a Treasure expended to purchase? What! the flattering and vain hopes of a few years, of which we may say as it was said

of

of the Roman Consulship, *unius anni volaticum gaudium*; the fugitive joy of a year: yea, not only short-liv'd and vain hopes in themselves, but such for the sake whereof we abridge our selves of the pleasures and desires of the flesh, 1 John 3. 3. and submit our selves to the greatest sufferings in the World, Rom. 8. 18. For the Hope of Israel am I bound with this Chain, &c. Acts 28. 20. Was this the purchase of his Blood? Was this it for which he sweat, and groan'd, and bled, and di'd? Was that precious Blood no more worth than such a trifle as this?

(3.) To what purpose did Christ rise again from the dead? was it not to be the *first-fruits of them that sleep*? Did he not rise as the common Head of Believers, to give us assurance we shall not perish and be utterly lost in the grave? Col. 1. 18. But if our Souls perish at death, there can be no Resurrection; and if none, then Christ died and rose in vain, *we are yet in our sins*, and all those absurdities are unavoidable, with which the Apostle loads this supposition, 1 Cor. 15. 13, &c.

(4.) And to as little purpose was his triumphant Ascension into Heaven, if we can have no benefit by it. The professed end of his Ascension was *to prepare a place for us*, John 14. 2. But to what purpose are those Mansions in the Heavens prepared, if the Inhabitants for whom they are prepared be utterly lost? And why is he called the *Forerunner*, if there be none to follow him? as surely there are not, if our Souls perish with our Bodies. Those heavenly Mansions, that City prepared by God, must stand void for ever, if this be so.

(5.) To conclude; In vain is the Intercession of Christ in Heaven for us, if this be so. They that shall never come thither, have no business there to be transacted by their Advocate for them. So that the whole Doctrine of Redemption by Christ is utterly subverted by this one supposition.

4. As it subverts the Doctrine of Redemption by Christ, and all the Hopes and Comforts we build thereon, so it utterly destroys all the Works of the Spirit upon the hearts of Believers, and makes them vanish into nothing.

There are divers Acts and Offices of the Spirit of God about and upon our Souls, I will only single out three, *viz.* his *sanctifying, sealing, and comforting Work*; all things of great weight with Believers.

(1.) His *sanctifying Work*, whereby he alters the frames and tempers of our Souls, 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Old things are passed away, all things are become new.*

The declared and direct end of this Work of the Spirit upon our Souls, is to attemper and dispose them for Heaven, Col. 1. 12. For seeing *nothing that is unclean can enter into the holy place*, Rev. 21. 27. *and without Holiness no man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. it is necessary that all those that have this hope in them, should expect to be partakers of their hopes in the way of Purification, 1 John 3. 3. And this is the ground upon which the People of God do mortifie their Lusts, and take so much pains with their own Hearts, Mart. 18. 8. counting it better (as their Lord tells them) *to enter into Life halt or maimed, than having two eyes or*

hands to be cast into Hell. But to what purpose is all this self-denial, all these heart-searchings, heart-humblings, cries and tears upon the account of Sin, and for an Heart suited to the Will of God, if there be no such Life to be enjoyed with God, *after this Animal Life is finished?*

If you say there is a present advantage resulting to us in this World, from our abstinence and self-denial; we have the truer and longer enjoyment of our Comforts on Earth by it: Debauchery and Licentiousness do not only flat the Appetite, and debase and alloy the Comforts of this World, but cut short our Lives by the exorbitances and abuses of them.

Tho' there be a Truth in this worth our noting, yet (1.) Morality could have done all this without *Sanctification*; there was no need for the pouring out of the Spirit, for so low an use and purpose as this. (2.) And therefore as the Wisdom of God would be censured and impeached, in sending his Spirit for an end which could as well be attained without it; so the Veracity of God must needs be affronted by it, who, as you heard before, hath declared our *Salvation* to be the end of our *Sanctification*.

(2.) His *Sealing, Witnessing, and Assuring Work.* We have a full account in the Scriptures, of these Offices and Works of the Spirit, and some spiritual sense and feeling of them upon our own hearts, which are two good assurances that there are such things as his bearing witness with our Spirits, Rom. 8. 16. *his sealing us to the day of Redemption*, Eph. 4. 30. *his earnest given into our hearts*, 2 Cor. 1. 22. All which Acts and Works of the Spirit have a direct and clear aspect upon the Life to come, and the Happiness of our Souls in the full enjoyment of God to Eternity; for it is to that Life we are now sealed; and of the full sum of that Glory, that these are the Pledges and Earnests of. But if our Souls perish by death, these Witnesses of the Spirit are delusions, and his Earnests are given us but in jest.

(3.) His *Comforting Work* is a sweet fruit and effect sensibly felt and tasted by Believers in this World. He is from this Office stiled the *Comforter*, John 16. 7. *signanter, & eminenter*: He so comforts, as none other doth, or can. And what is the matter of his Comforts, but the Blessedness to come, the Joys of the coming World? John 16. 13. *Eye hath not seen, &c.*

Upon the account of these unseen things, he enableth Believers to glory in Tribulations, Rom. 5. 4. to despise present things, whether the smiles or the frowns of the World, Heb. 11. 24. and v. 26. But if the Being of our Souls fail at death, these are but the fantastick Joys of Men in a Dream, and the experiences of all God's People are found but so many fond conceits, and gross mistakes.

5. This supposition overthrows the Doctrine of the *Resurrection*, which is the Consolation of Christians. We believe according to the Scripture, that after Death hath divorced our Souls and Bodies for a time, they shall meet again, and be re-united, and that the Joy at their re-union will be to all that are in Christ, greater than the Sorrows they felt at parting.

This

This seems not incredible to us, whatever natural improbabilities and carnal reasons may be against it, *Mis* 26. 8. and that because the Almighty power, which is able to subdue all things to himself, undertakes this task, *Philip*. 3. 21.

We believe this very same *numerical Body* shall rise again, *Job* 21. 27. by the return of the same Soul into it. which now dwelleth in it; and that we shall be the same persons that now we are: the *remunerative Justice* of God requiring it to be so.

We believe the Souls of the righteous shall much be better accommodated, and have a more comfortable habitation in their Bodies than now they have, *1 Cor.* 15. 42, 43. seeing they shall be made like unto Christ's glorious Body, *Phil.* 3. 21. and that then we shall live after the manner of Angels, *Luke* 20. 36. without the necessities of this animal life. These are the things we look for according to promise; and this expectation is our great relief against (1) the fears of death, *1 Cor.* 15. 55. (2) Against the death of our Friends and Relations, *Thess* 4. 14. (3) Against all the pressures and afflictions of this life, *Job* 19. 25. 26, 27.

But if the being of our Souls fail at death, all hopes and comforts from the Resurrection fail with it; for it is not imaginable that the Body should rise till it be revived, nor how it should be revived, but by the re-union of the Soul with it: and if it be not the same Soul that now inhabits it, we cannot be the same persons in the Resurrection we are now; and consequently, this supposition subverts not only the Doctrine of the Resurrection, but.

6. It overthrows also the faith of the *Judgment to come*. For if the Soul perish, the Body cannot rise; or if it rise by a new created Soul, the person raised is another, and not the same that lived and died in this World; and consequently, the rewards and punishments to be bestowed and awarded to all men in that day, cannot be just and equal: for we believe, according to the Scriptures, that,

(1) The Actions which men perform in this life, are not transient, but are filed to their account in the world to come; *Gal.* 6. 7. *here we sow, and there we reap*. Actions done in this World are two ways considerable, *viz.* *Physically*, or *Morally*, in the first consideration they are transient, in the last, permanent and everlasting. A Word is spoken, or an Act done, in a moment; but tho' it be past and gone, and perhaps by us quite forgotten, God registers it in his Book, in order to the day of account.

(2) We believe that God hath appointed a day in which all men shall appear before his Judgment-seat, to give an account of all they have done in the Body, whether it be good or evil, *2 Cor.* 5. 10.

(3) And that in order hereunto, the very same persons shall be restored by the Resurrection and appear before God, the very same Bodies and Souls, which did good or evil in this World: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Justice requires that the rewards and punishments be then distributed to the same persons that did good or evil in this World:

which strongly infers the immortality of the Soul, and that it certainly overlives the Body, and must come back from the respective places of their abode, to be again united to them, in order to their great account.

By all which you see the clearest proof of the Soul's Immortality, and how the contrary supposition overthrows our Faith, Duties, and Comforts. Yet notwithstanding all this, how apt are we to suspect this Doctrine, and remain still dissatisfied and doubting about it, when all is said? Which comes to pass partly from (1) the subtlety of Satan, who knows he can never persuade men to live the life of Beasts, till he first persuade them to think they shall die as the Beasts do (2.) and partly from the influence of Sense, and Reason upon us, whereby we do too much suffer our selves to be swayed, and imposed upon in matters of greatest moment in Religion. For these being proper *Arbiters* and Judges in other matters within their sphere, they are arrogant; and we easy enough to admit to them be *Arbiters* also in things that are quite above them. Hence come such plausible objections as these:

The Soul seems to vanish and die, when it leaves the Body: for when it hath struggled as long as it can to keep its possession in the Body, and at last is forced to depart, we can perceive nothing but a puff of breath, which immediately vanishes into air, and is lost. obj. 2. 1.

We cannot perceive, therefore it is nothing but what we do and can perceive *viz.* a puff of vanishing breath. By this argument the being of the Soul in the Body is as questionable, as after its departure out of the Body; for we cannot discern it by sight in the Body: yea, by this Argument we may as well deny the existence of God and Angels, as of Souls; for it is a spiritual and invisible being as they are; our gross senses are incapable of discerning Spirits, which are immaterial and invisible substances. Sol.

But you allow the Soul to have a rise and beginning, it is not eternal *à parté ante*; and it is certain, what ever had a beginning must have an end. obj. 2. 2.

Every thing which had a beginning may have an end, and what once was nothing, may by the power that created it, be reduced to nothing again. But tho' we allow it may be so, by the absolute power of God, we deny the consequence, that therefore it shall and must be so. Angels had a beginning, but shall never have an end. And indeed their Immortality, as well as ours, flows not so much from the nature of either, as from the will and pleasure of God who hath appointed them to be so. He can, but never will annihilate them. Sol.

But the Soul depends upon Matter in all its operations nothing is in the Understanding which was not first in the Senses; it useth the nature of Spirits as its servants and tools in all its Operations, and therefore how can it either subsist or act in a state of *Separation*? obj. 2. 3.

1. The Hypothesis is not only uncertain, but certainly false. There are acts performed by the Soul, even whilst it is in the Body, wherein it makes no use at all of the Body. Sol.

Such are the acts of Self-intuition, and Self-reflection : and what will you say of its acts in Raptures and Extasies, such as that of *Paul*, 2. *Cor.* 12. 2, and *John*, *Rev.* 21. 10. what use did their Souls make of the bodily Senses or natural Spirits then?

Sol. 2. And tho' in its ordinary actions in this Life it doth use the Body as its tool or instrument in working, doth it thence follow that it can neither subside or act separate from them in the other World? Whilst a Man is on horse-back in his Journey, he useth the help and service of his Horse, and is moved according to the motion of his Horse; but doth it thence follow, he cannot stand nor walk alone when dismounted at his Journey's end? We know Angels both live and act, without the ministry of the Bodies, and our Souls are spiritual Substances as well as they.

Objct. 4. But many Scriptures seem to favour the total cessation of the Soul's actions, if not of its being also after Separation as that in 2. *Sam.* 14. 14. We must needs die, and are as Water spilt upon the ground which cannot be gathered up; and *Psal.* 88. 10, 11, 12. with *Isaiah* 38. 18, 19. The dead cannot praise thee.

Sol. Those words of the Woman of Tekoa are not to be understood absolutely, but respectively: and the meaning is, that the Soul is in the Body as some precious liquor in a brittle glass, which being broken by death, the Soul is irrecoverably gone, as the Water spilt on the ground, which by no humane power or art of Man can be recovered again. All the means in the World cannot fetch it back into the Body again. She speaks of the Resurrection, or what shall be done in the World to come, by the Almighty power of God, but of what is impossible to be done in this World by all the skill and power of Man.

And for the expressions of *Heman*, and *Hezekiah*, they only respect and relate to those services their Souls were now employed about for the praise of God, which respect to the conversion or edification of others, as *Psal.* 30. 8, 9. or at most, to that mediate Service and Worship, which they give God, in and by their attendance upon his Ordinances in this World, and not of that immediate service and praise that is performed and given him in Heaven by the Spirits of just Men made perfect; such was the sweetness they had found in these Ordinances and Duties, that they express themselves as loth to leave them.

The same Answer solves also the Objections grounded upon other mistaken Scriptures, as that *Psal.* 78. 39. where Man is called a Wind, that passeth away, and cometh not again. It is only expressive of the frailty and vanity of the present animal Life we live in this World to which we shall return no more after death; it denies not Life to departed Souls, but the end of this animal Life at death: the Life we live in the other World is of a different nature.

Infer. I. Is the Soul immortal? Then, 'tis impossible for Souls to find full rest and contentment in any enjoyments on this side Heaven. All temporary things are inadequate, and therefore unsatisfying to our Souls. What gives the Soul rest and satisfaction, must be as durable as the Soul is; for if we could possibly find in this

World a condition and state of things most agreeable in all other respect to our desires and wishes, yet if the Soul be conscious to it self, that it shall and must over-live and leave them all behind it, it can never reach true contentment in the greatest affluence and confluence of them. Man being an immortal, is therefore a prospecting Creature, and can never be satisfied with this, that 'tis well with him at present, except he can be satisfied that it shall be so for ever. The thoughts of leaving our delightful and pleasant enjoyments, imbibers them all to us whilst we have them. All outward things are in *fluxu continuo*, passing away as the Waters, 1 *Cor.* 7. 31. Riches are uncertain, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. *They fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven, and with Wings of their own making*, *Prov.* 23. 5. (i. e.) As the Feathers that enable a Bride to fly from us, grow out of his own substance, doth that vanity that carries away all earthly enjoyments. This alone will spoil all contentment.

Then see the ground and reason of Satan's envy and enmity against the Soul, and his restless designs and endeavours to destroy it. It grates that Spirit of Envy, to find himself, who is by nature immortal, sunk everlastingly and irrecoverably in Misery, and the Souls of Men appointed to fill up those vacant places in Heaven from which the Angels fell. No Creature but Man is envied by Satan, and the Soul of Man much more than his Body: 'Tis true, he afflicts the Bodies of Men when God permits him, but he ever aims at the Soul when he wounds the Body. *Heb.* 10. 37. This roaring Lion is continually going about, seeking whom he may devour, 8 *Pet.* 5. 8. 'Tis the precious Soul he hunts after; that's the *Aspirus Diaboli*, the bit he gapes for, as the Wolf tears the Fleece to come at the Flesh. All the pleasure those miserable Creatures find, is the success of their Temptations upon the Souls of Men. 'Tis a kind of delight to them to plunge Souls into the same condemnation and misery with themselves. This is the trade they have been driving ever since their Fall. By destroying Souls, he at once exercises his Revenge against God, and his Envy against Man, which is all the relief his miserable condition allows him.

Do the Souls of Men over-live their Bodies? Then 'tis the height of madness and spiritual Insatiation, to destroy the Soul for the Body's sake; to cast away an immortal Soul for the gratification of perishing flesh; to ruin the precious Soul for ever, for the pleasures of Sin which are but for a moment: yet this is the madness of millions of Men. They will drown their own Souls in everlasting perdition, to procure unnecessary things for the Body, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. *They that will be rich, &c.* Every cheat and circumvention in dealing, every lie, every act of oppression, is a wound given the immortal Soul for the procuring some accommodations to the Body.

O what Soul-undoing bargains do some make with the Devil! Some sell their Souls outright for the gratification of their Lusts, 1 *King.* 21. 20. Many pawn their Souls to Satan in a conditional bargain, so do all that venture upon Sin, upon a presumption of Pardon and

and repentance. The Devil is a great trader for Souls, he hath all sorts of Commodities to suit all Mens humours that will deal with him. He hath Profits for the Covetous, Honours for the Ambitious, Pleasures for the Voluptuous: but a Soul is the price at which he sells them; only he will be content to sell at a day, and not require present pay: so that it be paid on a death-bed, in a dying hour, he is satisfied. But Oh! what an undoing bargain do Sinners make, to part with a Treasure for a Trifle! *Matt. 16. 26* the precious Soul for ever, for the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season! *Heb. 11. 25*. We are charmed with the present pleasure and sweetness there is in Sin; but how bitter will the after-fruits thereof be! See the Texts in the Margin: you will say hereafter as *Jonathán* did, *1 Sam. 14. 31*. *I tasted but a little Honey, and I must die.*

Prov. 20.
17.
Prov. 23.
31, 32.
Job 20. 12.
13.
Jam. 1. 15.

Infer. IV. Then the exposing of the Body to danger, yea, to certain destruction, for the preservation of the Soul, is the dictate of spiritual Wisdom, and that which every Christian is bound to chuse and practise, when both Interests come in full opposition, *Heb. 11. 35*. *Dan. 3. 28*. *Rev. 12. 11*. No promises of Preferment, no threats of Torments, have been able to prevail with the People of God to give the least wound, or do the least wrong to their own Souls. When *Secundus* was commanded to deliver his Bible, he answered, *Christianus sum, non traditur*; I am a Christian, I will not deliver it: then they desired him to deliver *aliquam ecclolam*, a Chip, a Straw, any thing that came to his hand, in lieu of it: he refused to redeem his Life by delivering the least trifle on that account to save it.

That is a great word of our Lord's, *Luke 9. 24*. *He that will save his Life, shall lose it; and he that loseth it for my sake, shall find it*. Christians, this is your Duty and Wisdom, and must be your Resolution and Practice in the day of Temptation, to yield your Bodies to preserve your Souls, as we offer our Arm to defend the Head. Oh! better thy Body had never been given thee, than that it should be a snare to thy Soul, and the instrument of casting it away for ever. Oh! how dear are some persons like to pay for their tenderness and indulgence to the flesh, when the hour of Temptation shall come! Mortify your irregular affections to the Body, and never hazard your precious immortal Souls for their sakes. 'Tis the character of an Hypocrite to chuse Sin rather than Affliction, *Job 36. 21*. But if ever thou hast been in the deeps of spiritual troubles for sin, if God have opened thine eyes to see the evil of sin, the immense weight and value of thy Soul, and of Eternity, *Thou wilt not count thy life dear to thee to finish thy course with joy*, *Acts 20. 24*.

Infer. V. If the Soul be an immortal Being, that shall have no end, Then 'tis the great concern of all men to strive to the utmost for the Salvation of their Souls, whatever become of all lesser temporary Interests in this World, *Luke 13. 24*. There is a gate, (*i. e.*) an introductive means of Life and Salvation: this gate is strait (*i. e.*) there are a world of difficulties to be encounter'd in the way of Salvation: but he that values and loves

Vol. I.

his never-dying Soul, must and will be diligent and constant in the use of all those means that have a tendency to Salvation, be they never so difficult or unpleasant to flesh and blood. There be difficulties from within our selves, such as Mortification, Self-denial, Contempt of the World, parting with all at the call of Christ: and difficulties from without, the Reproaches, Persecutions, and Sufferings for Christ, which would not be so great as they are, were it not for our unmortified Lusts within; but be they what they will, we are bound to strive through them all, for the Salvation of our precious and immortal Souls.

(1.) For 'tis the greatest concernment of the Soul, yea, of our own Souls; we are bound to do much for the saving of another's Soul, *2 Tim. 2. 10*. much more for our own; this is our darling, *Psal. 22*. our only one.

(2.) Others have done and suffered much for the saving of their Souls; and are not ours, or ought they not to be, as dear to us, as the Souls of any others have been to them? *Matt. 21. 32*.

(3.) The utmost diligence is little enough to save them. Do all that you can do, and suffer all that you can suffer, and deny your selves as deeply as ever any did, yet you shall find all this little enough to secure them, *1 Pet. 4. 18*. The Righteous themselves are scarcely saved, *1 Cor. 9. 24*.

(4.) The time to strive for Salvation is very short and uncertain, *Luke 13. 25*. *Joh. 12. 35*. 'Twill be to no purpose, when the seasons and opportunities of Salvation are once over. There is no striving in Hell, a death-pang of Despair hath seized them, hope is extinguished, and endeavours fail.

(5.) Doth not Reason dictate and direct you to do now, whilst you are in the way, as you will wish you had done, and repent with rage, and self-indignation, because you did it not, when you come to the end, and behold the final issues of things? Suppose but thy self now either, (1.) upon a death-bed, launching into Eternity; (2.) or at the Bar of Christ; (3.) or in view of Heaven; (4.) or in the sight and hearing of the Damned: what think you? will you not then wish, Oh! that I had spent every moment in the World, that could possibly be redeemed from the pure necessities of Life, in Prayer, in hearing, in striving for Salvation! From a prospect of this it was, that one spent many hours daily on his knees to the macerating of his Body; and being admonished of the danger of health, and advised to relax, he answered, *I must die, I must die.*

Object. 11.

Do not say, you have many encumbrances, and other employments in the World: for *One thing is necessary*, *Luke 10. 42*. Those are Conveniences, but this is of absolute necessity.

(2.) They will thrive the better for this, *1 Cor. 6. 33*. *Seek this, and they shall be added.* (3.) *But redeem the time* that can be redeemed to this purpose; let not so much precious time run waste as daily doth.

Object. 12.

Say not, no Man can save his Soul by his own striving, and therefore 'tis to little purpose; for it is not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, *Rom. 9. 16*. Y y y True,

True, this in it self cannot save you ; but what then? must we oppose those things which God hath subordinated? Bring this home to your natural or civil actions, eating, drinking, ploughing or sowing, and see how the consequence will look.

Obj. 3. Say not, 'tis a mercenary Doctrine, and disparages free Grace; for are not all the Enjoyments and Comforts of this Life confessedly from free Grace, tho' God hath dispensed them to you in the way of your diligence and industry.

Obj. 4. To conclude; Say not, the difficulties of Salvation are insuperable; 'tis so hard to watch every motion of the heart, to deny every Lust, to resist a subtle Temptation, to suffer the loss of *All for Christ*, that there is no hope for overcoming them.

For (1.) God can and doth make difficult things easie to his People, who work in the strength of Christ, *Phil. 4. 13.* (2.) These same difficulties are before all others that are before you, yet it discourageth not them, *Phil. 3. 11.* Others strive to the uttermost. There are extremes found in this matter: some work for Salvation, as an hireling for his Wages, so the Papists; these disparage Grace, and cry up Works. Others cry down Obedience as legal, as the Antinomians, and cry up Grace to the disparagement of Duties. Avoid both these, and see that you strive: but (1.) think not Heaven to be the price of your striving, *Rom. 4. 3.* (2.) Strive, but not for a spurt; let this care and diligence run throughout your lives; whilst you are living, be you still striving: your Souls are worth it, and infinitely more than all this amounts to.

Inscr. VI. Doth the Soul over-live the Body, and abide for ever? Then 'tis a great evil and folly to be excessively careful for the mortal Body, and neglective of the immortal Inhabitant. In a too much indulged Body, there ever dwells a too-much neglected Soul.

The Body is but a vile thing, *Phil. 3. 21.* the Soul more valuable than the whole World, *Mat. 16. 26.* To spend time, care, and pains for a vile Body, whilst little or no regard is had to the precious immortal Soul, is an unwarrantable folly and madness. To have a clean and washed Body, and a Soul all filth, (as one speaks) a Body neatly clothed and dressed, with a Soul all naked and unready; a Body fed, and a Soul starved; a Body full of the Creature, and a Soul empty of Christ; these are poor Souls indeed. We smile at little Children, who in a kind of laborious idleness take a great deal of pains to make and trim their Babies, or build their little Houses of sticks and straws: And what are they but Children of a bigger size, that keep such ado about the Body, a House of Clay, a weak Pile, that must perish in a few days. 'Tis admirable, and very convictive, of most Christians what we read in a Heathen. *I confess*

Fateor insitam esse nobis corporis nostri charitatem. Fateor nos hujus gerere tutelam, nec nego indulgentum illi: servientum nego. Multis enim serviet qui corpori servit, qui pro illorum timet, qui ad illud omnia refert; hujus nos nimis amor tantoribus inquietar, solitudinibus oneratur,

(saith Seneca) there is a love to the Body implanted in us all; we have the intelage and charge of it; we may be kind and indulgent to it, but must not serve it; but he that serves it, is a servant to many cares, fears, and passions. Let us have a diligent care of it, yet so as when Reason requires,

when our Dignity or Faith requires it, we commit it to the fire.

ejus diligentissime cura: ita tamen, ut cum exigerat ratio, cum dignitas, cum fides, mittendum in ignem sit. *Senec. Ep. 14. p. 545.*

contumeliis obicit: honorum ei vile est cui corpus nimis charum est: agatur

'Tis true, the Body is beloved of the Soul, and God requires, that it moderately care for the necessities and conveniencies of it; but to be fond, indulgent, and constantly solicitous about it, is both the sin and snare of the Soul. One of the Fathers being invited to dine with a Lady, and waiting some hours till she was dressed, and fit to come down; when he saw her, he fell a weeping; and being demanded why he wept, *Oh! saith he, I am troubled that you should spend so many hours this morning in pinning and trimming your Body, when I have not spent half the time in praying, repenting, and caring for my own Soul.* Two things a Master commits to his Servant's care, (saith one) the Child, and the Child's Cloaths: It will be but a poor excuse for the Servant to say, at his Master's return, Sir, here are all the Child's Cloaths neat and clean, but the Child is lost. Much so will be the account that many will give to God of their Souls and Bodies at the great day. *Lord, here is my Body, I was very careful for it, I neglected nothing that belonged to its content and welfare: but for my Soul, that is lost and cast away for ever, I took little care or thought about it.* 'Tis remarkable what the Apostle saith, *Rom. 8. 12.* We owe nothing to the flesh, we are not in its debt, we have given it all, more than all that belongs to it: but we owe many an hour, many a care, many a deep thought to our Souls, which we have defrauded it of for the vile Body's sake. You have robbed your Souls to pay your Flesh. This is madness.

How great a Blessing is the Gospel, which brings Inse. VII. Life and Immortality to light, the most desirable Mercies to immortal Souls! This is the great benefit we receive by it, as the Apostle speaks, *2 Tim. 1. 10.* Christ hath abolished Death, and brought Life and Immortality to light by the Gospel. Life and Immortality by a *in se deo vivit*, is put for immortal Life, the thing which all immortal Souls desire and long for. These desires are found in Souls that enjoy not the Gospel-light; for, as I said before, they naturally spring out of the very Nature of all immortal Souls: But how and where it is to be obtained, that is a secret for which we are entirely beholden to the Gospel-discovery. It lay hid in the Womb of God's purpose, till by the light of Gospel-Revelation it was made manifest. But now all men may see what are the gracious thoughts and purposes of God concerning Men, and what that is he hath designed for their Immortal Souls, even an Immortal Life; and this Life is to be obtained by Christ, than which no tidings can be more welcome, sweet or acceptable to us.

Oh therefore study the Gospel. *This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent,* *John 17. 3.* And see that you prize the Gospel above all earthly Treasures. 'Tis a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation. You have two inestimable benefits and blessings by it. (1.) It manifests and reveals eternal life to you, which you could never have come

come to the knowledge of any other way; those that are without it, are groping or feeling after God in the dark, *Acts* 17. 27. Poor Souls are conscious to themselves, that there is a just and terrible God, and that their sins offend and provoke him; but how to atone the offended Deity they know not, *Micah* 6. 6, 7. But the way of Reconciliation and Life is clearly discovered to us by the Gospel. (2.) As it manifests and reveals Eternal Life to us, so it frames and moulds our hearts, as God's sanctifying Instrument for the enjoyment of it. 'Tis not only the Instrument of Revelation, but of Salvation, the Word of Life, as well as the Word of Light, *Phil.* 2. 16. It can open your Hearts as well as your Eyes, and is therefore to be entertained as that which is the first rank of Blessings, a peerless and inestimable Blessing.

Inf. VIII.

If our Souls be Immortal, certainly our Enemies are not so formidable as we are apt by our sinful fears to represent them. They may, when God permits them, destroy your Bodies, they cannot touch or destroy your Souls, *Matt.* 10. 28. As to your Bodies, no Enemy can touch them till there be leave and permission given them by God, *Job* 1. 10. The Bodies of the Saints as well as their Souls, are within the line or hedge of Divine Providence: they are securely fenced, sometimes mediately by the Ministry of Angels, *Psal.* 34. 7. and sometimes immediately by his own Hand and Power, *Zech.* 2. 5. As to their Souls, whatever power Enemies may have upon them, (when Divine Permission opens a gap in the hedge of Providence for them) yet they cannot reach their Souls to hurt them, or destroy them, but by their own consent. They can destroy our perishing Flesh, it is obnoxious to their malice and rage; they cannot reach home to the Soul: no Sword can cut asunder the band of Union between Them and Christ; they would be dreadful Enemies indeed if they could do so. Why then do we tremble and fear at this rate, as if Soul and Body were at their mercy, and in their power and hand? The Souls of those *Martyrs* were in safety under the *Altar* in Heaven, they were clothed with *white Robes*, when their Bodies were given to be meat to the Fowls of Heaven, and Beasts of the Earth. The Devil drives but a poor trade by the Persecution of the Saints; he tears the *Nest*, but the *Bird* escapes; he cracks the *Shell*, but loseth the *Kernel*. Two things make a powerful defensive against our fears: (1.) That all our Enemies are in the hand of Providence. (2.) That all Providences are steered by that promise, *Rom.* 8. 28.

Inf. IX.

If Souls be Immortal, then there must needs be a vast difference between the effects and influences of Death upon the Godly and Ungodly.

Oh! if Souls would but seriously consider what an alteration Death will make upon their condition, for evil or for good, how useful would such Meditations be to them! (1.) They must be dispossessed and turned out of these houses of Clay, and live in a state of separation from them: of this there is an inevitable necessity, *Ecd.* 8. 8. 'Tis vain to say, I am not ready; ready or unready, they must depart when their Lease is out. 'Tis as vain to say, I am not willing; for willing or unwilling, they

Vol. I.

must be gone; there's no hanging back, and begging, *Lord, let death take another at this time, and spare me*; for no man dies by a Proxy. (2.) The time of our Souls departure is at hand, *2 Pet.* 1. 13, 14. *Job* 16. 22. The most firm and well-built Body can stand but a few days, but our ruinous Tabernacles give our Souls warning that the day of their departure is at hand. The lamp of Life is almost burnt down, the glass of Time is almost run; yet a few, a very few days and nights more, and then time, nights and days shall be no more. (3.) When that most certain and near-approaching time is come, wonderful alterations will be made on the state of all Souls, godly and ungodly.

(1.) A marvellous alteration will then be made on the Souls of the godly. For (1.) No sooner is the dividing stroke given by Death, and the parting pull over, but they shall find themselves in the arms of Angels, mounting them through the upper Regions in a few moments, far above all the respectable Heavens, *Luke* 16. 22. The airy Region is indeed the place where Devils inhabit, and have their haunts and walks; but Angels are the Saints Convoy thro' Satan's Territories from the arms of mourning Friends into the welcome arms of officious and benevolent Angels. (2.) From the light and converse of Men to the light of God, Christ, and the general assembly of blessed and sinless Spirits. The Soul takes its leave of all men at death, *Isa.* 38. 11. Farewel vain World, with all the mixed and imperfect comforts of it, and welcome the more sweet, suitable, and satisfying company of Father, Son, and Spirit, holy Angels, and perfected Saints, *Heb.* 12. 23.

(3.) From the bondage of corruption to perfect liberty, and everlasting freedom; so much is implied, *Heb.* 12. 23. *The Spirits of just men made perfect*. (4.) From all fears, doubtings, and questionings of our conditions, and anxious debates of our title to Christ, to the clearest, fullest, and most satisfying assurance: for what a Man sees, how can he doubt of it? (5.) From all burdens of affliction, inward and outward, under which we have groaned all our days, to everlasting rest and ease, *2 Cor.* 5. 1, 2, 3. Oh what a blessed change to the Righteous must this be!

(2.) A marvelous change will also be then made upon the Souls of the ungodly, who shall then part from (1.) All their comforts and pleasant enjoyments in the World, for here they had their consolation, *Luke* 16. 25. here was all their Portion, *Psal.* 17. 14. and in a moment find themselves arrested and seized by Satan, as God's Gaoler, hurrying them away to the Prison of Hell, *1 Pet.* 3. 19. *there to be reserved to the judgment of the great day, Jude ver. 6*. (2.) From under the means of Grace, Life, and Salvation, to a state perfectly void of all means, instruments, and opportunities of Salvation, *John.* 9. 4. *Eccles.* 9. 10. never to hear the joyful sound of Preaching or Praying any more; never to hear the wooing Voice of the blessed Bridegroom, saying, Come unto me, Come unto me, any more. (3.) From all their vain, ungrounded, presumptuous Hopes of Heaven, into absolute and final Desperation of Mercy. The very sinews and nerves

Y y 2

of

of hope are cut by death, Prov. 14. 32. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death.* These are the great and astonishing alterations that will be made upon our Souls, after they part with the Bodies which they now inhabit. Oh that we, who cannot but be conscious to our selves that we must over-live our Bodies, were more thoughtful of the condition they must enter into, after that separation which is at hand.

Infer. X. If our Souls be Immortal, then Death is neither to be feared by them in Heaven, nor hoped for by them in Hell. The Being of Souls never fails, whether they be in a state of Blessedness or of Misery. *In glory they are ever with the Lord,* 1 Thess. 4. 17. There shall be no death there, Rev. 21. 4. And in Hell, tho' they shall wish for death, yet death shall flee from them. Tho' there be no fears of annihilation in Heaven, yet there be many vain wishes for it in Hell, but to no purpose; there never will be an end put either to their being or to their torments. In this respect no other Creature is capable of the Misery that wicked Men are capable of: When they die, there is the end of all their Misery; but it is not so with men. Better therefore had it been for them, if God had created them in the basest and lowest order and rank of Creatures; a Dog, a Toad, a Worm is better than a Man in endless Misery, ever dying, and never dead. *And so much of the Soul's immortality.*

EPHES. V. 29.

For no Man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church.

HAVING given some account of the Nature and Immortality of the Soul, we next come to discourse its *Love and Inclination to the Body*, with which it is united, from this Text. The scope of the Apostle is, to press Christians to the exact discharge of those relative Duties they owe to each other; particularly he here urgeth the mutual Duties of *Husbands and Wives*, ver. 22. Wives, to an *obedient Subjection*; Husbands, to a *tender Love* of their Wives. This Exhortation he enforceth from the intimate Union, which by the Ordinance of God is betwixt them, they being now *one Flesh*. And this Union he illustrates by comparing it with,

1. The *Mystical Union of Christ and the Church.*

2. The *Natural Union of the Soul and Body.*

And from both these, as excellent Examples and Patterns, he with great strength of Argument urgeth the Duty of Love; ver. 28. *So ought Men to love their Wives as their own Bodies; he that loveth his Wife, loveth himself.* Self-love is naturally implanted in all Men, and it is the Rule by which we measure out and dispense our Love to others.—*Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.*

This *Self-Love* he opens in this place, by,

(1.) The Universality of it.

(2.) The Effects that evidence it.

(1.) The Universality of it, *No Man ever yet hated his own Flesh.* By *Flesh*, understand the Body, by an usual *Metonymy* of a part for the whole called *Flesh*. By *hating it*, understand a simple hatred, or hatred it self. 'Tis usual for Men to hate the deformities and diseases of their own Bodies, and upon that account to deal with the Members of their own Bodies as if they hated them; hence it is, they willingly stretch forth a gangren'd Leg or Arm to be cut off, for the preservation of the rest: but this is not simple hatred of a Man's self, but rather an Argument of the strength of the Soul's love to the Body, that it will be content to endure so much pain and anguish for its sake. And if the Soul be at any time weary of, and willing to part, not with a single Member only, but with the whole Body, and loathes its Union with it any longer, yet it hates and loathes it not simply in and for it self, but because it is so filled with Diseases all over, and loads the Soul daily with so much grief, that how well soever the Soul loves it in it self, yet upon such sad terms and conditions it would not be tied to it. This was *Job's* case, *Job* 10. 1. *My Soul is weary of my Life*; yet not simply of his Life, but *such a Life*, in pain and trouble. Except it be in such respects and cases, *No man*, saith he, *ever yet hated his own Flesh*; i. e. no Man in his right mind, and in the exercise of his Reason and Sense; for we must except distracted and delirious Men, who know not what they do, as also Men under the terrors of Conscience, when God suffers it to rage in extremity, as *Spiras*, and others, who would have been glad with their own hands to have cut the Thread that tied their miserable Souls to their Bodies, supposing that way, and by that change, to find some Relief. Either of these cases forces Men to act beside the stated Rule of Nature and Reason.

(2.) This *Love of the Soul to the Body* is further discovered by the Effects which evidence it, viz. its nourishing and cherishing the Body, *ἐκτρέφει ὡς ὁ ἑαυτὸν*. These two comprize the Necessaries for the Body, viz. Food and Rayment. The first signifies to nourish with proper food; the latter, to warm by cloathing, as the word *ἐκτρέφει* is render'd, *Jam.* 2. 16. to which the Hebrew word answers, *Job.* 31. 20. The Care and Provision of these things for the Body evidences the Soul's Love to it.

That the Souls of Men are strongly inclined, Doct. and tenderly affected, towards the Bodies in which they now dwell.

The Soul's Love to the Body is so strong, natural, and inseparable, that it is made the Rule and Measure by which we dispense and proportion our Love to others, *Mat.* 19. 19. *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* And the Apostle, *Galat.* 5. 14. tells us, That the whole Law, (i. e.) the second Table of the Law, is fulfilled, or summ'd up in this Precept, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* The meaning is not, that all and every one who is our Neighbour must be equally near to us as our own Bodies; but it intends (1.) The sincerity of our Love to others, which must be without Dissimulation, for we dissemble not in Self-

Self-love. (2.) That we be as careful to avoid injuring others, as we would our selves, *Math. 7. 12.* To do by others, or measure to them, as we would have done, or measured unto us: for which Rule, *Severus* the Heathen Emperour honoured Christ and Christianity, and caused it to be written in Capital Letters of Gold. (3.) That we take direction from this Principle of Self-love, to measure out our Care, Love and Respects to others, according to the different degrees of nearness in which we stand to them. As, (1.) The Wife of our Bosom, to whom by this Rule, is due our first Care and love, as in the Text. (2.) Our Children and Family, *1 Tim. 5. 8.* (3.) To all in general, whether we have any Bond of natural Relation upon them or no; but especially those to whom we are spiritually related, as *Gal. 6. 10.* And indeed, as every Christian hath a right to our Love and Care, above other Men, so in some cases, we are to exceed this Rule of Self-love, by a transcendent act of Self-denial for them, *1 John 3. 16.* And *Paul* went higher than that, in a glorious excess of Charity to the Community or Body, of God's People, preferring their Salvation not only to his own Body, but to his Soul also, *Rom. 9. 3.* But to these extraordinary Cases we are seldom called; and if we be, the Gospel furnisheth us with an higher Rule than Self-love, *John 13. 34.* But by this principle of Self-love in all ordinary Cases, we must proportion and dispense our Love to all others: by which you see what a deep rooted fixed Principle in Nature Self-love is, how universal and permanent alone this is, which else were not fit to be made the measure of our Loveto all others.

Two things will deserve our Consideration in the Doctrinal part of this point.

First, Wherein the Soul evidenceth its love to the Body.

Secondly, What are the Grounds and fundamental Causes or Reasons of its love to it; and then apply it.

First, Wherein the Soul evidenceth its love to the Body, and that it doth in divers respects.

1. In its Cares for the things needful to the Body, as the Text speaks, in *nourishing* and *cherishing* it, (i. e.) taking care for Food and Rayneat for it. This Care is universal, it's implanted in the most salvage and barbarous People; and is generally so excessive and exorbitant, that tho' it never needs a Spur, yet most times and with most Men it doth need a Curb; and therefore Christ in *Math. 6. 32.* shews how those Cares torture and distract the Nations of the World, warms them against the like Excesses, and propounds a Rule to them for the allay and mitigation of them, *1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31.* So doth the Apostle also, *1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31.* To speak as the matter is, most Souls are over-heated with their Cares, and eager pursuit after the concerns of the Body. They pant after the Dust of the Earth. They pierce themselves through with many Sorrows, *1 Tim. 6. 10.* They are cumbered like *Martha* with much serving. 'Tis a perfect Drudg and Slave to the Body, be-

flowing all its time, strength and studies about the Body: for one Soul that puts the Question to it self, *what shall I do to be saved?* a thousand are to be found, that mind nothing more, but, *What shall I eat, what shall I drink, and wherewith shall I and mine be clothed?* I do not say, that these are proofs of the Soul's regular Love to the Body; no, they differ from it, as a Fever from natural Heat. This is a doating Fondness upon the Body. He truly loves his Body, that moderately and ordnately cares for what is necessary for it, and can keep it under, *1 Cor. 9. 27.* and deny its whining Appetite, when Indulgence is prejudicial to the Soul, or warms its Lusts. Believers themselves find it hard to keep the Golden Bridle of Moderation upon their Affections in this matter. 'Tis not every Man hath attained *Agm's* cool Temper, *Prov. 30. 8.* that can slack his pace, and drive moderately, where the Interests of the Body are concerned: the best Souls are too warm, the generality are in raging Heats, which distract their minds, as that word, *Mat. 6. μὴ μενεαίνεσθαι*, signifies. If the Body were not exceeding dear to the Soul, it would never torture it self day and night with such anxious Cares about it.

2. The Soul discovers its esteem and value for the Body in all the Fears it hath about it. Did not the Soul love it exceedingly, it would never beafrighted for it, and on its account, so much and so often as it is. What a panick fear do the dangers of the Body cast the Soul into? *Isa. 7. 2.* When the Body is in danger, the Soul is in distraction, the Soul is in fears and tremblings about it: These Fears flow from the Soul's tender Love and Affection to the Body; if it did not love it so intensely, it would never afflict and torment it self at that rate it doth about it: Satan the professed Enemy of our Souls, being thoroughly acquainted with those Fears which flow from the Fountain of Love to the Body, politickly improves them in the way of temptation, to the utter ruin of some, and the great hazard of other Souls; he edges and sharpens his Temptations upon us this way; he puts our Bodies into danger, that he may thereby endanger our Souls; he reckons, if he can but draw the Body into danger, fear will quickly drive the Soul into Temptation: It is not so much from Satan's Malice or Hatred of our Bodies, that he stirs up Persecutions against us; but he knows the tie of Affection is so strong betwixt these friends, that Love will draw, and Fear will drive the Soul into many and great Hazards of its own Happiness, to free the Body out of those Dangers. *Prov. 29. 25. The Fear of Man brings a Snare:* and *Heb. 11. 37. tortured and tempted.*

Upon this ground also it is, that this Life becomes a Life of Temptation to all Men, and there is no freedom from that danger, till we be freed from the Body, and set at liberty by Death. Separated Souls are the only free Souls They that carry no Flesh about them, need carry no Fears of Temptation within them. 'Tis the Body which catches the sparks of Temptation.

3. The Soul manifests its dear Love and Affection

Affection to the Body, by its *Sympathy*, and compassionate feeling of all its burdens: Whatever touches the Body by way of *Injury*, affects the Soul also by way of *Sympathy*. The Soul and Body are as the strings of two Musical Instruments, set exactly at one height; if one be touched, the other trembles. They laugh and cry, are sick and well together. This is a wonderful Mystery, and a rare Secret (as a learned Man observes) how the Soul comes to sympathize with the Body, and to have not only a knowledge, but as it were a feeling of its Necessities and Infirmities; how this fleshly Lump comes to affect, and make its deep impressions upon a Creature of so different a nature from it, as the Soul or Spirit is. But that it doth so, tho' we know not how, is plain and sensible to any man. If any Member of the Body, tho' but the lowest and meanest, be in pain and misery, the Soul is presently affected with it, and commands the Eyes to watch, yea to weep, the Hands to bind it up with all tenderness, and defend it from the least injurious touch; the Lips to complain of its misery, and beg pity and help from others for it. If the Body be in danger, how are the Faculties of the Soul, Understanding, Memory, Invention, &c. employ'd with utmost strength and concernment for its deliverance! This is a real and unexceptionable evidence of its dear and tender Love to the Body. As those that belong to one mystical Body shew their sincere Love this way, 1 Cor. 12. 25, 26. *Ephes. 4. 19.* so the Soul.

4. The Soul manifesteth its love to the Body by its *fears* of Death, and extreme *aversion* to a separation from it. On this account Death is called in *Job 18. 14.* the *King of Terrors*, or the *black Prince*, or the *Prince of Clouds and Darkness*, as some translate that place. We read it, the *King of Terrors*, meaning that the Terrors at Death are such Terrors as subdue and keep down all other Terrors under them, as a Prince doth his Subjects. Other Terrors compared with those that the Soul conceives and conflicts with at parting, are no more than a cut finger to the laying ones Head on the Block: Oh! the Soul and Body are strongly twisted and knit together in dear Bands of intimate Union and Affection, and these Bands cannot be broken without much struggling. Oh! 'tis a hard thing for the Soul to bid the Body farewell; 'tis a bitter parting, a doleful separation: Nothing is heard in that hour but the most deep and emphatical Groans; I say, *emphatical Groans*, the deep sense and meaning of which, the living are but little acquainted with: for no Man living hath yet felt the Sorrows of a parting pull; whatever other Sorrows he hath felt in the Body, yet they must be supposed to be far short of these.

The sorrows of Death are in Scripture set forth unto us, by the bearing Throes of a travailing Woman, *Mills 2. 24.* *Edin's Harlots* and what those mean, many can tell: The Soul is in labour, it will not let go its hold of the Body but by constraint; Death is a close Siege, and when the Soul is beaten out of its Body, it disputes the passage with Death, as Soldiers use to do an Enemy that enters by Storm, and fights and strives to the last. It's also compar'd

to a *Battle*, or *sharp Fight*, *Eccles. 8. 8.* that *War*. That War with an Emphasis. No Conflict so sharp, each labour to the utmost to drive the other from the ground they stand on, and win the Field. And tho' Grace much overpowers Nature in this matter, and reconciles it to Death, and makes it desire to be dissolved, yet Saints wholly put not off this reluctance of Nature, 2 Cor. 5. 2. Not that we would be unclothed; as it is with one willing to wade over a Brook to his Father's house, puts his foot into the water, and feels it cold, starts back, and is loth to venture in; *Not that we would be unclothed*. And if it be so with sanctified Souls, how is it, think you, with others? Mark the Scripture-language, *Job 27. 8.* God taketh away their Souls, saith our Tranflation; but the Root is, *Super extrahere*, and signifies to pull out by plain force and violence. A graceless Soul dieth not by consent, but force. Thus *Adrian* bewailed his departure, *O Animula, vagula, blandula, heu quo vadis!* Yea, tho' the Soul have never to long a time been in the Body, tho' it should live as long as the *Antediluvian Fathers* did for many hundred years, yet still it would be loth to part; yea, tho' it endure abundance of Misery in the Body, and have little rest or comfort, but time spent in griefs and fears, yet for all that 'tis loth to part with it. All this shews a strong inclination and affection to it.

5. Its desire of *Re-union* continuing still with it in its state of separation, speaks its love to the Body. As the Soul parted with it in grief and sorrow, so it still retains even in Glory an inclination to Re-union, and waits for a day of responsiveness: and to that sense, some searching and judicious Men understand those words of *Job*, ch. 14. 14. *If a Man die, shall he live again? viz. by a Resurrection:* if so, then all the days of my appointed separation, my Soul in Heaven shall wait till that Change come. And to the same sense is that cry of separated Souls, *Rev. 6. 9, 10, 11.* *How long, O Lord how long?* (i. e.) to the consummation of all things, when Judgment shall be executed on them that killed our Bodies, and our Bodies so long absent, restored to us again? In that day of Resurrection, the Souls of the Saints come willingly from Heaven it self, to repossess their Bodies, and bring them to a partnership with them in their Glory: for it is with the Soul in Heaven as it is with an Husband who is richly entertained, feasted, and lodged abroad, but his dear Wife is solitary and comfortless; it abates the completeness of his Joy. Therefore we say, The Saints Joy is not consummate till that day.

There is an exercise for Faith, Hope, and desires on this account in Heaven.

The Union of Soul and Body is natural, their separation is not so: many benefits will redound to both by a Re-union, and the Resurrection of the Body is provided by God, as the grand relief against those prejudices and losses the Bodies of the Saints sustain by separation. I say not that the propension or inclination of the Soul to re-union with its Body, is accompanied with any perturbation or anxiety in its state of separation; for it enjoys God, and in

him

him a placid rest; and as the Body, so the Soul rests in hope; 'tis such a hope as disturbs not the rest of either: yet when the time is come for the Soul to be re-espoused, it is highly gratified by that second Marriage, glad it is to see its old dear Companion, as two Friends after a long separation. And so much of the Evidence of the Soul's love to the Body.

Secondly, Next we are to enquire into the Grounds and Reasons of its Love and Inclination to the Body. And,

1. The fundamental Ground and Reason thereof will be found in their *Natural Union* with each other. There my Text lays it: *No Man ever yet hated his [own] flesh.* Mark, the Body is the Soul's own; they are strictly married and related to each other: the Soul hath a propriety in its Body, these two make up, or constitute one Person: True, they are not essentially one, they have far different Natures, but they are personally one; and tho' the Soul be what it was, after its separation, yet to make a Man the *who* he was, (*i. e.*) the same complete and perfect person, they must be reunited. Hence springs its Love to the Body. Every Man loves his own, *John* 17. 19. All the World is in love with its own, and hence it cares to provide for its welfare, *1 Tim.* 5. 8. *If any Man provide not for his own, he is worse than an Infidel.* For Nature teacheth all Men to do so. Why are Children dearer to Parents than to all others, but because they are their own? *Job* 19. 17. But our Wives, our Children, our Goods, are not so much our own as our Bodies are; this is the nearest of all Natural Unions.

In this Propriety and Relation are involved the Reasons and Motives of our love to, and care over the Body, which is no more than what is necessary to their Preservation. For, were it not for this Propriety and Relation, no Man would be at any more cost or pains for his own Body, than for that of a Stranger. 'Tis Propriety which naturally draws Love, Care, and Tenderness along with it; and these are ordered by the Wisdom of Providence, for the conservation of the Body, which would quickly perish without it.

2. The Body is the Soul's ancient *Acquaintance*, and intimate *Friend*, with whom it hath assiduously and familiarly conversed from its beginning. They have been Partners in each others Comforts and Sorrows. They may say to each other, as *Micomius* did to his Colleague, with whom he had spent twenty years in the Government of the *Thuringian Church*: *Cucurrimus, certavimus, laboravimus, pugnativimus, vicimus, & vicimus conjunctissime*; We have run, striven, laboured, fought, overcome, and lived most intimately and lovingly together. Custom and daily Conversation begets and conciliates Friendship and Love betwixt Creatures of contrary Natures: Let a Lamb be brought up with a Lion, and the Lion will express a tenderness towards it, much more the Soul to its own Body.

3. The Body is the Soul's house and beloved habitation, where it was born, and hath lived ever since it had a Being, and in which it hath enjoyed all its Comforts, natural and supernatural, which cannot but strengthen the Soul's

engagement to it. Upon this account the Apostle calls it the *Soul's home*, *2 Cor.* 5. 6. *Whilst we are at home in the Body.* 'Tis true, this house is not so comfortable a habitation, that it should be much desired by many Souls: we may say of many gracious Souls, that they pay a dear Rent for the house they dwell in; or, as it was said of *Galba*, *Anima Galbae male habitat*, their Souls are but ill accommodated; but yet it is their home, and therefore beloved by them.

4. The Body is the Soul's Instrument by which it doth its Work and Business in the World, both natural and religious, *Rom.* 6. 13. Through the bodily senses it takes in all the natural Comforts of this World, and by the bodily Members it performs all its Duties and Services. When these are broken and laid aside by Death, the Soul knows it can work no more in that way it now doth, *John* 9. 4. *Eccles.* 9. 10. Natural Men love their Bodies for the natural pleasures they are instrumental to convey to their Souls; and spiritual Men, for the use and service they are of to their own and others Souls, *Phil.* 1. 23.

5. The Body is the Soul's Partner in the benefit of Christ's Purchases. It was bought with the same Price, *1 Cor.* 6. 20. sanctified by the same Spirit, *1 Thess.* 5. 23. interested in the same Promises, *Matt.* 22. 32. and designed for the same Glory, *1 Thess.* 4. 16, 17. So that we may say of it as it was said of *Augustine* and his friend *Alippius*, they are *sanguine Christi conglutinati*, glewed together by the Blood of Christ. And thus of the grounds and reasons of its Love.

Is it so? Learn hence the mighty strength and *Infer.* 1. prevalence of Divine Love, which over-powering all natural Affections, doth not only enable the Souls of Men to take their separation from the Body patiently, but so long for it ardently, *Phil.* 1. 23. While some need patience to die, others need it as much to live, *2 Thess.* 3. 5. 'Tis said, *Rev.* 12. 11. *They loved not their lives.* And indeed on these terms they first clofed with Christ, *Luke* 12. 26. *to hate their lives for his sake*, (*i. e.*) to love them in so remiss a degree, that whenever they shall come in competition with Christ, to regard them no more than the things we hate.

The love of Christ is to be the supreme love, and all others to be subordinate to it, or quenched by it. 'Tis not its own comfort in the Body it principally and ultimately designs and aims at, but Christ's Glory; and so this may be furthered by the death of the Body, its death thereupon becomes as eligible to the Soul as its Life, *Phil.* 1. 20. Oh! this is a high pitch of Grace, a great attainment, to say as one did, *Vivere cenno, ut Christo vivam*; I refuse life, to be with Christ: Or another, when he was asked whether he was willing to die? answered, *Illius est nolle mori, qui nolit ire ad Christum*; Let him be loth to die, that is loth to go to Christ. So, *2 Cor.* 5. *We are willing rather to be absent from the Body, and present with the Lord.*

'Tis not every Christian that can arrive to this degree of Love; tho' they love Christ sincerely, yet they shrink from Death cowardly, and are loth to be gone. There are two sorts

And this is no more than necessary for the conservation of the species, else the Body would be neglected, exposed, and quickly perish, being had in no more regard than any other Body.

sorts of Grounds upon which Christians may be loth to be unbodied; 1. Sinful. 2. Allowable.

1. The sinful and unjustifiable grounds are such as these, *viz.* (1.) Guilt upon the Conscience, which will damp and discourage the Soul, and make it loth to die. It arms Death with terror, *the sting of Death is sin.* (2.) Unmortified affections to the World, I mean in such a degree as is necessary to sweeten Death, and make a Man a Volunter in that sharp engagement with that last and dreadful Enemy. It is with our Hearts as with Fuel; it green, and full of sap, it will not burn; but if that be dried up, it catches presently. Mortification is the drying up of carnal affections to the Creature, which is that that resists Death, as green Wood doth the fire. (3.) The weakness and cloudiness of Faith. You need Faith to die by, as well as to live by, *Heb. 11. 13. All these died by Faith.* The less strength there is in Faith, the more in Death. A strong Believer welcomes the Messengers of Death, when a weak one, unless extraordinarily assisted, trembles at them.

2. There are grounds on which we may desire a longer continuance in the Body, *warrantably* and allowably: As (1.) to do him yet more service in our Bodies, before we lay them down. This the Saints have pleaded for longer life, *Psal. 30. 9. Psal. 88. 11, 12, 13. and Isa. 38. 18, 19.* (2.) To see the Clouds of God's anger dispelled, whether publick or personal, and a clear Light break out e're we die; *Psal. 27. 13.* (3.) They may desire with submission to outlive the days of Persecution, and not to be delivered into the hands of cruel men, but come to their Graves in peace, *Psal. 31. 15. and 2 Thess. 3. 2.* that they may be delivered from absurd men.

3. But tho' some Christians shun Death upon a sinful account, and others upon a justifiable one; yet others there are, who seeing their Title clear, their Work done, and relishing the Joys of Heaven in the prelibations of Faith, are willing to be unclothed, and to be with Christ. Their love to Christ hath extinguished in them the love of Life; and they can say with *Paul, Acts 21. 13. I am ready.* Ignatius longed to come to those Beasts that were to devour him; and to many of the Primitive Christians Christ was so dear, that their Lives were cheap, and low-priz'd things for his enjoyment. And here indeed is the glory and triumph of a Christian's Faith and Love to Christ: For (1.) it enables him to part cheerfully with what he sees and feels, for what his eyes yet never saw, *1 Pet. 1. 8. Whom having not seen, ye love.* (2.) To part with what is dearest on Earth, and lies nearest the Heart of all he enjoys, for Christ's sake. (3.) To reconcile his Heart to what is most abhorrent and formidable to Nature. (4.) To endure the greatest of pains and torments to be with him. (5.) To cast himself into the vast Ocean of Eternity, the most amazing change, to be with Christ. Oh the glorious Conquests of Love!

Infer. II. Then the Apostasy of unregenerate Professors in times of imminent Danger is not to be wondered at. They will and must waver from Christ, when their Lives are in hazard for him. The love

of the Body will certainly prevail over their love to Christ and Religion. *Amor meus pondus meum.* Self-love will now draw. Love is the weight of the Soul, which inclines and determines it, in the competition of Interests, and the predominant Interest always carries it. Every unregenerate Professor loves his own Life more than Christ, prefers his Body before his Soul; such a one may upon divers accounts, as Education, Example, Right Convictions of Conscience, or ostentation of Gifts, fall into a Profession of Religion, and continue a long time in that Profession, before he visibly recede from Christ; *Hope* of the Resurrection of the Interest of Religion in the World; *Shame* of retracting his Profession; *Applause* of his Zeal and Constancy in higher Trials; the Peace of his own Conscience, and many such Motives, may prevail with a carnal Professor to endure a while; but when dangers of Life come to an height, they are gone, *Matth. 24. 8, 9, 10.* And therefore our Lord tells us, That they who hate not their Lives, cannot be his *Disciples*, *Luke 12. 26.* Now will they lose their Lives by saving them, *Mat. 16. 25.* And the Reasons are plain and forcible. For,

1. Now is the proper season for the predominant Love to be discovered, it can be hid no longer: And the love of Life is the predominant Love in all such persons; for do but compare it with their love to Christ, and it will easily be found so. They love their Lives *truly* and *really*, they love Christ but feignedly and pretendedly; and the *real* will and must prevail over the *feigned* Love. They love their Lives *seriously* and *intensely*, they love Christ but *coldly* and *remissly*: And the *servent* Love will prevail over the *remiss* Love. Their love to their Bodies hath a root in themselves, their love to Christ hath no root in themselves, *Mat. 13. 21.* And that which hath a root must needs outlast and outlive that which hath none.

2. Because when Life is in hazard, Conscience will work in them by way of discouragement; 'twill hint the danger of their eternal state to them, and tell them they may cast away their Souls for ever in a Bravado; for tho' the Cause they are called to suffer for be good, yet their Condition is bad; and if the *Condition* be not good as well as the *Cause*, a Man is lost for ever, tho' he suffer for it, *1 Cor. 13. 3.* Conscience, which encourages and supports the Upright, will daunt and appal the Hypocrite, and tell him, he is not on the same terms in Sufferings that other Men are.

3. Because then all the Springs by which their Profession was fed and maintained, fail and dry up. Now the Wind that was in their *backs* is come about, and blows a storm in their *facer*; no Preferences nor Honours are now to be had from Religion. These means Sufferings are a perfect surprize to them, for they never counted the Cost, *Luke 14. 28.* Now they must stand alone, and resist unto Blood, and sacrifice all *Visibles* for *Invisibles*; and this they can never do.

Oh therefore Professors look to your Hearts, try their predominant Love; compare your love

love to Christ with that to your Lives. Now the like question will be put to you that once was put to *Peter*, *John* 21. 15. *Lovest thou me more than these?* What say you to this? You think now, you do; but alas, your love is not yet brought to the fire to be tried: You think you hate sin, but will you be able to strive unto blood against sin? *Heb.* 12. 4. Will you chuse suffering rather than sin? *Job* 36. 21. O try your love to Christ before God bring it to the trial. Sure I am, the love of Life will make you warp in the hour of temptation; except,

1. You sat down and counted the Cost of Religion before-hand: If you set out in Procession only for a Walk, not for a Journey; if you go to Sea for Recreation, not for a Voyage; if you be mounted among other Processors only to take the air, and not to engage an Enemy in sharp and bloody Encounters, you are gone.

2. Except you live by Faith, and not by Sense, *2 Cor.* 4. 18. *Whilst we look not at the things that are seen.* You must ballance present Sufferings with future Glory. You must go by that account and reckoning, *Rom.* 8. 18. or you are gone. *Now the Just shall live by Faith;* and if Faith don't support, your fears will certainly sink you.

3. Except you be sincere and plain-hearted in Religion, driving no design in it but to save your Souls; else fee your lot in that Example, *2 Tim.* 4. 10. *Demas hath forsaken me.* O take heed of a cunning, subdalous, double heart in Religion; be plain, be open, care not if your Ends lie open to the eyes of all the World.

4. Except you experience the power of Religion in your own Souls, as well as wear the name of it. O my Brethren, 'tis not a name to live that will do you service now. Many Ships are gone down to the bottom, for all the brave names of the *Success*, the *Prosperous*, the *Happy-Return*, and so will you. There is a knowing in our selves by taste and real experience, *Heb.* 10. 34. which doth a Soul more service in a suffering hour, than all the splendid Names and Titles in the World.

5. Except you make it your daily work to crucify the Flesh, deny self for Christ, in all the Forms and Interests of it. He that can't deny himself, will deny Jesus Christ, *Mat.* 16. 24. let him deny himself, take up his Cross, and follow me, else he can't be my Disciple. Ponder these things in your Hearts, whilst yet God delays the Trial.

Infer. III.

If the Souls of Men be naturally so strongly inclin'd and affected towards the Body; then hence you may plainly see the Wisdom of God in all the Afflictions and Burdens he lays upon his People in this World, and find that all is but enough to wean off their Souls from their Bodies, and make them willing to part with them.

The Life of the Saints in this World, is generally a burdened and a groaning Life; *2 Cor.* 5. 2. *In this Tabernacle we groan, being burdened.* Here the Saints feel, (1.) A burden of sin. *Rom.* 7. 24. this is a dead and a sinking weight. (2.) A burden of Affliction of this all are partakers, *Heb.* 12. tho' not all in an equal degree, or in the same kind, yet all have their burdens equal to, and even beyond

their own strength to support it; *2 Cor.* 1. 8. *pressed above measure.* (3.) A burden of inward troubles for Sin, and outward troubles in the Flesh both together: so had *Job*, *Heiman*, *David*, &c.

Certainly this befalls them not, (1.) Casually, *Job* 5. 6. It rises not out of the Dust: (2.) Nor because God loves and regards them not; for they are fruits of his love; *Heb.* 12. 6. *whom he loveth he correcteth:* (3.) Nor because he takes pleasure in our Groans; *Lament* 3. *To tread under his feet the Prisoners of the Earth the Lord hath no pleasure:* 'Tis not for his own pleasure, but his Childrens profit, *Heb.* 12. 10: And among the profits that result from these burdens, this is not the least, to make you less fond of the Body than you would else be, and more willing to be gone to your everlasting Rest. And certainly all the diseases and pains we endure in the Body, whether they be upon inward or outward accounts, by Passion or Compassion from God or Men, will be found but enough to wean us, and loose off our Hearts from the fond love of Life. Afflictions are bitter things to our taste, *Ruth* 1. 20. so bitter; that *Naomi* thought a name of a contrary signification fitter for her afflicted Condition; call me *Marah* (i. e.) bitter, not *Naomi*, pleasant, beautiful. And the Church, *Lam.* 3. 19. calls them Wormwood and Gall.

The great design of God in afflicting them, is the same that a tender Mother projects in putting Wormwood to her Breast when she would wean the Child.

It hath been observed by some discreet and grave Ministers, that before their remove from one place to another, God hath permitted and ordered some weaning Providence to befall them; either denying wonted success to their labour, or alienating and cooling the affections of their People towards them, which not only makes the manner of their departure more easy, but the grounds of it more clear. Much so it falls out in our natural Death, the comfort of the World is insatiable to us before we leave it; the longer we live in it, the less we shall like it. We overlive most of our Comforts which engaged our Hearts to it, that we may more freely take our leave of it. It were good for Christians to observe the voice of such Providences as these, and answer the Designs of them in a greater willingness to die.

1. Is thy Body which was once hale and vigorous, now become a crazy, sickly, pained Body to thee, neither useful to God, nor comfortable to thee? A *Tabernacle* to groan and sigh in? And little hopes it will be recovered to a better temper; God hath ordered this to make thee willing to be divorced from it: the less desirable Life is, the less formidable Death will be.

2. Is thy Estate decayed and blasted by Providence, so that thy life which was once full of Creature-comforts, is now fill'd with Cares and Anxieties; O 'tis a weaning Providence to thee, and bespeaks thee the more cheerfully to bid the World farewell. The less comfort it gives you, the less it should entangle and engage you. We little know with what aking Hearts, and pensive Breasts, many of God's People

People walk up and down, tho' for Religion, or Reputation sake they put a good face upon it; but by these things, God is bespeaking and preparing them for a better State.

3. Is an Husband, a Wife, or dear Child-rend dead, and with them the comfort of Life laid in the Dust? why this the Lord sees necessary to do to persuade you to come after willingly? 'Tis the cutting a funder the roots in the Earth, that thou mayst fall the more easily. O how many strokes must God give at our Names, Estates, Relations, and Health, before we will give way to the last stroke of Death that fells us to the ground?

4. Do the times frown upon Religion? Do all things seem to threaten stormy times at hand? Are desirable Assemblies scattered? Nothing but sorrows and sufferings to be expected in this World? By these things God will imbitter the Earth, and sweeten Heaven to his People.

5. Is the beauty and sweetness of Christian Society defaced and decayed? Does that Communion which was wont to be pithy, substantial, spiritual, and edifying, become either frothy or contentious, so that thy Soul has no pleasure in it? This also is a weaning Providence to our Souls; *Strigelius* desired to die that he might be freed *ab implacabilibus Theologorum odiis*, from the Wranglings and Contentions that were in his time. Our fond affection to the Body requires all this, and much more to wean and mortify them.

Infer. IV. How comfortable is the Doctrine of the Resurrection to Believers, which assures them of receiving their Bodies again, tho' they part with them for a time!

Believers must die as well as others; their Union with Christ privileges them not from a Separation from their Bodies, *Rom. 8. 10. Heb. 9. 27.* But yet they have special grounds of Consolation against this doleful separation above all others. For,

1. Tho' they part with them, yet they part in hopes of receiving them again *1 Theff. 4. 13, 14.* They take not a final leave of them when they die. Husbandmen cast their Seed-corn into the Earth cheerfully and willingly, because they part with it in hope; so should we when we commit our Bodies to the Earth at Death.

2. Tho' Death separate these dear Friends from each other, yet it cannot separate either the one or other from Christ, *Luke 20. 37, 38. I am the God of Abraham. &c.* Your very Dust is God's, and the Grave rots not the bond of the Covenant.

3. The very same Body we lay down at Death, we shall assume again at the Resurrection; not only the same *specific*, but the same *numerical* Body; *Job 19. 25. 26. With these Eyes shall I see God.*

4. The unbodied Soul shall not find the want of its Body so as to afflict or disquiet it; nor the Body the want of its Soul; but the one shall be at rest in Heaven, and the other sweet asleep in the Grave; and all that long interval shall slide away without any afflicting sense of each other's absence. The time will be long, *Job 14. 12.* but if it were longer, it

cannot be afflicting, considering how the Soul is clothed immediately, *2 Cor. 5. 1, 2.* and how the Body sleeps sweetly in Jesus, *1 Theff. 4. 14.*

5. When the day of their re-couplings is come, the Soul will find the Body so transformed and improved, that it shall never receive prejudice from it any more, but a singular addition to its Happiness and Glory. Now it clogs us: *Mat. 26. 41. The Spirit indeed is willing, but the Flesh is weak.* It incumbers us with cares to provide for it, and eats up time and thoughts; but then it will be a spiritual Body, *1 Cor. 15. 43.* like to the Angels for manner of subsistence, *Luke. 20. 35, 36. 1 Cor. 6. 13.* and, which is the highest step of Glory, like unto Christ's glorious Body, *Phil. 3. 21.* Well therefore might the Father say, *Resurrectio mortuorum est Consolatio Christianorum*; The Resurrection of the Dead is the Consolation of Christians.

Use II. Of Reproof.

In the next place let me press you to regulate your love to your Bodies, by the rules of Religion and right Reason: I must press you to love them, tho' Nature it self teacheth you so to do; but I press you to love them as Christians, as Men that understand the right use and improvement of their Bodies. There are two sorts of errors in our love to the Body, one in *Defect*, the other in *Excess*; both come fully here to be censured and healed.

First, Some offend in the *defect* of love to their own Bodies, who use them as if they had no love for them, whose Souls act as if they were enemies to their own Bodies: They do not formally and directly hate them, but consequentially and eventually they may be said to hate them, and that.

(1.) By defiling them with filthy Lusts; so the Apostle speaks, *1 Cor. 6. 18. Every sin that a Man doth, is without the Body, but he that committeth Adultery sinneth against his own Body*: in other sins 'tis the instrument, but here 'tis both Instrument and Object; not only God, but your own Bodies are abused, and wronged by it. The Body may be considered two ways, either.

1. As our Vessel; or
2. As the Spirit's Temple.

1. As our Vessel or Instrument for natural and spiritual uses and services: and on that account we should not injure or defile it, *1 Theff. 4. 4, 5.* but possess it in sanctification and honour. The lusts of Uncleanneſs, Gluttony, and Drunkenneſs quench the vigour, blast the beauty, and destroy the health and honour of the Body; and so render it both naturally and morally unfit for the service and use of the Soul.

2. And the injury is yet greater, if we consider it as the Spirit's Temple. On this ground the Apostle strongly convinceth, and dissuadeth Christians from these abuses of the Body, *1 Cor. 6. 15, 16.* He argues from the Dignity God will put upon our Bodies by the Resurrection, *ver. 13, 14.* They are to be transformed, and made like unto Christ's glorious Body; and from the Honour he has already put upon the Bodies of the Saints in their union with Christ, *ver. 15, 16.* They, as well

as the Soul, are ingrafted into him, and joined with him; they are his Temples, to be dedicated, hallowed, and consecrated to his service. O let them not be made a sink for lusts, or meer strainers for meat and drink.

(2.) By macerating them with covetous lusts, denying them their due comforts and refreshments, and unmercifully burdening them with labours and sorrows about things that perish.

(1.) Some deny their Bodies due comforts and refreshments, which the natural and positive Laws of God both allow and command. Their Souls are cruel Step-mothers to their Bodies, and keep them too short; not out of a prudent and Christian design to starve their lusts, but to advance their estates. Of this evil Solomon speaks *Ecclef. 6. 22.* *There is an evil which I have seen under the Sun, and it is common among men; A man to whom God hath given Riches, Wealth and Honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his Soul of all that he desireth; yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof but a stranger eateth it. This is vanity, and it is an evil disease.* *Tenacity* is a disease of the Soul, like that of a *Dyscracy* in the Stomach, which so indispoeth it that it cannot receive with any appetite or delight the best refreshments at a plentiful Table. (2.) And others there are that wrong and abuse their own Bodies by laying unreasonable and unmerciful loads upon them, especially loads of grief and sorrow, wasting and weakening them beyond all rules of Reason or Religion. If a friend or relation die, they have less mercy on their own Bodies, than a conscientious man hath on the Horse he rides. Cares and sorrows are as deadly to the Body as a Sword, *1 Tim. 6. 10.* Intense and immoderate Grievs about worldly losses and crosses have slain their ten thousands: and which is strange, the Soul seems to take a certain kind of pleasure in loading and tormenting the Body. There is a real truth in that strange expression of *Seneca*, Sorrow it self hath a certain kind of pleasure attending it.

The Souls of some Mourners do willingly excite and provoke their own Grievs, when they begin to abate, which is like the whetting of the Knife that grows dull, to make it cut the deeper into the Body. Thus, as *Seneca* observes, some Parents that have lost their beloved Children, willingly call to mind their pleasant sayings, and pretty actions, to find a kind of pleasure in a fresh shower of tears for them; when, poor hearts! sorrow hath so broken them already, that they need consolations under their present sorrows, rather than irritations of new ones. And the Soul's unmercifulness to the Body, is in such cases farther discovered by its obstinate refusal of all that is comforting and relieving. So it is said of *Rachel*, *Jerem. 31. 15.* *Rachel weeping for her children, would not be comforted, because they were not.* So the *Israelites* harkned not unto *Mose*, because of the anguish of spirit, and the cruel bondage, *Exod. 6. 9.* Thus we studiously rake together, and exasperate whatsoever is piercing, wounding, and overwhelming; and shut our Ears to all that is relieving and supporting, which is cruelty to our own Bodies, add that which hath so far broken the

health and strength of some Bodies, that they are never like to be useful instruments to the Soul any more in this world; such deep and desperate wounds have their own Souls given them by immoderate Grief, as will never be perfectly healed but by the Resurrection. Of those wounds the body may say, as it is *Zeck. 13. 6.* These are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house (or by the hand) of my friend; thus my own Soul hath dealt cruelly and unmercifully with me.

Secondly, Others offend in the *Excess* and extravagancy of their love to the Body, and these are a hundred to one in number with those that sin in defect of love. My friends, upon a due search it will be found, that the love of our Souls generally degenerates into fondness and folly: There is but little well tempered and ordinate love found among men. We make fondlings, yea, we make Idols of our own Bodies; we rob God, yea our own Souls, to give to the Body. It is not a natural and kindly heat of love, but a meer feverish heat which preys upon the very Spirits of Religion, which is found with many of us. This feverish distemper may be discovered by the beating of our pulse in 3 or 4 particulars.

(1.) This appears by our sinful indulgence to our whining appetites. We give the flesh whatsoever it craves, and can deny it nothing it desires; pampering the Body, to the great injury and hazard of the Soul. Some have their conversation in the lusts of the flesh, as it is *Eph. 2. 3.* trading only in those things that please and pamper the flesh: *They sow to the flesh*, *Gal. 6. 8.* (i. e.) all their studies and labours are but the sowing of the seeds of pleasure to the flesh. Not a handful of spiritual seed sown in Prayer for the Soul all the day long; what the Body craves, the obsequious Soul like a slave, is at its beck to give it. *Tir. 3. 3.* *Serving divers lusts and pleasures*; attending to every knock and call, to fulfil the desires of the flesh. O how little do these men understand the life of Religion, or the great design of Christianity? which consists in mortifying, and not pampering and gratifying the Body, *Rom. 14. 13, 14.* And according to that rule all serious Christians order their Bodies, giving them what is needful to keep them serviceable and useful to the Soul, but not gratifying their irregular desires; giving what their wants, not what their wantonness calls for. So *Paul*, *1 Cor. 9. 27.* I beat it down, and keep it under; he understood it as his *Servant* not his *Master*. He knew that *Hagar* would quickly perk up, and domineer over *Sarah*, expect more attendance than the Soul, except it were kept under: These two verbs, *συνάμω* and *ἀναγορεύω* are very emphatical; the former signifies to make it black and blue with buffeting, the other, to bring it under by checks and rebukes, as Masters that understand their Place and Authority use to do with insolent and wanton Servants.

It was a rare expression of a *Heathen*, *Major sum, & ad majora natus, quam ut corporis mei sim mancipium*: I am greater, and born to greater things, than that I should be a drudge

Inest quidam dule tristitia.
Seneca.
Ep. 50.

Cum eccurrant sermones eorum jucundi, conversatio hilaris, officiosa pietas; tunc oculi velut in gaudio relaxantur.
Id. ibid.

or vassal to my Body. And it was the saying of a pious Diviue, when he felt the Flesh rebellious and wanton, *Ego faciam, aselle, ut non calcitres*: I will make thee, thou As, that thou shalt not kick. I know the superstitious Papists place much of Religion in these external things, but tho' they abuse them to an ill purpose, there is a necessary and lawful use of these abridgments and restraints upon the Body; and it will be impossible to mortify, and starve our Lusts, without a due rigour and severity to our Flesh. But how little are many acquainted with these things? They deal with their Bodies as David with *Adonijah*, of whom it's said, 1 *Kings* 1. 6. His Father had not displeased him at any time, in saying, Why hast thou done so? And just so our Flesh requites us by its Rebellions and Treasons against the Soul; it seeks the life of the Soul, which seeks nothing more than its content and pleasure: this is not ordinate love, but fondness and folly, and what we shall bitterly repent for at last.

(2.) It appears by our sparing and favouring of them, in the necessary uses and services we have for them in Religion. Many will rather starve their Souls, than work and exercise their Bodies, or disturb their sluggish rest: thus the idle excuses and pretences of endangering our Health, oftentimes put by the duties of Religion, or at least lose the fittest and properest season for them: We are lazy upon our beds when we should be wrestling upon our knees: The World is suffered to get the start of Religion in the mornings, and so Religion is never able to overtake it all the day long. This was none of *David's* course, he prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried, *Psal.* 119. 147. and *Psal.* 5. 3. *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my Prayer unto thee, and will look up.* And indeed we should consecrate unto God the freest and fittest parts of our time, when our bodily Senses are most vigorous; and we would do so (except God by his providence disable us) were our Hearts fully set for God, and Religion lay with weight upon our Spirits.

Some I confess cannot receive this injunction, being naturally disabled by prevailing Infirmities; but those that can, ought to do so. But O how many slothful excuses doth the Flesh invent to put off duty! We shall injure our Health, &c. O the hypocrisy of such pleas! If profit or pleasure call us up, we have no such shifts, but can rise early, and sit up late.

O Friends, why hath God given you Bodies, if not to waste and wear them out in his service, and the service of your own Souls? if your Bodies must not be put to it, and exercised this way, where is the mercy of having a Body? If a stately Horse were given you on this condition, that you must not ride or work him, what benefit would such a gift be to you? Your Bodies must and will wear out, and it's better wear them with working, than with rusting: we are generally more solicitous to live long, than to live usefully and serviceably; and it may be our Health had been more precious in the eyes of God, if it had been less pre-

cious in our own eyes. 'Tis just with God to destroy that Health with diseases, which he sees we would cast away in slothfulness and idleness. Think with thy self, had such a Soul as *Timothy's* or *Gaius's* been blest with such a Body as thine, so strong and vigorous, so apt and able for service, they would have honoured God more in it in a day, than perhaps you do in a year. Certainly this is not Love, but Laziness; not a due improvement, but a sinful neglect and abuse of the Body, to let it rust out in idleness, which might be employed so many ways for God, for your own and others Souls. Well, remember Death will shortly dissolve them, and then they can be of no more use; and if you expect God should put Glory and Honour upon them at the Resurrection, use them for God now, with a faithful self-denying diligence.

(3.) It appears by our cowardly shrinking from dangers that threaten them, when the Glory of God, our own and others Salvation, bid us expose and not regard them. Some there are, that rather than they will adventure their Flesh to the rage of Man, will hazard their Souls to the wrath of God. They are too tender to suffer pain or restraint for Christ, but consider not what sufferings are prepared for the fearful and unbelieving in the World to come, *Rev.* 21. 8. How many sad examples do the Church Histories of antient and latter times afford us, of Men who consulting with flesh and blood in time of danger, have in pity to their Bodies ruined their Souls!

There be but few like minded with *Paul*, who set a low price upon his liberty or life for Christ, *Acts* 20. 24. or with those worthy *Jews*, *Dan.* 3. 28. who yielded their Bodies to preserve their Consciences. Few of *Chrysostom's* mind, who told the *Empress*, *Nikisi* peccatum times, I fear nothing but Sin; or of *Basil's* who told the *Emperor*, God threatened Hell, whereas he threatened but a Prison. That is a remarkable Rule that Christ gives us, *Mat.* 10. 28. The sum of it is, to set God against Man, the Soul against the Body, and Hell against temporal sufferings; and so surmounting these low fleshly considerations, to cleave to our duty in the face of dangers. You read, *Gal.* 1. 16. how in pursuit of duty, tho' surrounded with danger, *Paul* would not confer or consult with flesh and blood i. e. ask its opinion which were best, or stay for its consent till it were willing to suffer; he understood not that the Flesh had any voice at the Council table in his Soul, but willing or unwilling, if duty call for it, he was resolved to hazard it for God.

We have a great many little *Politicians* among us, who think to husband their Lives and Liberties a great deal better than other plain-hearted and too forward Christians do; but these *Politicks* will be their perdition, and their craft will betray them to ruin. They will lose their Lives by saving them, when others will save them by losing them, *Matth.* 10. 39. For the interest of the Body depends on and follows the safety of the Souls as the Cabin doth the Ship.

O my Friends, let me beg you not to love your Bodies into Hell, and your Souls too for their sakes: be not so fear'd at the sufferings of the Body, as with poor *Spir*a to dash them both

against

against the wrath of the great and terrible God. Most of those Souls that are now in Hell, are there upon the account of their indulgence to the flesh, they could not deny the *Flesh*, and now are denied by God. They could not suffer from *Men*, and now must suffer the vengeance of *eternal Fire*.

(4.) In a word; it appears we love them fondly and irregularly, in that we cannot with any patience think of death and separation from them. How do some men fright at the very name of Death! and no Arguments can persuade them seriously to think of an unbodied and separated state. 'Tis as Death to them, to bring their thoughts close to that ungrateful Subject. A Christian that loves his Body regularly and moderately, can look into his own Grave with a composed mind, and speak familiarly of it as *Jeb* 17. 14. And *Peter* speaks of the putting off of his Body by Death, as a man would of the putting off of his Cloaths at night, *2 Pet.* 1. 13, 14. And certainly such men have a great advantage above all others, both as to the tranquility of their Life and Death. You know a parting time must come, and the more fond you are of them, the more bitter and doleful that time will be. Nothing, except the guilt, and terrible charges of Conscience, put men into terrors at death, more than our fondness of the Body. I do confess, Christless persons have a great deal of reason to be shy of death; their dying day is their undoing day: but for Christians to startle and fright at it, is strange, considering how great a friend Death will be to them that are in Christ. What are you afraid of? What, to go to Christ? to be freed of Sin and Affliction too soon? Certainly this hath not been so comfortable a habitation to you, that you should be loth to exchange it for a heavenly one.

Use III. Of Exhortation.

TO conclude; Seeing there is so strict a Friendship and tender Affection betwixt Soul and Body, let me persuade every Soul of you to express your love to the Body, by labouring to get Union with Jesus Christ, and thereby to prevent the utter ruine of both to all Eternity.

Souls, if you love your selves, or the Bodies you dwell in, shew it by your preventing care in season, lest they be cast away for ever. How can you say you love them, when you daily expose them to the everlasting wrath of God, by employing them as Weapons of Unrighteousness, to fight against him that formed them? You feed and pamper them on Earth, you give them all the delights and pleasures you can procure for them in this World; but you take no care what shall become of them, nor your souls neither, after Death hath separated them. Oh cruel Souls! cruel not to others, but to your selves, and to your own flesh, which you pretend so much love to! Is this your love to your Bodies? What, to employ them in Satan's service on Earth, and then to be cast as a Prey to him for ever in Hell? You think the rigor and mortification of the Saints, their abstemiousness and self-denial, their cares, fears, and diligence, to be too great severity to their Bodies: but they know, these are the most real

evidences of their true love to them; they love them too well to cast them away as you do. Alas! your love to the Body doth not consist in feeding, and cloathing, and pleasing it; but in getting it united to Christ, and made the *Temple of the Holy Ghost*; in using it for God, and dedicating it to God.

I beseech you, Brethren, by the Mercies of God, to present your Bodies living Sacrifices to God, which is your reasonable service, *Rom.* 12. 1. The Soul should look upon the Body as a wise Parent upon a rebellious or wanton Child, that would (if left to it self) quickly bring it self to the *Gallows*; the Father looks on him with compassion and melting bowels, and saith, with the Rod in his hand, and Tears in his eyes, *My Child, my naughty, disobedient, headstrong Child, I resolve to chastise thee severely, I love thee too well to suffer thee to be ruin'd, if my care or corrections may prevent it.* So should our Souls evidence their love to, and care over their own rebellious flesh. 'Tis cruelty, not love or pity, to indulge them to their own destruction.

Except you have *gracious Souls*, you shall never have *glorified Bodies*: except your Souls be united with Christ, the happiness of your Bodies as well as Souls is lost to all Eternity. Know you not that the everlasting condition of your Bodies follows and depends on the Interest your Souls now get in Christ? Oh! that this one sad Truth might sink deep into all our considerations this day; That if your Bodies be snares to your Souls, and your Souls be now regardless of the future estate of themselves and them; assuredly they will have a bitter parting at Death, a terrible meeting again at the Resurrection, and horrid reflections upon each other, mutually charging their ruin upon each other to all Eternity: Whilst they that are in Christ part in hope, meet with joy, and bless God for each other for evermore.

II P^E T. I. 13, 14.

Tea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this Tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance:

Knowing that shortly I must put off this my Tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

AT the 10th verse of this Chapter, the Apostle sums up his foregoing Precepts and Exhortations in one great and most important Duty, the *making sure of their Calling and Election*. This Exhortation he enforceth on them by a most solemn and weighty motive, *ver. 11. Even an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom.* No Work of greater necessity or difficulty, than to make sure our Salvation; no Argument more forcible and prevalent, than an easie and free entrance into Glory at death, an *iswara's*, a sweet and comfortable dissolution, to enter the Port of Glory before a Wind, with our full lading of Comfort, Peace and Joy in believing, our Sails full, and our Streamers flying: Oh! how much better is this, than to lie Wind-bound, I mean Heart.

Heart-bound, at the Harbour's mouth ! tofs'd up and down with fears, doubts, and manifold temptations, making many a-board to fetch the *Harbour* ; for so much is signified in his figurative and allusive expression, *ver. 11.*

And for their encouragement in this great and difficult Work, he engageth himself by promise to give them all the assistance he can, whilst God should continue his life; and knowing that would be but a little while, he resolves to use his utmost endeavour to secure these things in their Memories after his death, that they might not die with him. This is the general scope and order of the Words.

Wherein more particularly we have,

1. His exemplary industry and diligence in his Ministerial Work
2. The Consideration stimulating and provoking him thereunto.

1. His exemplary industry and diligence in his Ministerial Work. In which two things are remarkable, *viz.* (1.) The quality of his

*Διευρίγων, excitare, ex-
perge facere, i. e. mentes
vestras tanquam dormitan-
tes ac torpentes, &c.
Poli Synopsis.*

work, which was to stir them up, by putting them in remembrance, to keep the heavenly flame of Love and Zeal lively upon the Altar of their Hearts. He well knew what a sleepy Disease the

best Christians are troubled with, and therefore he had need to be stirring them up, and awakening them to their Duty. (2.) The constancy of his Work, as long as I am in this *Tabernacle* ; (i. e.) as long as I live in this World. The Body is here called a *Tabernacle*, in respect of its movableness and frailty, and in opposition to that House made without hands, eternal in the Heavens. And it is observable how he limits and bounds his serviceableness to them by his commoration in his *Tabernacle* or Body, as well knowing after death he could be no longer useful to them, or any others in this World. Death puts an end to all our Ministerial usefulness: but till that time he judg'd it meet, and becoming him, to be aiding and assisting their Faith: Our Life and Labour must end together.

2. We have here the Motive or Consideration stimulating and provoking him to this diligence, knowing that I must shortly put off this *Tabernacle*, even as the Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me: In which words he gives an account of, (1.) The speediness ; (2.) Necessity ; (3.) Voluntariness of his Death, and the way and means by which he knew it. All these must be considered singly and apart, and then valued all together, as they amount to a weighty Argument or Motive to excite him to diligence in his Duty.

Taxidi brevi futurum.
Every Christian knows not
the time of his death, as Pe-
ter did, by special Revelati-
on. — But tho' we know it
not by a word spoken to us in
particular, we know it by a
word written for all in com-
mon, Eccl. 9. 5. The living
know that they must die.

(1.) He reflects upon the speediness or near approach of his death. I must [shortly] put off this my *Tabernacle*, which is a form of Speech of the same importance with that of Paul, 2 Tim. 4. 6. The time of my departure is at hand, my time in the Body is almost at an end.

(2.) The necessity of his death: It is not I may, but I must put off this my *Tabernacle* ; yea, I must put it off shortly ;

for so the Lord had shewed him : Christ had signified it expressly to him, *John 21. 18, 19.* And besides this, most Expositors think this Clause refers to some special Vision or Revelation which Peter had of the time and manner of his own death : so that besides the natural necessity, or the inevitableness of his death by the Law of Nature, he was certified of it by special Revelation. We have here also,

(3.) The voluntariness of his death ; for Voluntariness is consistent enough with the necessity of the Event. I must put off, or lay down my *Tabernacle* : he saith not, I must be torn by violence from it, but I must *depose*, or lay it down. *Camera* will have the word here used for Death, properly to signify the laying down of one's Garments : he made no more of putting off his Body than his Garments.

Upon the consideration of the whole matter, the speediness of his death, which he knew to be at hand ; the necessity of it, that when it came he must be gone from them, and could be no more useful to them ; and his own inclination to be with Christ in a better state, being as willing to be gone as a weary Traveller to be at home ; he judg'd it meet, or becoming him, as he was called of Christ to feed his Sheep, as he was girded extraordinarily for the Church's service, full of spiritual Excellencies, all which in a short time would be taken away from them by death: I say, upon all these accounts he could not but judge it meet to be stirring them up, and every way striving to be as useful as he might.

Hence the Note will be,

How strong soever the Afflictions and Inclinations of Souls are to the fleshly Tabernacles they now live in, yet they must put them off, and that speedily.

The point lies very plain before us in the Scriptures. That is a remarkable expression we have in *Job 16. 22.* When a few years are come, I shall go the way whence I shall not return. In the Hebrew it is, When the years of number, or my numbered years are come ; years so numbered, that they are circumscribed in a very short period of Time. When those few years are past, then I must go to my long home, my everlasting abode, never more to return to this World : The way whence I shall not return ; elsewhere called the way of all flesh, *Josh. 23. 15.* and the way of all the Earth, 1 King. 2. 2.

There is no man that hath power over the Spirit to retain the Spirit ; neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that War. By Spirit understand the natural Spirit, or breath of Life, which, as I shewed before, connects or ties the Soul and Body together. This Spirit no man can retain in the day of death. We can (as one speaks) as well stop the Chariot of the Sun when passing to night, and chase away the shadows of the evening, as escape this hour of darkness that is coming upon us. A Man may escape the Wars by pleading privilege of years, or weakness of Body, or the King's Protection, or by sending another in his room ; but in this War the Press is so strict, that it admits no dispensation ; young or old, weak or strong, willing or unwilling, all's one, into the Field we must go, and look that last and most dreadful

*Depondere
dicat, ut
significet
se voluntarie
mortem obitu-
rum esse
pro Chris-
to. Paul.*

*(1.) The
certainty of
death, Job
16. 22.
Anni nu-
merati (2.)
q. i. nume-
rati sunt
adeo ut
brevisima
circum-
scripti.*

Eccl. 8. 8.

*Mortem
(inquat Se-
neca) nulla
diligentia
evitari, nul-
la fortassis
domari,
nulla re-
tentari va-
lens.*

ful Enemy in the face. 'Tis in vain to think of sending another in our room, for no man dieth by Proxy; or to think of compounding with Death, as those fell-deluding Fools did, *1/sa* 28. 15. who thought they had been discharged of the Debt by feigning the Sergeant: No, no there is no discharge in that War. *Nihil prodest or a concludere, & vitam fugientem retinere*, saith Hierom on that Text; Let us shut our mouths never so close, struggle against death never so hard, there is no more retaining the Spirit, than a Woman can retain the Fruit of her Womb, when the full time of her deliverance is come. Suppose a Man were sitting upon a Throne of Majesty, surrounded with armed Guards, or in the midst of a College of expert and learned Physicians, Death will pass all these Guards to deliver thee the fatal Message: Neither can Art help thee, when Nature it self gives thee up.

The Law of Mortality binds all, good and bad, young and old, the most useful and desirable Saints, whom the World can worst spare, as well as useless and undesirable Sinners, *Rom.* 8. 10. *And if Christ (or tho' Christ) be in you, the Body is dead because of Sin.* Peter himself must put off his Tabernacle, for they are but Tabernacles, frail and movable frames, not built for continuance: these will drop off from our Souls, as the Shell falls off from the Bird in the Nest: be our earthly Tabernacles never so strong or pleasant, we must depose them, and that *shortly*; our Lease in them will expire quickly, we have but a short term. *James* 4. 14. like a thin Mist in the morning, which the Sun presently dissipates; this is a Metaphor chosen from the Air: You have one from the Land, where the swift Post runs, *Job* 9. 25. So doth our Life from Stage to Stage, till its journey be finished; and a third from the Waters, there sail the swift Ships, *Job* 9. 26. which weighing Anchor, and putting into the Sea, continually lessen the Land, till at last they have quite lost sight of it: from the Fire, *Psal.* 58. 4. The lives of Men are as soon extinct as a blaze made with dry Thorns, which is almost as soon out as in. Thus you see how the Spirit of God hath borrowed Metaphors from all the Elements of Nature, to shadow forth the brevity and frailty of that Life we now live in these Tabernacles: so that we may say as one did before us, *Nescio an dicenda sit vita mortalis, an vitalis mors*; I know not which to call it, a mortal Life, or a living Death.

The continuance of these our Tabernacles: or Bodies is short, whether we consider them *absolutely or comparatively*,

1. *Absolutely.* If they should stand 70 or 80 years, which is the longest duration, *Psal.* 90. 10. how soon will that time run out? What are years that are past but as a Dream that is vanished, or as the waters that are past away? it is *in fluxu continuo*: there is no stopping its swift course, or calling back a moment that is past. Death set out in its journey towards us the same hour we were born; and how near is it come this day to many of us? It hath us in chase, and will quickly fetch us up, and overtake us; but few stand so long as the utmost date.

2. *Comparatively.* Let us compare our time in these Tabernacles, (1.) either with Eternity, or with him who inhabits it, and it shrinks up into nothing; *Psal.* 39. 5. *My age is nothing unto thee.* So vast is the disproportion, that it seems not only little, but nothing at all. Or (2.) with the duration of the Bodies of Men in the first Ages of the World, when they lived many hundred years in these fleshly Tabernacles. The length of their Life was the benefit of the World, because Religion was then *amplius datus*, a thing handed down from Father to Son; but certainly it would be no benefit to us that are in Christ, to be so long suspended the fruition of God in the everlasting Rest.

The grounds and reasons of this Necessity that lies upon all, to put off their earthly Tabernacles so soon, are.

1. The Law of God, or his Appointment.
2. The Providence of God ordering it futable to this Appointment.

1. The Law or appointment of God which came in force immediately upon the Fall; *Gen.* 2. 17. *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* And accordingly it took place upon all Mankind immediately upon the first Transgression, *Rom.* 5. 12. *Death entered by sin.* The threatening was not his immediate actual personal Death in the day that he should eat, but a state of Mortality to commence from that time to him and his posterity; hence it's said, *Heb.* 9. 27. *It is appointed to all Men once to die.*

2. The Providence of God ordering and framing the Body of Man futable to this his appointment; a frail, weak Creature, having the seeds of death in his Constitution: thousands of Diseases and Infirmities are bred in his Nature, and the smallest pore in his Body is a door large enough to let in Death. Hence his Body is compared to a piece of Cloth which Moths have fretted, *Psal.* 39. 11. it's become a sorry rotten thing which cannot long hang together. And indeed it is a wonder it continues so long as it doth.

And both these, viz. the divine Appointment and Providence, are in pursuance of a double design, or for the payment of a twofold debt which God owes to the first and to the second Adam.

(1.) By cutting off the Life, or dissolving the Tabernacles of wicked Men, God pays that debt of Justice owing to the first Adam's sinful Posterity, whose sins cry daily to his Justice to cut them off. *Rom.* 6. 23. *The wages of sin is death.* And indeed it is admirable that his patience suffers ungodly Men to live so long as they do, for he endures with much long suffering, *Rom.* 9. 22. He sees all their sins, he is grieved at the heart with them: his forbearance doth but encourage them the more to sin against him; *Ecclef.* 8. 11. *Because Sentence, &c. yet forbears; Forty years long was I grieved with this Generation.* *Psal.* 95. 10. And it's wonderful that Patience doth not crack under such a Load. *Habakkuk* admired it, *Habak.* 1. 13. *Thou art of power Eyes, &c.* Yet he suffers them to spend lavishly

Quotidie morimur, quotidie edim demitur aliqua pars vitæ; & tunc quoque cum creamus, vita decrevit. Infantiam amittimus, deinde Adulescentiam, usque ad hesternam. Quicquid transit temporis perit.

(2) The speediness of death. The Scriptures borrow Metaphors from all the Elements to this purpose.

lavishly upon his patience from year to year, but Justice must do its Office at last.

(2.) By cutting off the lives of good men, God pays to Christ the reward of his Sufferings, the end of his Death, which was to bring many Sons to Glory, *Heb. 2. 10.* Alas! it answers not Christ's end and intention in dying, to have his People so remote from him; *John 17. 24.* *He would have them where he is, that they might behold his Glory* Two vehement desires are satisfied by this appointment of God, and its execution, *viz.*

1. Christ's.

2. The Saints.

1. Christ's desires are satisfied; for this is the thing he all along kept his eye upon in the whole Work of his Mediation; it was to bring us to God, *1 Pet. 3. 18.* Tho' he be in Glory, yet his Mystical Body is not full till all the Elect be gathered in by Conversion; and gathered home by Glorification, *Ephes. 1. 23.* The Church is his fulness. He is not fully satisfied till he see his Seed, the Souls he died for, safe in Heaven; and then the Debt due to him for all his Sufferings is fully paid him, *Isa. 53. 11.* He sees the travail of his Soul. As it is the greatest satisfaction and pleasure a Man is capable of in this World, to see a great Design which hath been long projecting and managing, at last by an orderly Conduct brought to its perfection.

2. The desires of the Saints are hereby satisfied, and their weary Souls brought to rest. Oh! what do gracious Souls more pant after than the full enjoyment of God, and the Vision of his Face! the state of freedom from sin, and complete conformity to Jesus Christ! From the day of their espousals to Christ, these desires have been working in their Souls. Love and Patience have each acted its part in them, *2 Thess. 3. 5.* Love hath put them into a holy ardor and longing to be with Christ; Patience hath qualified and allayed those desires, and supported the Soul under the delay. Love cries, Come, Lord, come; Patience commands us to wait the appointed time. This appointed time on which so great hopes and expectations depend, is the time of dissolving these Tabernacles; for till then the Soul's Rest is suspended; and if it were perfectly freed from all other loads and burdens, both of Sin and Affliction, yet its very absence from Christ would alone make it restless: for it is with the Soul in the Body, as it is with any other Creature that is off its Centre, it doth and must gravitate and propend, it is still moving and inclining farther, and feels not it self ease and at rest where it is, be its condition in other respects never so ease. *2 Cor. 5. 6.* *Whilst we are at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord.* You have a little Shadow or Emblem of this in other Creatures: You see the Rivers, tho' they glide never so sweetly betwixt the fragrant Banks of the most pleasant Meadows in their course and passage, yet on they go towards the Sea; and if they meet with never so many Rocks or Hills to resist their course, they will either strive to get a passage through them, or if that may not be, they will fetch a compass, and creep about them, and nothing can

stop them till by a central force they have finished their weary course, and poured themselves into the bosom of the Ocean. Or as it is with your selves, when abroad from your Habitations and Relations; this may be pleasing a little while; but if every day might be a Festival, it would not long please you, because you are not at home.

The main Motives that persuade gracious Souls to abide here, are to finish the Work of their own Salvation, and farther other mens; but as their Evidences for Heaven grow clearer to themselves, and their capacity of service less to others, so must their desires to be with Christ be more and more inflamed.

Now the case so standing, that Christ's condition in Heaven being a condition of desire and longing for the enjoyment of his People there, and all the Glory of Heaven would not content him without that; and the condition of his People on Earth being also a state of longing, groaning, and panting to be with Him, and all the Pleasures and Delights and Comforts they have on Earth will not content them without it: How wise and gracious an appointment of Heaven is it, that these our Tabernacles shall and must be put off, and that shortly! For hereby a full and mutual satisfaction is given to the restless desires both of Christ's heart and of theirs. See the reflected flames of Love betwixt them in *Rev. 22. The Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let him that is athirst come; Behold, I come quickly: even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.* Delays make the heart sad, *Prov. 13. 12.* Should our commoration on Earth be long, our Patience had need be much greater than it is; but under all our burdens here, this is our relief, it is but a little while, and all will be well, as well as our Souls can desire to have it.

Must we put off these Tabernacles? Is Death *Infer. I.* necessary and inevitable? *Then 'tis our wisdom to sweeten to our selves that Cup which we must drink, and make that as pleasant to us as we can, which we know cannot be avoided.* Die we must, whether we be fit or unfit, willing or unwilling: 'tis to no purpose to shrug at the name, or shrink back from the thing. In all Ages of the World, Death hath swept the Stage clean of one Generation to make room for another, and so it will from Age to Age till the Stage be taken down in the general dissolution.

But tho' Death be inevitable by all, it is not alike evil, bitter and dreadful to all. Some tremble, others triumph at the appearance of it. Some meet it half way, receive it as a friend, and can bid it welcome, and die by consent, making that the matter of their Election, which in it self is necessary and unavoidable: so did *Paul, Philip. 1. 23.* But others are drawn or rent by plain violence from the Body, *Job 27. 8.* when God draws out their Souls.

That Man is happy indeed, whose heart falls in with the appointment of God, so voluntarily and freely, as that he dare not only look Death in the face with confidence, but go along with it by consent of will. Remarkable to this purpose is that which the Apostle asserts of the frame of his own heart, *2 Cor. 5. 8.* *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from*

from the Body, and present with the Lord. Here is both Confidence and Complacency, with respect to Death. *Θασιμότης*. The word signifies Courage, Fortitude; or, if you will, an undaunted boldness and presence of mind, when we look the King of Terrors in the face. We dare venture upon Death, we dare take it by the cold hand, and bid it welcome. We dare defie its Enmity, and deride its noxious Power, 1 Cor. 15. 55. *O Death, where is thy sting?* And that's not all, we have complacency in it, as well as confidence to encounter it. *Εὐθυμότης*. We are willing; the Translation is too flat, *We are well pleased*; it is a desirable, a grateful thing to us, to die; but yet not in an absolute, but comparative consideration, *ὑποκρίσθαι μάλλον*, we are willing rather, (i. e.) rather than not see and enjoy our Lord Jesus Christ; rather than to be here always sinning and groaning. There is no complacency in Death, in it self it is not desirable. But if we must go thro' that streight gate, or not see God; we are willing rather to be absent from the Body. So that you see Death was not the matter of his submission only, he did not yield to what he could not avoid, but he ballances the evils of Death with the privileges it admits the Soul into, and then pronounces, *ὑποκρίσθαι*, we are content, yea, pleased to die.

We cannot live always if we would, and our Hearts should be wrought to that frame, as to say, we would not live always if we could. Job 7. 16. *I would not live always, or long*, saith he. But why should Job deprecate that which was not attainable? *I would not live always*; he needed not to trouble himself about that, it being impossible that he should: both statute and natural Law forbid it. Ay, but this is his sense: Supposing no such necessity as there is, if it were pure matter of election; upon a due ballancing of Accounts, and comparing the Good and Evil of Death, I would not be confin'd always, or for any long time to the Body: It would be a Bondage unsupportable to be here always.

Indeed those that have their Portion, their All, in this life, have no desire to be gone hence. They that were never changed by Grace, desire no change by Death; if such a Concession were made to them, as was once to an English Parliament, That they should never be dissolved but by their own consent, when would they say as Paul, *I desire to be dissolved*? But it's far otherwise with them whose Portion and Affections are in another World, they would not live always if they might, knowing; that never to die, is never to be happy.

If you say, *This is an excellent and most desirable temper of Soul; but how did these holy men attain it? Or what is the course we may take to get the like frame of willingness?*

They attained it, and you may attain it in such Methods as these.

1. They lived in the believing views of the invisible World, and so must you, if ever Death be desirable in your eyes, 2 Cor. 4. 18. It's said of all that died comfortably, *that they died in Faith*, Heb. 11. 13. You will never be willing to go along with Death, except you know where it will carry you.

Vol. I.

2. They had assurance of Heaven, as well as Faith to discern it. Assurance is a lump of Sugar indeed in the bitter Cup of Death; nothing sweetens like it. So 2 Cor. 5. 1. so Job 19. 26, 27. This puts Roses into the pale Cheeks of Death, and makes it amiable, 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56. and Rom. 8. 38, 39.

3. Their Hearts were weaned from this World, and the inordinate affection of a terrene life, Phil. 3. 8. all was dung and dross for Christ; they trampled under foot what we hug in our bosoms. So 'tis said, Heb. 10. 34. *Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in your selves, &c.* And so it must be with us, if ever we obtain a complacency in Death.

4. They ordered their Conversations with much Integrity, and so kept their Consciences pure and void of offence; Acts 24. 16. *Herein do I exercise my self, &c.* and this was their comfort at last, 2 Cor. 1. 12. *This is our rejoicing, &c.* So Job 27. 5. *My Integrity will I not let go till I die.* Oh! this unflinching Death of all its terrors.

5. They kept their love to Christ at the height: that flame was vehement in their Souls, and made them despise the terror, and desire the friendly assistance of Death, to bring them to the sight of Jesus Christ, Phil. 1. 23. so Ignatius, *O how I long, &c.* Thus it must be with you, if ever you make Death eligible and lovely to you, which is terrible in it self. There is a loveliness in the Death, as well as in the Life of a Christian: *Let me die the death of the righteous*, said Balaam.

Must we put off these Tabernacles of Flesh? Inscr. II. *How necessary is it that every Soul look out in season, and make provision for another habitation?* If you must be turned out of one House, you must provide another, or lie in the streets. This the Apostle comforted himself with, That if *unclothed, he should not be found naked*, 2 Cor. 5. 1. *ans to pray* a Building of God, a House not made with hands. You must turn out, and that shortly, from these earthly habitations. Oh! what provision have you made for your Souls *time for so* that day? The Soul of Adrian was at a sad great a loss, when he saw he must be turn'd out of this World; *O Animula vagula, blandula, heu quo vadis!* But it was Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob's privilege, that God had prepared for them a City, Heb. 11. 16.

I know 'tis a common presumption of mortals, that they shall be in Heaven, when they can be no longer on Earth. *Presumendo sperant, & sperando pereunt.* But a few moments will convince them of their fatal mistake; their poor Souls will meet with a confounding repulse, like that *Matth. 7. 22.* There is indeed a City full of heavenly Mansions prepared for some: but who are they that are entitled to it, and may confidently expect to be received into it? To be sure, not the presumptuous, who make a Bridge of their own Shadows, and so fall and perish in the Waters. Brethren, it is one of the most solemn enquiries you were ever put upon: and therefore I beseech you see whether your Characters set you among those men or no.

1. Those that are new-born shall be clothed with their new House from Heaven, when
A a a a Death

Quest.

Sol.

Death uncloths them of these Tabernacles : The *New Jerusalem* hath none but newborn Inhabitants, 1 *Per.* 1. 3, 4. and Christ tells us, *John* 3. 3. *all others are excluded.* Glory is the Privilege of Grace. Let Nature be adorned and cultivated how it will, if not renewed by Grace, there's no hope of Glory. You must be born again, or turned back again from the Gates of Heaven disappointed. You must be regenerated or damned. This alters the temper of thy heart, and futes it to the life of God which is indispensably necessary to them that shall live with him. Else Heaven would be no Heaven to us, *Rom.* 8. 7. and therefore we must be wrought this way to it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. no privilege of Nature, no duties of Religion avail without this, *Gal.* 6. 15. If Morality without Regeneration could bring Men to Heaven, why are not the Heathens there ? If Strictness in Duty without Regeneration, why not the Pharisees there ? Believe it, neither Names nor Duties, no nor the Blood of Christ, ever did or shall bring one Soul to glory without it. O then thou that boastest of a house in Heaven, lay thine hand on thy heart, and ask it, (1) Am I a new Creature, (*i. e.*) Am I renewed ? (2) In my state and condition ? 1 *John* 3. 14. *past from death to life.* (3) In my frame and temper ? *Eph.* 5. 8. *once darkness, now light in the Lord.* (4) In my practice and conversation ? *Eph.* 2. 12, 13. 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. If not, my Soul is destitute of a habitation in the City of God ; and when I die, my Body must lie in the lonely house of the Grave, that dark Vault and Prison, and my Soul be shut out from God into outer darkness.

2. Those that live as Strangers and Pilgrims on Earth, seeking a better place and state than this World affords them, for them God hath made preparations in Glory, *Heb.* 11. 13, 16. If you be strangers on earth, you are the Inhabitants of Heaven. Now there be 4 things included in this Character. (1) They look not on this World as their own home, nor on the people of it, as their own people, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. *ἀλλήκοι, ἵνα* be unpeopled. There are none of my fellow-Citizens, we must go two ways at death. (2) They set not their affections on things present as their portion 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. *Ἰνα* 13, 14. Their Bodies are here, their Hearts in Heaven. (3.) Their carriage and manner of life not like the men of this World, 1 *Per.* 4. 4. *ἐν κόσμῳ*. So the Rule guides them, *Rom.* 12. 2. and for their course is steered; at least intended, *Philip.* 3. 20. our *πρόσθετα*, our Trade is in Heaven. (4) Their *Dialect* and Language differs from the *Natives* of this World. Their Language is earthly, 1 *John* 4. 5. 6. but these have a *pure lip*, *Zeph.* 3. 9. (5) Their Society and chosen Companions are not of this World, *Psal.* 16. 3. They are a company of themselves, *Aff.* 4. 21. (6) Their spirit and temper of heart is not after the World, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. They discover another Spirit, *Num.* 14. 24. These things have us to be strangers on earth, and consequently the men for whom God hath prepared heavenly Habitations when we die.

3. Those that live and die by Faith, shall

not fail to be received into a better Habitation by Death. This is another Character of them that shall be received into Glory, laid down in the same place, *Heb. 11. 13.* They lived by Faith and when they died, they died embracing the Promises, which is *Characteristical* of those that shall dwell in that heavenly City; and implies, (1.) Intimate acquaintance with the Promises, they are things well known and familiarized to them. The word *ἀσπασαμένους*, *Salutantes*, saluting them, is a Metaphor from the manner of parting betwixt two dear and intimate Friends. The Faith of a Christian embraces the Promises in its arms, as dear friends use to do at parting; and saith, Farewel sweet Promises, from which I have sucked out so much relief and refreshment in all the troubles of my life; I must now live no more by Faith on you, but by sight: O you have often cheered my Soul, and been my Song in the house of my Pilgrimage. (2.) It implies the firm credit that a Believer gives to things unseen, upon the grounds of the Promises, as if he did sensibly take and grasp them in his very arms and bosom. They take Christ, and all the inviolable things in the Promises into their sensible embraces, *1 Pet. 1. 8.* Faith is to them instead of Eyes. (3.) It implies the sincerity of a Believer's profession, who dares trust to that at last gasp, which he professed to believe in the midst of life, and the Comforts of this World. As he professed to believe in health, so you shall find his Actings when his eye and heart strings are cracking, *Rom. 14. 9.* Christ in the Promises was his professed joy in life, and this is what he grasps at death and lays his last hold on. (4.) It shews you whence all a Believer's comforts come in life and death. O tis from the Promises, Christ in the Promises is the Spring of their Consolation. This they fetch their comfort from, when the World cannot administer one drop of refreshment to them. There be two great works Faith performs for the Saints, one in life, the other in death. In life it is the Principle of Mortification to their sins, in death it is the Spring of Consolation to their hearts: It makes them die whilst they live, and live when they die.

4. Those that love the Person and Appearance of Christ, have a mark that sets them among the Inhabitants of Heaven and Glory, *2 Tim. 4. 8.* but then this Love must be (1) Sincere, and without hypocrisy. (2) Supreme, and above all others' Beloved. (3) Conforming the Soul to Christ; if Sincere and Supreme, it will be transformative. (4) Longing to be with him. Such Love is a mark of Souls for whom Heaven is prepared.

Must we put off our Tabernacles, and that Infer. III. shortly? What a Spur is this to a diligent redemption and improvement of time? This is the use Peter made of it here, and every one of us should make. It was said of *Bishop Hooper*, he was spare in his diet, spare in his words, but most of all spare of his time. You have but little time in these Tabernacles, what pity is it to waste much out of a little?

(1) *Great* is the worth and excellency of Time, all the Treasures of the World cannot *protra*ſ,

protrast, stop, or call back one minute of time. Oh what is Man, that the heavenly Bodies should be wheel'd about by Almighty Power in constant Revolutions, to beget Time for him! *Psalm* 8. 3.

(2.) More precious are the seasons and opportunities that are in time for our Souls; those are the golden spots of Time, like the Pearl in the Oyster-shell, of much more value than the Shell that contains it. There is much time in a short opportunity. There is a day on which our eternal happiness depends, *Luke* 19. 41, 42. *Heb.* 4. 7.

(3.) Invaluable are the things which God doth for Mens Souls in time. There are works wrought upon Mens hearts in a seasonable hour in this life, which have an influence into the Soul's happiness throughout Eternity. There is a time of Mercy, a time of Love, *viz.* of Illumination and Conversion; and on that point of Time, Eternal Life hangs in the whole weight of it.

(4.) Lost opportunity is never to be recovered by the Soul any more, *Ezek.* 24. 13. *Rev.* 22. 11. To come before the opportunity, is to come before the Bird be *hatch'd*; and to come after it, is to come when the Bird is *flown*. There is no calling back time, when it is once past. See this in the Examples you find, *Luke* 13. 26. *Eccles.* 9. 10.

(5.) It is wholly uncertain to every Soul, whether the present day may not determine his Lease in this Tabernacle, and a Writ of Ejection be served by Death upon his Soul to-morrow, *James* 4. 13. *Luke* 12. 20.

(6.) As soon as ever Time shall end, Eternity takes place. The stream of Time delivers Souls daily into the boundless Ocean of vast Eternity. *Ab hoc momento pendet eternitas*. We are now measured by Time, hereafter by Eternity.

(7.) In Eternity all things are fixed and unalterable. We have no more to do, all means and works are at an end, *John* 9. 4. and *Eccles.* 11. 3. *As the Tree falls, so it lies*. Oh that these weighty Considerations might lie upon your hearts, as long as you are in these Tabernacles! If they did, (1.) The Unregenerate would not so desperately hazard their eternal Happiness, by trifling away their precious seasons under the Gospel. Oh how many aged Sinners, gray-headed Sinners hear me this day, who in fifty or sixty years never redeemed one solemn hour to take their poor Souls aside out of the clutter and distracting noise of the World, to ask and debate this question with them, *Oh my Soul, how stands the case with thee in reference to the World to come!* They have found no time to bethink themselves in what World their Souls shall be landed, when Time shall deliver them up into Eternity. Their whole Life hath been but a continual diversion from one trifle to another; they have been serious in trifles, and trifled in things most serious: this will afford horrid reflections in the World to come. (2.) The Regenerate would not cast away the comfort of their lives in the Evidences of eternal Life, at so cheap a rate as they do. May I not say to you, as the Apostle doth, *Heb.* 5. 12. for the time you have had under the Gospel,

Vol. I.

you might have attained a rich Treasure both of Grace and Comfort; *Turpe est senex elementarium*. Is it not shameful and inexcusable, to be where you were twenty years past? Oh! let these things sink deep into every Soul.

Must we shortly put off these our Tabernacles? *Infer.* IV. *Then slack your pace, and cool your selves; be not too eager in the prosecution of earthly designs*. Oh! what bustling is here for the World, and for provisions for futurity, whereas far less would serve the turn! We need not victual a Ship to cross the Channel to France, as if she were bound to the Indies. Most Mens Provisions, at least their Cares and Thoughts, are far beyond the preparations of their abode in this World. The folly of this, Christ discovers in that Parable, *Luke* 12. 19 and on this very account gives him the Title of a Fool, who provided for years, many years, when, poor Soul, he had not one night to enjoy those Provisions.

Oh the multitude of thoughts and cares this World needlessly devours! We keep our selves in such a continual hurry and crowd of cares, thoughts and employments about the concerns of the Body; that we can find little time to be alone, communing with our own hearts about our great Concernments in Eternity. It is with many of us in respect of our Souls, and their great Interests, as it is with a man that is deep in thoughts about some Subject that wholly swallows him up, he seeth not what he seeth, nor heareth what he heareth of any other matter: His eyes seem to look upon this or that, but it's all one as if he did not. So it was with *Archimedes*, who was so intent in drawing his *Mathematical Schemes*, that tho' all the City was in an Alarm, the Enemy had taken it by storm, the Streets filled with dreadful cries, and dead Bodies, the Soldiers came into his particular House, nay, entered his very Study, and pluck'd him by the sleeve, before he took any notice of it: Even so many Mens hearts are so profoundly immersed and drowned in earthly Cares, Thoughts, Projects or Pleasures, that Death must come to their very Houses, yea, and pull them by the sleeve, and tell them its Errand, before they will begin to awake, and come to a serious Consideration of things more important.

If we must shortly put off these Tabernacles, *Infer.* V. *then the groaning and mourning time of Believers is but short: how heavy forever their burden be, yet they shall carry it but a little way*. It's said, *2 Cor.* 5. 4. *We that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened*. Good Souls in this state are every where groaning under heavy pressures. Their burdens are of two sorts, *Sympathetical*, whereby they grieve with, and on the account of others; and so every true Member of the Church of God ought to sympathize, both with God, *Psalm* 139. 21. *Am not I grieved with them that rise up against thee?* *Psalm* 42. 10. it is as with a Sword in their bones; and with the People of God, *Zeph.* 3. 18. sorrowful for the solemn Assembly, *so 2 Cor.* 11. 29. *Who is offended, and I burn not?* And indeed, it is an argument of rich, as well as true Grace, that we can, and do heartily mourn with, and for the Interest and People of God, tho' our own Lot in the World, as *Nehemiah's*, be never so comfortable. Or else our burdens

A a a a a

ATC

are *Idiopathetical*, (i. e.) such as we bear upon our own proper account and score. And where is the Christian that hath not his own burden, yea, many burdens on him at once? Some groan under the burden of Sin, *Rom. 7. 24.* Scarce one day are the Tears off from some Eye-lids on this account. And who groans not under the burden of Affliction, either inward upon the Soul, *Prov. 18. 14. Job 6. 1, 2, 3.* or outward upon the Body, State, Relations, &c. These things make the people of God a burden to themselves, *Job 7. 20, 21.* Yea, under these burdens they would sink, did not the Lord sustain them, *Psal. 55. 22.*

But God will put a speedy and final end to all these things. When you put off this Tabernacle, you put off with it all those burdens, inward and outward. The Soul presently feels a great load off its shoulders; it shall never groan more, God shall thenceforth wipe away all tears from their eyes: For why are those burdens now permitted and imposed by the Lord upon you, but (1) To prevent Sin, *Hosea 2. 6.* They are your Clogs, to keep you from straying. (2) To purge out Sin, *Isa. 27. 9.* (3) To make you long more for Heaven, and the Rest to come. But all these ends are accomplished in that day you put off your Tabernacles, for then Sin is gone, and Rest is come.

Inf. VI. Must you shortly put off those Tabernacles? Then spare them not whilst you have them, but employ them for God with all diligence. Shortly they shall be useless to you, yea, Meat for Worms; now they may be servicable, and their Service is their Honour: you received them not for such low ends as you employ them for. See

Ambrose said of Valentinian, No man was ever such a Servant to his Master, as Valentinian's Body was to his Soul.

Inf. VII. Look beyond this embodied state, and learn to live now as you hope to live shortly; begin to be what you expect to be. You know the time is at hand that you shall live above all bodily concerns and employments, the Soul shall be a drudge to the Body no more. You shall beas the Angels, *Matt. 22. 30.* not marrying, nor given in Marriage, which is *Synechdochically* put for all carnal Employments and Enjoyments; eat no more, drink no more, sleep no more, buy and sell no more. Now sute your selves as much as your state and the duties of Religion will suffer you, to that state beforehand. The sum of what I aim at is in *1 Cor. 7. 29, 30.* Be in all your Relations as if you had none. Look on those things as if already they were not, which shortly must be none of yours; and both acquaint and accustom your thoughts to the life of separation from the Body, which you must shortly live. Which brings me home to the next point, viz. *The Condition of Humane Souls in a state of Separation.*

H E B. XII. 23.

— ὁ ἁγίους ἀνθρώπους τῶν νεκρῶν.

— And to the Spirits of just Men made perfect.

THE particular scope of this Context falls in with the general design of the whole Gospel, which is to persuade Men to a life of Holiness. The *Matter* of the Exhortation is most weighty, and the *Arguments* enforcing it most powerful: He doth not talk, but dispute; he doth not say, but prove, that greater and more powerful engagements unto Holiness lie upon those who live under the Gospel, than upon the People who lived under the Law. And thus the Argument lies in this Context.

If God at the delivering of the Law upon Mount Sinai strictly enjoined and required so great Purity and Holiness in that People, signified by the *Ceremonies* of two days preparation, the washing of their cloaths, abstinence from conjugal Society, &c. much more doth he require and expect it in Us, who are come under a much more excellent and heavenly Dispensation than theirs was.

Et 19. 10.

To make good the *Sequel*, he compares the legal and the evangelical Dispensations in many particulars, ver. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. giving the Gospel the preference throughout the whole *Collation*.

In sum, the privileges of the New Testament Believers are here stated both *negatively* and *positively*.

1. *Negatively*, by shewing what we are exempted from.

2. *Positively*, shewing what we are to come unto.

1. *Negatively*, What we are exempted or freed from; ver. 18, 19, 20, 21. *We are not come unto the Mount that might be touched, &c.* The sum of all is this, That the promulgation of the Law was accompanied with amazing dread and terror. For, after *Moses* by command from God had sanctified the *Mount*, and set *Rails* about it, that neither *Priest* nor *People*, Man nor *Beast*, might touch the very *Borders* of it, lest they die; the Lord descended in fire upon the top of the *Mountain* the third day in the morning, with most terrible tokens of Divine Majesty, *sc.* with Thundrings, Lightnings, dark Clouds, and the noise of a *Trumpet* exceeding loud; the *Mount* was covered with smoke, as the smoke of a *Furnace*, and flames mounting up into the midst of Heaven, the whole *Mountain* shaking and trembling exceedingly: Out of this horrid Tempest the awful Voice of God was heard, all the *People* in the *Camp* trembling, yea, and *Moses* himself quaking for fear.

Crebris micat ignibus æther.

This was the manner of the Law's promulgation: but to such a terrible Dispensation as this we are not come, which is the negative part of our privilege.

2. He opens the positive Privileges to which we are come.

(1.) *Ye are come* [saith he] *to Mount Zion*, not the Earthly, but the Spiritual *Zion*. *Mount Zion* was the place celebrated above all the World for the Worship of God, *Psal. 87. 17. All my Springs* [saith God] *are in thee*. There was the Temple, the Ark of the Covenant, the Glory of the Lord dwelling between the *Cherubims*. The *Priests* that attended the service of God, had their residence there, as the Angels have in Heaven. Thither the Tribes went up from all quarters of *Juda*, *Psal. 84.* as the Children of God now do to Heaven from all quarters of the World. *Judea* was the best Kingdom in the World; *Jerusalem* the best City in that Kingdom; and *Zion* the most glorious place in that City. Here Christ taught his heavenly Doctrine; near to it he finished his glorious work of Redemption. Hence the everlasting Gospel went forth into all the World: and on these considerations it's put to signify the Gospel-Church or State in this place, and is therefore called the *heavenly Jerusalem* in the following words. We do not come to the literal *Zion*, nor to the *earthly Jerusalem*; but to the Gospel-Church, or State, which may be called a Heaven upon Earth, compared with that *literal Jerusalem*.

(2.) *Ye are come to an innumerable company of Angels.* [Gr. to *myriads of Angels, a myriad is ten thousand; but myriads in the plural number, and sent down indefinitely too, may note many millions of Angels: And therefore we fitly render it, to an innumerable company of Angels.]

They had the ministry of Angels as well as we, thousands of them ministered to the Lord in the dispensation of the Law at *Sinai*, *Psal. 63. 17.* But this notwithstanding, we are come to a much clearer knowledge both of their present Ministry for us on Earth, *Heb. 1. 14.* and of our fellowship and equality with them in Heaven, *Luke 20. 36.*

(3.) *Ye are come to the general Assembly and Church of the first-born, whose names are written* (or enrolled) *in Heaven.* [This also greatly commends and amplifies the Privileges of New Testament-Believers; the Church of God in former ages was circumscribed and shut up within the narrow limits of one small Kingdom, which was as a Garden inclosed out of a waste Wilderness: but now by the calling in of the *Gentiles* the Church is extended far and wide, *Eph. 3. 5, 6.* It is become a great Assembly, comprizing the Believers of all Nations under Heaven; and so speaking of them collectively, it is the general Convention or Assembly, which is also dignified and enobled by two illustrious Characters, *viz.* (1.) That it is the *Church of the first-born*, (i. e.) consisting of Members dignified and privileged above others, as the first-born among the *Israelites* did excel their younger Brethren. (2.) That their Names are written in Heaven, (i. e.) registered or enrolled in God's Book as Children and Heirs of the heavenly Inheritance, as the first-born in *Israel* were registered in order to the Priesthood, *Numb. 3. 40, 41.*

(4.) *Ye are come to Cal the Judge of all.* But

why to God the Judge? this seems to spoil the harmony, and jar with the other parts of the discourse. No, no; they are come to God as a righteous Judge, who as such will pardon them, *1 Joh. 1. 9. crown* them, *2 Tim. 4. 8.* and avenge them on all their oppressing and persecuting Enemies, *1 Thess. 1. 5, 6, 7.*

(5.) *And to the spirits of just Men made perfect.* A most glorious privilege indeed, in which we are distinctly to consider,

1. The quality of those with whom we are associated or taken into fellowship.

2. The way and manner of our association with them.

1. The quality of those with whom we are associated, or to whom we are said to be come, and they are described by three Characters, *viz.*

(1.) Spirits of Men.

(2.) Spirits of just Men.

(3.) Spirits of just Men perfected or consummated

(1.) They are called *Spirits*, that is, immaterial Substances, strictly opposed to Bodies, which are no way the objects of our exterior Senses, neither visible to the eye, or sensible to the touch, which were called properly *Souls* whilst they animated Bodies in this lower World; but now being loosed and separated from them by death, and existing alone in the World above, they are properly and strictly styled *Spirits*.

(2.) They are the *Spirits of just Men.* Man may be termed *just* too ways, (1.) By a full discharge and acquittance from the guilt of all his Sins, and so Believers are *just Men* even whilst they live on Earth groaning under other imperfections, *Acts. 13. 39.* Or, (2.) By a total freedom from the pollution of any Sin. And tho' in this sense there is not a just Man upon Earth, that doth good, and sinneth not, *Eccles. 7. 22.* yet even in this sense *Adam* was just before the Fall, *Eccles. 7. 29.* according to his original Constitution; and all Believers are so, in their glorified condition, all Sin being perfectly purged out of them, and its existence utterly destroyed in them. On which account.

(3.) They are called the *Spirits of just Men made perfect*, or consummate. The word *perfect* is not here to be understood absolutely, but *synecdochically*; they are not perfect in every respect, for one part of these just Men lies rotting in the grave: but they are perfected, for so much as concerns their *Spirit*; tho' the Flesh perish and lie in dishonour. yet their Spirits being once loosed from the Body, and freed radically and perfectly from Sin, are presently admitted to the facial vision and fruition of God, which is the culminating point (as I may call it) higher than which the Spirit of Man aspires not, and attaining to this it is for so much as concerns it self, made *perfect*. Even as the Body at last lodg'd in its centre, gravitates no more, but is at perfect Rest; so it is with the Spirit of Man come home to God in glory, 'tis now consummate, no more need to be done to make it as perfectly happy as it is capable to be made, which is the first thing to be considered, *viz.* the quality of those with whom we are associated.

2. The second follows, namely, the way and

* μυριάς
ἀγγέλων,
Hellenizē
dicunt
μυριάδας,
sive alio
addita-
mento, ad
significan-
dam innum-
erabilem
multitudi-
nem.
Græc.

Primo-
genti-
lium
prius
in ma-
tricula
terre-
stris, hi
vero in al-
bo celesti.

and manner of our association with the blessed Spirits of just Men, noted in this expression, [*we are come.*] He saith not, *we shall come* hereafter, when the Resurrection hath restored our Bodies, or after the general Judgment; but, *we are come* to these Spirits of just Men. The meaning whereof we may take up in these three particulars.

(1.) We that live under the Gospel-light, are come to a clearer apprehension, sight and knowledge of the blessed and happy estate of the Souls of the Righteous after death, than ever they had, or ordinarily could have, who lived under the Types and Shadows of the Law, *Ephes.* 3. 4, 5. And so we are come to them, in respect of clearer apprehension.

(2.) We are come to those blessed Spirits in our Representative, Christ, who hath carried our Nature into the very midst of them, and whom they all behold with highest admiration and delight. By Christ who is entered into that holy place where these Spirits of just Men live, we are come into a near relation with them: For he being the common Head, both to them in Heaven, and to us on Earth, we and they consequently make but one Body or Society, *Eph.* 2. 19. Whereupon (notwithstanding the different and remote Countries they and we live in) we are said to sit together with them in heavenly places, *Eph.* 3. 15. & 2. 6.

(3.) [*We are come.*] That is, we are as good as come, or we are upon the matter come; there remains nothing betwixt them and us but a puff of Breath, a little space of time, which shortens every moment: We are come to the very borders of their Country, and there is nothing to speak of betwixt them and us: and by this expression, *We are come*, he teacheth us to account and reckon those things as present, which so shortly will be present to us, and to look upon them as if they already were, which is the highest and most comfortable life of Faith we can live on Earth. Hence the Note is,

Doct.

That righteous and holy Souls once separated from their Bodies by death, are immediately perfected in themselves, and associated with others alike perfect in the Kingdom of God.

That the Spirits of just men at the time of their separation from their Bodies do not utterly fail in their Beings, nor that they are so prejudiced and wounded by death, that they cannot exert their own proper acts in the absence of the Body, hath been already cleared in the foregoing parts of this Treatise, and will be more fully cleared from this Text.

But the true level and aim of this Discourse is at a higher Mark, *viz.* the far more excellent, free and noble Life the Souls of the Just begin to live immediately after their Bodies are dropt off them by death, at which time they begin to live like themselves, a pleasant, free and divine Life. So much at least is included in the Apostle's Epithet in my Text, Spirits of just Men made perfect; and suitable thereto are his words in 1 Cor. 13. 10, 12. *When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know, even as I am known.*

These two Adverbs, *Now* and *Then*, distin-

guish the twofold state of gracious Souls, and shew what it is whilst they are confined in the Body, and what it shall be from the time of their emancipation and freedom from that clog of Mortality. *Now* we are imperfect, but *then* that which is perfect takes place, and that which is imperfect is done away, as the imperfect Twilight is done away by the opening of the perfect Day.

And it deserves a serious Animadversion, That this perfect state doth not succeed the imperfect one after a long interval, (as long as betwixt the Dissolution and Resurrection of the Body) but the imperfect state of the Soul is immediately done away by the coming of the perfect one. The Glass is laid by as useless, when we come to see face to face, and eye to eye.

The Waters will prove very deep here, too deep for any Line of mine to fathom; there is a cloud always over-shadowing the World to come, a gloom and haziness upon that state; *sua* we would, with our weak and feeble beam of imperfect Knowledge, penetrate this Cloud, and dispel this gloom and haziness, but cannot: We think seriously and close to this great and awful Subject, but our thoughts cannot pierce through it; we reinforce those thoughts by a fallow or thick succession of fresh thoughts, and yet all will not do, our thoughts return to us either in confusion, or without the expected success. For, alas! how little is it that we know or can know of our own Souls now whilst they are embodied, much less of their unembodied state! The Apostle tells us, 1 Cor. 2. 9. *That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of Man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* And another Apostle adds, *It doth not yet appear what we shall be.* 1 John 3. 2.

Yet all this is no discouragement to the search and regular enquiry into the future state; for tho' Reason cannot penetrate these Mysteries, yet God hath revealed them to us (tho' not perfectly) by his Spirit. And tho' we know not (particularly and circumstantially) what we shall be, yet this we know, that we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And it is our privilege and happiness, that we are come to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, (*i. e.*) to a clearer knowledge of that state than was ordinarily attainable by Believers under former Dispensations.

These things premised, I will proceed to open my apprehensions of the separate state of the Spirits of just Men made perfect, in *three Propositions*; whereby, as by so many steps, we may orderly advance as far as safely and warrantably we may into the knowledge of this great Mystery, clearing what afterwards shall remain obscure in the solution of several Questions relating to this Subject, and then apply the whole in several Uses of this great Point: And the first Proposition is this:

There is a twofold Separation of the Soul Prop. I. from the Body; *viz.* one Mental, the other Real: Or,

1. Intellectual, by the Mind only.
2. Physical, by the stroke of Death.

Separatio per intellectum fit, cum duo revera conjuncta, separatim concipiuntur. *Conimbr. de Anima*, p. 595.

1. Of intellectual or mental Separation, I am first to speak in this Proposition; and it is nothing else but an act of the

Understanding or Mind, conceiving or considering the Soul and Body as separated and parted each from other, whilst yet they are united in a personal oneness by the Breath of Life. This mental Separation may and ought to be frequently and seriously made, before Death makes the real and actual Separation; and the more frequently and seriously we do it, the less of horror and distraction will attend that real and fatal stroke whenever it shall be given. For hereby we learn to bear it gradually, and by gentle essays to acquaint our shoulders with the burden of it. Separation is a word that hath much of horror in the very sound, and useth to have much more in the sense and feeling of it, else it would not deserve that title, *Job* 8. 14. *The King of Terrors*, or the most terrible of all terribles: But acquaintance and familiarity abates that horror, and that two ways especially,

(1.) As it is preventive of much guilt.

(2.) As it gains a more inward knowledge of its Nature.

(1.) The serious and fixed thoughts of the parting hour is preventive of much guilt; and the greatest part of the horror of Death rises out of the guilt of sin; *The sting of Death is sin*, 1 Cor. 15. 56. *Augustine* saith, Nothing more recalls a Man from sin, than the frequent meditation of death. I dare not say it is the strongest of all Curses to keep us back from sin, but I am sure it is a very strong one.

Nihil sic revocat a peccato, quam frequenter meditatio. *Aug.*

Let a Soul but seriously meditate what a change Death will make shortly upon his person and condition; and the natural effects of such a Meditation, through the Blessing of God upon it, will be a flattening and quenching of its keen and raging Appetite after the enlivening Vanities of this World (which draw Men into so much guilt) a conscientious fear of sin, and an awakened care of Duty. It was once demanded of a very holy Man (who spent much more than the ordinary allowance of time in Prayer, and searching his own heart) why he so mangled his own Body by such frequent and long-continued Duties? His Answer was, *Oh! I must die, I must die*. Nothing could separate him from Duty, who had already separated his Soul from his Body, and all this World by fixed and deep thoughts of Death.

(2.) Hereby we gain a more inward knowledge and acquaintance with the nature of Death: and the more we are acquainted with it, the less it terrifies us. A Lion is much more dreadful to him that never saw him, than he is to his Keeper who feedeth him every day. A pitched Battle is more frightful and scaring to a new-listed Soldier that never took his place in the Field before, nor saw the dreadful countenance of an Army ready to engage, nor heard the thundering noise of Cannon, and Volleys of Shot, the shouts of Armies, and groans of dying Men on every side, than it is to an old

Soldier who hath been used to such things. The like we may observe in *Seamen*, who it may be trembled at first, and now can sing in a Storm.

Scarce any thing is more necessary for weak and timorous Believers to meditate on, than the time of their separation. Our hearts will be apt to start and boggle at the first view of Death; but it is good to do by them as Men use to do by young Colts, ride them up to that which they fright at, and make them smell to it, which is the way to cure them. Look, as Bread (saith one) is more necessary than other Food, so the Meditation of Death is more necessary than many other Meditations. Every time we change our habitations, we should realize therein our great change. Our Souls must shortly leave this, and be lodged for a longer season in another Mansion. When we put off our cloaths at night, we have a fit occasion to consider, that we must strip nearer one of these days, and put off, not our cloaths only, but the Body that wears them too.

Sicut panis necessarius est præ cæteris elementis, ita intentio mortis meditatio necessaria est præ cæteris donis & exercitiis. *Dionys.*

Holy Job had by frequent thoughts familiarized Death and the Grave to himself, and could speak of them, as Men use to speak of their Housels and dearest Relations, *Job* 17. 14. *I have said to Corruption, Thou art my Father; to the Worm, Thou art my Mother and Sister*. But it needs much Grace to bring and hold the Heart to this Work; and therefore *Moses* begs it of God, *Psal.* 90. 12. *So teach us to number our days; and David, Psal.* 39. 4. *Lord, make me to know my end*. Yea, the advantages of it have been acknowledged by Men whose Light was less, and Diversions more than ours. The Jews for this use and end had their Sepulchres built before-hand, and that in their Gardens of Pleasure too; that they might season the delights of Life with the frequent thoughts of Death, *John* 19. 41.

Philip of Macedon would be awakened by his Page every morning with this sentence, *Memento te esse mortalem*; Remember, oh King! thou art a mortal Man. A great Emperour of Constantinople not only at his Inauguration, but at Elige ab his faxis, ex quo, invictissime Cæsar, tibi tumulum facere velis.

Actual Separation may be considered either in fieri, Prop. II. in the precious Pangs and fore-going Agonies of it; or in facto esse, in the last separating stroke which actually parts the Soul and Body asunder, lays the Body prostrate and dead at the feet of Death, and thrusts the Soul quite out of its ancient and beloved habitation.

1. Let it be considered in the previous Pangs and fore-running Agonies which commonly make way for this actual Dissolution: And to the People of God, this is the worst and bitterest part of Death, (except those conflicts with Satan, which they sometimes grapple with on a Death-bed) which they encounter at that time. There is (saith one)

no

no poniard in Death it self, like those in the way or prologue to it. I like not *to die* said another, but I care not if *I were dead*; the end is better than the way. The conflicts and struggles of Nature with Death are bitter and sharp, pains unknown to Men before whatever pains they have endured: nor can it be expected to be otherwise, seeing the ties and engagements betwixt the Soul and Body are so strong, as we shew'd before.

The Soul will not easily part with the Body, but disputes the passages with Death from Member to Member, (like resolute Soldiers in a stormed Garison) till at last it is forced to yield up the *Fort Royal* into the hands of victorious Death, and leave the dearly beloved Body a Captive to it.

This is the dark side of Death to all good Men; and tho' it be not worth naming in comparison with the dreadful consequences of death to all others, yet in it self it is terrible.

* Separation is not natural to the Soul, which was created with an inclination to the Body: 'tis natural indeed to clasp and embrace, to love and cherish its own Body; but to be divided from it, is grievous and preternatural.

* Cum separatio naturalis non sit, neq; etiam violenta; fit consequens, ut ex approbata Philosophorum approbatione, preternaturalis esse dicatur. Conimb.

The Agonies of Death are expressed in Scripture by a word which signifies the travelling pains of a Woman, yea, by the sharpest and acute pains they feel, even the birth-pangs, or bearing throes, *Acts* 2. 24.

And yet all are not handled alike roughly by the hands of death; some are favoured with a desirable *easy* and gentle and easy death.

'Tis the privilege of some Christians to have their Souls fetcht out of their Bodies as it were by a kiss from the mouth of God, as the Jewish Rabbins use to express the manner of *Moses* his death. Mr. *Bolton* felt no pain at his death, but the cold hand of his friend who asked him what pain he felt. Yea, holy *Bayneham* in the midst of the flames professed it was to him as a Bed of Roses.

Every Believer is equally freed from the sting and curse of Death; but every one is not equally favoured in the agonies and pains of Death.

2. Separation from the Body is to be considered in *facto esse*, (i. e.) in the result and issue of all these bitter pangs and agonies, which end in the actual dissolution of Soul and Body.

* Death, or actual separation, is nothing else but the dissolving of the tie, or loosing of the bond of Union betwixt the Soul and Body. † Some call it the privation of the second act of the Soul, that is, its act of informing or enlivening the Body. Others, according to

* *Θάνατος* ἐστὶν ἡ λύσις τῆς συνῆς τοῦ σώματος καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς, vel animæ a corpore dissolutio, Vires.

† Privatio actus secundi ejusdem animæ, id est, informationis seu unionis erga corpus. Conimb.

Scripture-phrase, the departing of the Soul from the Body. So *Peter* styles it, *2 Pet.* 1. 15. *μὴ ἀπολειπὲς τὸ σῶμα*, after my departure

|| Relictio corporis depositio sarcinæ gravis, modo alia sarcina non patietur, quia homo præcipitetur in gloriâ. Aug.

i. e. after my death. *Augustine* || calls it the laying down of a heavy burden, provided there be not another burden for the

Soul to bear afterwards, which will sink it into Hell.

In respect of the Body which the Soul now forfakes, it is called the *putting off this Tabernacle*, *2 Pet.* 1. 14. and the dissolving the earthly House or Tabernacle, *2 Cor.* 5. 1.

In respect of the *terminus a quo*, the place from which the Soul removes at death, it is called our departure hence, *Phil.* 1. 23. or our weighing anchor, and loosing from this coast or shoar to sail to another.

In respect of the *terminus ad quem*, the place to which the Spirits of the Just go at death, it is called our going to, or being with the Lord, *ibid.* To conclude, in respect of that which doth most lively resemble and shadow it forth, it is called our *falling asleep*, *Act.* 7. ult. our *sleeping in Jesus*, *1 Thess.* 4. 14. This Metaphor of sleep must be stretched no farther than the Spirit of God designed in the choice of it, which was not to favour and countenance the fancy of a sleeping Soul after death; but to represent its state of placid rest in Jesus's bosom, if it refer at all to the Soul: for I think it most properly respects the Body; and thence the Sepulchers where the bodies of the Saints were laid, got the name of κοιμητήρια, Dormitories, or sleeping places.

This is its last farewell to this world, never to return to a low animal life more. *Job* 7. 9. 10. For as the cloud is consumed and vanished away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more; he shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more. The Soul is no more bound to a Body, nor a retainer to the Sun, Moon or Stars, to meat, drink and sleep, but is become a free, single, abstracted Being, a separate and pure Spirit, which the Latins call *Lemures*, *Manes*, Ghosts or Souls of the dead, and my Text *Spirits made perfect*, a being much like unto the Angels who are ἀσώματα ἀσπύρατα, bodiless Powers. An Angel, as one speaks, is a perfect Soul, a Soul is an imperfect Angel, I do not say that upon their separation they became Angels; for they will still remain a distinct Species of Spirits. Angels have no inclination to Bodies, nor corporis were ever fettered with clogs of flesh as Souls compedi were. And by this you see what a difference there is betwixt these two considerations of death. How ghastly and affrighting is it in its previous pangs! how lovely and desirable in the issue and result of them! which is but the change of Earth for Heaven, Men for God, Sin and Misery for Perfection and Glory.

The separation of the Soul and Body makes a great Prop. III and wonderful change upon both, but especially upon the Soul.

There is a twofold change made upon Man by death, one upon his Body, another upon his Soul. The change upon the body is great, and visible to every eye. A living Body is changed into a dead Carcase: A beautiful and comely Body, into a loathsome spectacle: that which lately was the object of delight and love, is hereby made an abhorrence to all flesh; *Fury my dead out of my sight*, *Gen.* 23. 4.

What

What the Sun is to the greater, that the Soul is to the lesser World. When the Sun shines comfortably, how vegete and chearful do all things look! how well do they thrive and prosper! The *Birds* sing merrily, the *Beasts* play wantonly, the whole Creation enjoyeth a day of light and joy: but when he departs, what a night of horror followeth! How are all things wrapt up in the sable Mantle of darknes! Or if it but abate its heat, as in Winter, the Creatures are as it were buried in the Winding-sheet of Winter's Frost and Snow: just so it is with the Body, when the Soul shineth pleasantly upon it, or departs from it,

That Body which was fed so assiduously, cared for so anxiously, loved so passionately, is now tumbled into a Pit, and left to the mercy of crawling Worms. The change which Judgment made upon that great and flourishing City *Nineveh*, is a fit Emblem to shadow forth that change which Death makes upon human Bodies: That great and renowned City was once full of People which thronged the streets thereof; there you might have seen Children playing upon the Thresholds, Beauties shewing themselves through the Windows, Melody sounding in its Palaces: but what an alteration was made upon it, the Prophet *Zephaniah* describes, Chap. 2. v. 14. *Flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the Beasts of the Nations; both the Cormorant and the Bittern shall lodge in the upper Lintels of it; their Voice shall sing in the Windows; Desolation shall be in the Thresholds, for he shall uncover the Cedar-work.*

Thus it is with the Body when Death hath dislodged the Soul. Worms nestle in the holes where the beautiful Eyes were once placed; Corruption and desolation is upon all parts of that stately Structure. But this being a vulgar Theme, I shall leave the Body to the Dust from whence it came, and follow the Soul, which is my proper Subject, pointing at the changes which are made on it.

The Effence of the Soul is not destroyed or changed by the Body's Ruin; it is substantially the self-same Soul that it was when in the Body. The supposition of an essential change, would disorder the whole frame and model of God's eternal Design for the Redemption and Glorification of it, *Rom.* 8. 29, 30. But tho' it undergo no substantial change at Death, yet divers great and remarkable alterations are made upon it by sundering it from the Body.

As,
1. It is not where it was. It was in a Body, immers'd in Matter, married unto Flesh and Blood; but now it is out of the Body, unclothed, and stript naked out of its garments of flesh, like pure Gold melted out of the Ore with which it was commixed; or as a Bird let out of her Cage into the open Fields and Woods. This makes a great and wonderful change on it.

2. Being free from the Body, it is consequently discharged and freed from all those cares, studies, fears and sorrows to which it was here enthralled and subjected upon the Body's account. It puts off all those Passions and Burdens with it, never spends one thought more about Food and Raiment, Health and Sickness, Wives

and Children, Riches or Poverty; but liveth henceforth after the manner of Angels, *Mat.* 22. 30. It is now unrelated to, and therefore unconcerned about all these things.

3. In the unbodied state it is perfectly freed from sin, both in the Acts and Habits: a Mercy it never enjoyed since the first moment it dwelt in the Body. The cure of this disease was indeed begun in the Work of Sanctification, but it is not perfected till the day of the Soul's Glorification. 'Tis now, and not till now, a Spirit made perfect; that is, a Soul enjoying its perfect health and rectitude. No more groans; tears or lamentations upon the account of indwelling Sin.

4. The way and manner of its converse with, and enjoyment of God is changed. There are two mediums, by which Souls converse with God in the Body, *viz.*

(1.) One internal, *sc.* Faith.

(2.) The other external, *sc.* Ordinances.

(1.) If a Man walk with God on Earth, it must be in the use and exercise of Faith, *2 Cor.* 5. 7. nor can there be any Communion carried on betwixt God and the Soul without it, *Heb.* 11. 6.

(2.) The external mediums are the Ordinances of God, or Duties of Religion, both publick and private, *Psal.* 63. 2. Betwixt these two mediums of Communion with God, this remarkable difference is found: The Soul may see and enjoy God by Faith, in the want or absence of Ordinances; but there is no seeing or conversing with God in the greatest plenty and purity of Ordinances, without Faith, *Heb.* 4. 2.

But in the same moment the Soul is cut off from union with the Body, it is also cut off from both these ways of enjoying God, *1 Cor.* 13. 12. *1 Jsa.* 38. 11. but yet the Soul is no loser, nay, it is the greatest gainer by this change. The Child is no loser by ceasing to derive its Nourishment by the Navel, when it comes to receive it by the Mouth; a more noble way, whereby it gets a new pleasure in tasting the variety of all delectable food. *Hesekiah* bemoan'd the loss of Ordinances upon his supposed death-bed, saying, *I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the Land of the living: q. d.* Now farewell Temple and Ordinances; I shall never go any more into his Temple, where my Soul hath been so often cheered and refresh'd with the displays of his Grace and Goodness; I shall never more join with the Assembly of his People on Earth. And suppose he had not, sure he would have lost nothing, had he then exchanged the Temple at *Jerusalem*, for the Temple in Heaven, and Communion with sinful imperfect Saints on Earth, for fellowship with Angels, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect. By this change we lose no more than he loseth, who whilst he stands delightfully contemplating the Image of his dearest Friend in a glass, hath the glass snatch'd away by his Friend, whom he now seeth face to face.

Upon this change of the mediums of Communion, it will follow, that the Communion betwixt God and the separate Soul, excels all the Communion it ever had with him on Earth, in

- (1.) The Clearness.
- (2.) The Sweetness,
- (3.) The Constancy of it.

(1.) It's Visions of God in the state of Separation are more clear, distinct, and direct than they were on earth; Clouds and Shadows are now fled away. The Soul now seeth as it is seen, and knoweth as it is known; its apprehensions of God there differ from those it had here, as the crude and confused apprehensions of a Child, do from those we have in the manly state.

(2.) They are also more sweet and ravishing. As our Visions are, so are our Pleasures: Perfect Visions produce perfect Pleasures. The faculties of the Soul now, and never till now, lie level to that rule, *Mat. 22. 37.* The Visions of God command and call forth all the heart and soul, mind and strength, into acts of love and delight. It was not so here, if the Spirit was willing, the Flesh was weak; but there the clog is off from the foot of the Will.

(3.) More constant, fixed, and steady. 'Tis one of the greatest Difficulties in Religion, to fix the thoughts, and cure the wildness and roving of the Fancy. The heart is not steady with God, and hence are its ups and downs, heatings and coolings; which are things unknown in the perfect state. By all which it appears, the change by Dissolution is great and marvellous both upon Body and Soul, but upon the Soul more especially.

PROP. IV. The Souls of the Righteous, at the instant of their Separation, are received by the blessed Angels, and by them transferred unto the place of Blessedness.

Tho' Angels are by nature a superiour order of Spirits, differing from Men in dignity, as the Nobles and Barons in the Kingdoms of this World, differ from inferiour Subjects; yet are they made ministering Spirits, (*i.e.*) servicable Creatures in the Kingdom of Providence to the meanest of the Saints, *Heb. 1. 14.* and herein the Lord puts a singular honour upon his People, in making such excellent Creatures as Angels servicable to them. *Luther* assigns to them a double office, *sc.* to sing the Praises of God on high, and to watch over his Saints here below. Their Ministry is distinguished into three branches: *Nunciatio*, for admonition or warning; *Advocatio*, for protection and defence; *Evocatio*, for succour, help, and comfort. This last office they perform more especially at the Soul's departure. Like tender Nurses, they keep us whilst we live, and bring us home in their Arms to our Father's house when we die.

They are about our death-beds, waiting to receive their precious charge into their arms and bosoms. When *Lazarus* breathed out his Soul, the Text saith, it was carried by the Angels into *Abraham's bosom*, *Luke 16. 23.* And upon this account, *Tertullian* calls them *Evocatores animarum*, the Callers forth of Souls. At the Translation of *Elijah*, they appeared in the form of Horses and Chariots of fire, *2 Kings. 2. 11.* Horses and Chariots are not only designed for conveyance, but for conveyance in State; and truly it is no small honour to have such a noble Convey and Guard to attend our Souls to Heaven.

If it be demanded, *What need is there of their help or company? Cannot God by his immediate hand and power gather home the Souls of his people to himself at death? He inspired them into our Bodies without their help, and can receive them again when we expire them, without their aid.*

True, he can do so; but it hath pleased him to appoint this method of our Translation, not out of meer necessity, but bounty. Souls ascend not to God in the virtue of the Angels wings or arms, but of Christ's Ascension. Had not he ascended as our Head and Representative, all the Angels in Heaven could not have brought our Souls thither. He ascended by his own Power, and we ascend by the virtue of his Ascension. 'Tis therefore rather for the State and Decorum, than any absolute necessity, that they attend us in our Ascension.

God will not only have his People brought home to him safely, but honourably. They shall come to their Father's House in a becoming Equipage, as the Children of a King. This puts honour upon our Ascension-day, that Day is adorned by the attendance of such illustrious Creatures upon us. 'Tis no small honour which God herein designs for us, that Creatures of greater dignity than our selves shall be sent from Heaven to attend and wait upon us thither.

Yea, that our Ascension-day should in this resemble Christ's Ascension, is an honour indeed. When he ascended, there were multitudes of these heavenly Creatures to wait upon him, *Psal. 68. 17, 18.* The Chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels; the Lord is among them as in *Sinai*, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, &c. A Cloud was prepared as a Royal Chariot, to carry up the King of Glory to his Princely Pavilion, and then a Royal Guard of mighty Angels to wait upon his Chariot; if not for support, yet for the greater state and solemnity of their Lord's Ascension. And O what Jubilations of blessed Angels were heard that day in Heaven! How was the whole City of God moved at his coming! the Triumph is not ended to this day, no, nor never shall.

Now herein God greatly honours his People, that there shall be some resemblance and conformity betwixt their Ascension and Christ's; * Angels rejoice to attend those to Heaven, who must be their fellow-Citizens for ever in Heaven! It is convenient also, that those who had the charge of us all our life, should attend us to our Father's house at our death. In the one they finish their Ministry, in the other they begin their more intimate Society.

Moreover, the Angels are they whom God will employ to gather together his Elect from the four Winds of Heaven at the great day, *Mat. 24. 31.* And who more fit to attend their Spirits to Heaven singly, than those who must collect them into one Body at last, and wait upon that collective Body when they shall be brought to Christ? *Psal. 45. 14.*

But the sight and presence of Angels is exceed- Obje-
ing awful, and overwhelming to humane nature:

* Quomodo interfuerint capiti, eo modo interfuerint etiam membris. *Gaudet* intervire illis in terris, quos aliquando socios habebunt in caelis. *Gerhard.*

Sol.

it will rather astonish and terrify, than refresh and cheer us, to find our selves all on a sudden surrounded and beset with such Majestick Creatures. We see what effects the appearance of an Angel hath had upon good Men in this World. We shall die, (said Manoa) for we have seen God, Judg. 13. 22. So Eliphaz, a Spirit passed before my face, the hair of my flesh stood up, Job 4. 15.

Sol.

True, whilst our Souls inhabit these mortal and sinful Bodies, the appearance of Angels is terrible to them, and cannot be otherwise, partly upon a natural, and partly upon a moral account. The dread of Angels naturally falls upon our Animal Spirits: They shrink and tremble at the approach of Spirits; not only the Spirits of Men, but of Beasts, quail at it. A Dog or a Horse is terrified at it, as well as a Man, Numb. 22. 25. The dread of Spirits strikes the animal or natural Spirits primarily; and the Mind or rational Soul by consent. There is also another cause of fear in Man, upon the sight or presence of Angels, viz. a consciousness of guilt. Wherever there is guilt, there will be fear, especially upon any extraordinary appearance of God to us, tho' it be but mediately by an Angel.

But when the Soul is freed both from flesh and sin, and shall enjoy it self in a Nature like to these pure and holy Spirits, the dread of Angels is then vanished, and the Soul will take great content and satisfaction in their Company and Communion: The Soul then finds it self a fit Companion for them, looks upon them as its fellow-Servants; for so they are, Rev. 19. 10. And the Angels look upon the Spirits of just Men, not as Inferiors and Underlings, but with great respect, as Spirits in some sense nearer to Christ than themselves. So that henceforth no dread falls upon us from the presence of these excellent Creatures; but each enjoyeth singular delight in each others society. And thus we see in what honourable and pleasing company the Souls of the Just go hence to their Father's House and Bosom.

The Soul is not so maimed and prejudiced by its separation from the Body, but that it both can and doth live, and act without it; and performs the Acts of Cogitation and Volition, without the aid and Ministry of the Body.

I know it is objected by them that assert the Soul's sleeping till the Resurrection; that tho' its Essence be not destroy'd by death, yet its Operations are obstructed by the want and absence of the Body, its Tool and Instrument: and thus they form their Objection.

All that the Soul understands it understands by Species: that is, the Images of things which are first formed in the Phantasy: As when we would conceive the Nature of a House, a Ship, a Man, or a Beast; we first form the Image or Species thereof in our fancy, and then exercise our thoughts about it: But this depending upon

bodily Organs and Instruments, the separated Soul can form no such Images. It hath no such innate Species of its own, but comes into the World an aëra tabula, white paper; and being deprived

by separation of the help of Senses and Phantasms, it consequently understands nothing.

Thus the Soul in its state of Separation is represented to us as wounded in its Powers and Operations, to that degree which seems to extinguish the very nature of it. But,

Sol. 1 We deny that the Soul knows nothing now but by Phantasms and Images; for it knows it self, its own Nature and Powers, of which it cannot possibly feign or form any Image or Representation, what Form, Shape, or Figure, can the fancy of a Man cast his own Soul into, to help him to understand its Nature?

And what shall we say of its understanding during an Extasy, or Rapture? Doth the Soul know nothing at such a time: Doth a dull Torpor seize and benumb its intellectual Powers? No, no, the Understanding is never more bright, clear, apprehensive and perfect, than when the Body in an Extasy is laid aside as to any use or assistance of the mind. The Soul for that space uses not the Body's assistance, as the very words *Extasy* and *Rapture* convince us.

2. To understand by *Species*

doth not agree to the Soul naturally and necessarily, but by accident, as it is now in union with the Body: Were it but once loosed from the Body, it would understand better without than ever it did in the Body by them. A Man that is on horse-back, must

move according to the motion of the Horse he rides; but if he were on foot, he then uses his own proper motion as he pleaseth; so here. But tho' we grant the Soul doth in many cases now make use of Phantasms, and that the agitation of the Spirits, which are in the Brain and Heart, are conjunct with its Acts of Cogitation and Intellection: Yet as a searching Scholar well observes, the Spirits are rather Subjects than Instruments of those Actions; and the whole essence of those Acts is antecedent to the motion of the Spirits, As when we use a Pen in writing, or a Knife in cutting, there is an operation of the Soul upon them, before there can be any operation by them.* How's They act as they are first acted, and so do these bodily Spirits. So that to speak properly, the Body is bettered, by the use the Soul makes of it in these its noble Actions; but the Soul is not advantaged by being tied to such a Body, it can do its own work without it, its Operations follow its Essence, not the Body to which it is for a time united.

In sum, 'Tis much more absurdous and difficult to conceive a stupified, benumbed, and unactive Soul, whose very Nature is to be active, lively, and always in motion, than it is to conceive a Soul freed from the shackles and clogs of the Body, acting freely according to its own Nature. I with the favourers of this Opinion may take heed, lest it carry them farther than they intend, even to a denial

Intellectus incorporea & immaterialia contemplantur, ut Deum & intelligentias; sed hæc nullo modo in phantasiam cadunt, cum sint extra limites corporum extrinsecum. *Contimb. de An. l. 3. c. 8. Q. 2.*

Si autem hoc non est ex natura animæ, sed per accidens hoc convenit ei, ex eo quod corpori alligatur, sicut Platonici possunt, de facili quartio solvi possunt. Nam remoto impedimento corporis, rediret anima ad suam naturam. *Aquin. p. 1. Q. 8. Art. 11.*

Conditiones intellectus sunt tres: (1) Obiectum, ens verum & intelligibile. (2) Phantasma, vel species sensibilis in Phantasia latens (3) Species intelligibilis quæ est accidens spirituale, representans idealiter intellectui rem materialiter existentem extra intellectum.

of its Existence and Immortality, and turn them into downright *Somnifists* or *Atheists*.

Pro. VI. *That the separated Souls of the Just, having finished all their Work of Obedience on Earth, and the Spirit having finished all his Work of Sanctification upon them, they do ascend to God, with all the habits of Grace inherent in them; and all the comfortable Improvements of their Graces accompanying and following them.*

This Proposition is to be opened and confirmed in these four Branches.

(1.) When a gracious Soul is separated from the Body, all its Work of Obedience in this World is finished. Therefore Death is called *the finishing of our course*, Acts 20. 24. *the night, when man works no more*, John 9. 4. *There is no working in the Grave*, Eccles. 9. 10. for Death dissolves the *Compositum*, and removes the Soul immediately to another World, where it can act for it self only, but not for others, as it was wont to do on Earth. *I shall see Man no more* (saith *Hezekiah*) *with the Inhabitants of the World*, Isa. 38. 11. That which was said of *David's* death, is as true of every Christian, *that having served his generation according to the will of God, he fell asleep*, Acts 13. 36.

I do not say this lower World receives no benefit at all by them after their death; for tho' they can speak no more, write no more, pray for, and instruct the Inhabitants of this World no more, nor exhibit to them the beauty of Religion in any new Acts or Examples of theirs, (which is that I mean by saying *they have finished all their Work of Obedience on Earth*) yet the benefit of what they did whilst in the Body, still remains after they are gone; as the Apostle speaks of *Abel*, Heb. 11. 4. *Who being dead, yet speaketh*. This way indeed abundance of service will be done for the Souls of Men upon Earth, long after they are gone to Heaven. And this should greatly quicken us to leave as much as we can behind us, for the good of Posterity, *that after our decease* (as the Apostle speaks, 2 Pet. 1. 15.) they may have our Words and Examples in remembrance. But for any Service to be done *de novo*, after death, it is not to be expected. We have accomplished as a Hireling our day, and have not a stroke more to do.

(2.) As all our Work of Obedience is then finished by us, so at death all the Work of God is finished by his Spirit upon us. The last hand is then put to all the preparatory Work for Glory, not a stroke more to be done upon it afterwards; which appears as well by the immediate succession of the Life of Glory, (whereof I shall speak in another Proposition) as by the cessation of all sanctifying Means and Instruments, which are totally laid aside as things of no more use after this stroke is given; *Adepro fine, cessant media*, Means are useless, when the End is attain'd. *There is no Work*, saith *Solomon*, *in the grave*. How short soever the Soul's stay and abode in the Body was, tho' it were regenerated one day, and separated the next, yet all is wrought upon it, which God ever intended should be wrought in this World, and there is no Preparation-work in the other World.

(3.) But tho' the Soul leave all the means or

Grace behind it, yet it carries away with it to Heaven all those habits of Grace which were planted and improved in it in this World, by the Blessing of the Spirit upon those means: Tho' it leave the Ordinances, it loseth not the Effects and Fruits of them; tho' they cease, their Effects still live. *The truth dwelleth in us, and shall be in us for ever*, 1 John 2. 27. *The Seed of God remaineth in us*, 1 John 3. 9.

Common Gifts fail at Death, but saving Grace sticks fast in the Soul, and ascends with it into Glory. Gracious habits are inseparable; Glory doth not destroy, but perfect them. They are the Soul's meekness for Heaven, Col. 1. 12. and therefore it shall not come into his presence, leaving its meekness behind it. In vain is all the Work of the Spirit upon us in this World, if we carry it not along with us into that World, seeing all his Works upon us in this Life have a respect and relation to the Life to come.

Look therefore as the same natural Faculties and Powers which the Soul had (tho' it could not use them) in its imperfect Body in the Womb, came with it into this World, where they freely exerted themselves in the most noble Actions of natural Life; so the habits of Grace which by Regeneration are here implanted in a weak and imperfect Soul, go with it to Glory, where they exert themselves in a more high and perfect way of acting than ever they did here below. The languishing spark of Love is there a vehement flame; the faint, remis, and infrequent delight in God, is there at a constant, ravishing, and transporting height.

(4.) To conclude, As all implanted habits of Grace ascend with the sanctified Soul to Heaven; (for the Soul ascends not thither as a natural, but as a new Creature) so all the effects, results, and sweet improvements of those Graces, which we gathered as the pleasant fruits of them on Earth, these accompany and follow the Soul into the other World also; *Their works follow them*, Rev. 14. 13. They go not before in the Notion of Merits to make way for them, but they follow or accompany them as Evidences, and comfortable Experiences. I doubt not, but the very remembrance of what pass'd betwixt God and the Soul here, betwixt the day of its Espousals to Christ, and its Divorce from the Body, will be one sweet Ingredient into their Blessedness and Joy, when they shall be singing in the upper Region the Song of *Moses* and of the *Lamb*. They were never given to be lost, or left behind us. And thus you see with what a rich Cargo the Soul fails to the other World, tho' if it had no other, it would never drop Anchor there.

The Souls of the Just, when separated from their Bodies, do not wander up and down this World, nor hover about the Sepulchres where their Bodies lie; nor are they detain'd in any Purgatory, in order to their more perfect Purification; nor do they fall asleep in a benumbed stupid state: but do forthwith pass into Glory, and are immediately with the Lord.

When once the mind of Man leaves the Scripture-guidance and direction, which is to it what the Compass or Pole star is to a Ship in the wide

Pro. VII

wide Ocean, whither will it not wander? in what uncertainties will it not fluctuate? and upon what Rocks and Quickfands must it inevitably be cast? Many have been the foolish and groundless Conceits and Fancies of Men about the Receptacles of departed Souls.

1. Some have assigned them a restless wandering Life, now here, now there, without any certain dwelling-place any where. The only ground for this fancy, is the frequent Apparitions of the Ghosts or Spirits of the dead, whereof many Instances are given; and who is there that is a stranger to such Stories? Now, if departed Souls were fixed any where, this World would be quiet and free from such disturbances.

I make no doubt but very many of these Stories have been the industrious Fictions and Devices of wicked and superstitious Votaries to gain reputation to their way, speaking Lies in hypocrisy, to draw Disciples after them. And many others have been the Tricks and Impostures of Satan himself, to shake the Credit of the Saints Rest in Heaven, and the Imprisonment of ungodly Souls in Hell, as will more fully appear when I come to speak to that Question more particularly.

2. Others think, when they are loosed from the Body at death, they hover about the graves and solitary places where their Bodies lie, as willing, seeing they can dwell no longer in them, to abide as near them as they can; just as the surviving Turtle keeps near the place where his Mate died, and may be heard mourning for a long time about that part of the Wood. This Opinion seeks countenance and protection from that Law, *Deut.* 18. 10, 11. which prohibits Men to consult with the Dead; of which restraint there had been no need nor use, if it had not been practised; and such practices had not been continued, if departed Souls had not frequented those places, and given Answers to their Questions. But what I said before of Satan's Impostures, is enough for the present to return to this also.

3. The *Papists* send them immediately to Purgatory, in order to their more thorow Purification. This Purgatory *Bellarmino* thus describes: *It is a certain place wherein, as in a Prison, Souls are purged after this life, that were not fully purged here, to the intent they may enter pure into Heaven; and tho' the Church* (saith he) *hath not defined the place, yet the Schoolmen say, it is in the bowels of the Earth, and upon the borders of Hell.* And to countenance this profitable Fable, divers Scriptures are by them abused and misapplied, as *1 Cor.* 3. 15. *Matth.* 5. 25, 26. *1 Pet.* 3. 19. All which have been fully rescued out of their hands, and abundantly vindicated by our Divines, who have proved, God never kindled that fire to purify Souls; but the *Pope* to warm his own Kitchen.

4. Another sort there are, who affirm, they neither wander about this World, nor go into Purgatory, but are cast by Death into a Swoon or Sleep; remaining in a kind of benumbed condition, till the Resurrection of the Body. This was the Error of *Bryllus*; and *Irenaeus* seems to border too near upon it, when

he saith, || *The Souls of Disciples shall go to an invisible place appointed for them of God, and shall there tarry till the Resurrection, waiting for that time: and then receiving their Bodies, and perfectly, (i. e.) corporately, rising again, as Christ did, they shall come to the sight of God.*

|| *Discipulorum Animæ abibunt in invisibilem locum, definitum eis à Deo; & ibi usque ad Resurrectionem commorabuntur, sustinentes Resurrectionem: post, recipientes corpora, & perfecte resurgentes, (i. e.) corporaliter, quemadmodum & Dominus resurrexit, sic venient ad conspectum Dei.* *Ben. lib. 5.*

All these mistakes will fall together by one stroke; for if it evidently appear (as I hope it will) that the Spirits of the Just are immediately taken to God, and do converse with, and enjoy him in Heaven; then all these Fancies vanish, without any more labour about them particularly. Now there are four Considerations which to me put the immediate Glorification of the departed Souls of Believers beyond all rational doubt.

1. Heaven is as ready and fit to receive them as ever it shall be.
2. They are as ready and fit for Heaven as ever they shall be.
3. The Scripture is plainly for it. And,
4. There is nothing in Reason against it.

1. Heaven is as fit and ready to receive them when they die, as ever it shall be. Heaven is prepared for Believers, (1.) By the purpose and decree of God, and so far it was prepared from the foundation of the World, *Matth.* 25. 34. (2.) By the Death of Christ, whose Blood made the purchase of it for Believers, and so meritoriously opened the Gates thereof, which our Sins had barred up against us, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. (3.) By the Ascension of Christ into that holy place, as our Representative and Forerunner, *John* 14. 2. This is all that is necessary to be done for the preparation of Heaven; and all this is done, as much as ever God design'd should be done to it, in order to its preparation for our Souls. So that no delay can be upon that account.

2. The departed Souls of Believers are as ready for Heaven as ever they shall be. For there is no Preparation-work to be done by them, or upon them after Death *John* 9. 3. *Eccles.* 9. 10. Their Justification was complete before Death, and now their Sanctification is so too; Sin, which came in by the union, going out at the separation of their Souls and Bodies. They are *Spirits made perfect*.

3. The Scripture is plain and full for their immediate Glorification; *Luke* 23. 43. *To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* *Luke* 16. 22. *The Beggar died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom.* *Phil.* 1. 21. *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* The Scripture speaks but of two ways by which Souls see and enjoy God, *viz.* Faith and Sight; the one imperfect suited to this Life; the other perfect, fitted for the Life to come; and this immediately succeeding that for the imperfect is done away by the coming of that which is perfect, as the Twilight is done away by the advancing of the perfect Day.

4. To conclude, There is nothing in Reason lying in bar to it. It hath been proved before, that the Soul in its unbodied state, is capable

to enjoy Blessedness, and can perform its acts of Intellection, Volition, &c. not only as well, but much better than it did when embodied. I conclude therefore, That seeing Heaven is already as much prepar'd for Believers, as it need be, or can be; and They as much prepar'd from the time of their Dissolution, as ever they shall be; the Scriptures also being so plain for it, and no bar in Reason against it: all the forementioned Opinions are but the Dreams and Fancies of Men, who have forsaken their Scripture-guide; and this remains an unshaken Truth, That the Spirits of the Just go immediately to Glory, from the time of their separation.

Pro. VIII *At the time of a gracious Soul's separation from the Body, it is instantly and perfectly freed from sin, which till that time dwelt in it from its beginning; but thenceforth shall do so no more.*

Immediately upon their separation from the Body, they are Spirits made perfect, as my Text styles them; and that Epithet Perfect could never sute them, if there were any remaining root or habit of Corruption in them.

The time, yea, the set time is now come, to put an end to all the dolorous groans of gracious Souls upon the account of indwelling Sin. What the Angel said to Joshua. Zech. 3. 3, 4. the same doth God say of every upright Soul at the time of its separation, *Take away the filthy Garments from him, and cloath him with change of Raiments, and set a fair Mitre upon his head.* Thus the Garments spotted with the Flesh, are taken away with the Body of Flesh, and the pure unchangeable Robes of perfect Holiness clothed upon the Soul, in which it appears without fault before the Throne of God, Rev. 14. 5.

There is a threefold burden from Evil in Sin, under which all regenerated Souls groan in this Life, viz. (1.) The Guilt; (2.) The Filth; (3.) The Inherence of it in their Nature. And there is a threefold Remedy or Cure of these Evils. The Guilt of Sin is remedied by *Justification*: The Filth of Sin is inchoatively healed by *Sanctification*: The Inherence of Sin is totally eradicated by *Glorification*. For as it entered into our Persons by the Union of our Souls and Bodies, so it is perfectly cast out by their Disunion or Separation at Death. The last stroke is then given to the Work of Sanctification, and the last is evermore the perfecting stroke: Sin languished under imperfect Sanctification in the time of Life, but it gives up the Ghost under perfected Sanctification, from and after Death. Sanctification gave it its deadly wound, but Glorification its final abolition. For it is with our Sins after Regeneration as it was with that Beast mentioned Dan. 7. 12. which thoit was wounded with a deadly wound, yet its Life was prolonged for a season: And this is the appointed season for its expiration. For if at their dissolution they are immediately received into Glory (as it hath been prov'd they are in our seventh Proposition) they must necessarily be freed perfectly from Sin, immediately upon their dissolution; because nothing that is unclean can enter into that pure and holy place: They must be, as the Text truly represents them, *the Spirits of just Men made perfect.*

For if so great holiness and purity be required in all that draw nigh to God upon Earth, as you read *Psalm* 93. 5. certainly those who are admitted immediately to his Throne must be without fault, according to *Revel.* 7. 14, 15, 16, 17.

When a compounded Being comes to be dissolved, each part returns to its own Principle; so it is here. The Spirit of Man, and all the Grace that is in it, came from God, and to him they return at death, and are perfected in him and by him: The Flesh returns to the Earth, whence it came, and all that Body of Sin is destroyed with it; neither the one or other shall be a snare or clog to the Soul any more. A Christian in this World is but Gold in the Ore; at Death the pure Gold is melted out and separated, and the Dross cast away and consumed.

Hence three *Confessaries* offer themselves to us.

That a Believer's Life and Warfare end together. We lay not down our weapons of War till we lie down in the dust; 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course.* The Course and Conflict you see are finished together. Tho' they commence from different terms, yet they always terminate together. Grace and Sin have each acted its part upon the Stage of Time, and the Victory hovered doubtfully, sometimes over Sin, and sometimes over Grace: but now the War is ended, and the Quarrel decided, Grace keeps its ground, and Sin is finally vanquished. Now, and never before, the gracious Soul stands triumphing like that noble *Argive*,

In vacuo solus Sessor Plausorque Theatra:
not an Enemy left to renew the Combat; the War is ended, and with it all the fears and sorrows of the Saints.

Separated Souls become impeccable, or free *Conf. II.* from all the hazard of Sin, from the time of their separation. For, there being no root of sin now inherent in them, consequently no temptation to sin can fasten upon them: all temptations have their handles in the corruption of our Natures. Did not Satan find matter prepared within us, dry Tinder fitted to his hand, he might strike in temptations long enough before one of his hellish sparks could catch or fasten upon us. Temptations are grievous exercises to Believers; they are *darts*, *Eph.* 6. 16. they are *thorns*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. But the separate Soul is out of Gunshot: 'twere as good discharge an Arrow at the body of the Sun, as a temptation at a translated Soul.

Separated Souls are more lovely Companions, and their Conferences more sweet and delightful than ever they were in this World. It was their corruption which spoil'd their Communion on Earth, and it is their spotless Holiness which makes it incomparably pleasant in Heaven. The best and loveliest Saints have something in them which is distastful; even sweet Briars, and holy Thistles, have their offensive Prickles: but when that which was so lovely on Earth is made perfect in Heaven, and nothing of that remains in Heaven, which was so offensive in them on Earth; Oh what delightful Companions will they be! Oh blessed Society! Oh most delightful Companions! let my Soul for ever be united to their assembly. I love them

Idoque
vocat con-
secratos,
vel perfe-
ctos, quia
carnis in-
firmitati-
bus non
amplius
sint obno-
xii, depo-
sita ipsa
carne.
Mari. in
loc.

Conf. III.

Conf. III.

them under their Corruptions, but how shall my Soul be knit to them when it seeth them shining in the 1 Perfections!

Prop. 9. *The Pleasures and Delights of the separate Spirits of the Just, are incomparably greater and sweeter, than those they did, or at any time could experience in their bodily state.*

With what a pleasant face would death smile upon Believers, what Roses would it raise in its pale cheeks, if this Proposition were but well settled in our hearts by faith! And if we will not be wanting to our selves, it may be firmly settled there, by these four Considerations, which demonstrate it.

Consideration I. *Whosoever Pleasure any man receives in this World, he receives it by means of his Soul.* Even all corporeal and sensitive delights have no other relish and sweetness, but what the Soul gives them; which is demonstrable by this, that if a man be placed amidst all the pleasing Objects and Circumstances in the World, if he were in that Center where he might have the confluence of all the delights of this World; yet if the Spirit be wounded, there is no more relish or favour in them, than in the white of an Egg. What pleasure had *Spira* in his Liberty, Estate, Wife and Children; These things were indeed proposed and urged again and again to relieve him; but instead of pleasure, they became his horror: let but the mind be wounded, and all the mirth is marr'd; one touch from God upon the Spirit, destroys all the joy of this World. Nay,

Let but the intention of the mind be strongly carried another way, and for that time, (though there be no guilt or wound upon the Soul) the most pleasant enjoyments lose their pleasure. What delight, think you, would bags of Gold, sumptuous Feasts, or exquisite Melody have afforded to *Archimedes*, when he was wholly intent upon his Mathematical lines? By this then it is evident, that the rise of all pleasure is in the mind, and the most agreeable and pleasing Objects and Enjoyments signify nothing without it: The mind must be sound in it self, and at leisure to attend them, or we can have no pleasure from them.

Consideration II. *Of all Natural Pleasures in the World, Intellectual Pleasures are found to be most agreeable and connatural to the Soul of man.*

The more refined and remote from sense any pleasure is, the more grateful it is to the Soul; those are certainly the sweetest Delights that spring out of the mind. A drop of intellectual pleasure is valued by a generous and well tempered Soul, above the whole Ocean of impure Joys, which come to it fophisticated and tang'd through the muddy Channels of sense.

No Sensualists in the world can extract such pleasure out of Gold, Silver, Meat, and drink; as a searching and contemplating mind finds in the discovery of Truth.

* *Heinsius*, that learned Library-keeper of *Leyden*, professed, that when he had shut up himself among so many illustrious Souls, he seemed to sit down there as in the very lap of Eternity, and heartily pitied the

the Rich and Covetous Worldlings that were strangers to his Delights.

And * *Cardan* tells us, that to know the secrets of Nature, and the order of the Universe, hath greater pleasure and sweetness in it, than the thoughts of Man can fathom, or any Mortal hope for. Yea, such Beauty, faith * *Plutarch*, there is in the Study of the *Mathematicks*, that it were unworthy to compare such Bubbles and Bubbles as Riches with it. Yea, faith another †, it were a sweet thing to be extinguished in those Studies.

Julius Scaliger was so delighted with *Poetry*, that he protested he had rather be the Author of twelve Verses in *Lucan*, than *Emperour of Germany*. And to say truth, there is a kind of || enchanting sweetness in those intellectual Pleasures and Feasts of the mind; such a Delight as hardly suffers the mind to be pull'd away from it. These Pleasures have a finer edge, a higher gust, a more agreeable savour to the mind than sensitive ones; as approaching much nearer to the nature of the Soul, which is spiritual.

Confid. III. And as Intellectual pleasures do as far exceed all sensitive pleasures as those which are proper to a man, do those which we have in common with Beasts: so *Divine Pleasures* do again much more surpass Intellectual ones. For what compare is there betwixt those joys which surprize a Scholar in the discovery of the Secrets of Nature, and those that overwhelm and swallow up the Christian in the discovery of the glorious Mysteries of Redemption by Christ, and his own personal interest therein!

To solve the *Phenomena* of Nature is pleasant, but to solve all the difficulties about our Title to Christ and his Covenant, that is ravishing. *Archimedes* his *ignis*, I have found it, was but the frisk or skip of a Boy to that rapturous voice of the Spouse, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his*. These are Entertainments for Angels, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. a short Salvation for the season it is felt and tasted, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. after these delights all others are insipid and dry. And yet one step higher.

Confid. IV. *All that divine Pleasure which ever the holiest and devoutest Soul enjoyed in the Body, is but a sip, or prelibation, compared with those full draughts it hath in the unbodied state.*

Whilst it is embodied, it rejoiceth in the Earnests and Pledges of joy; but when it is unbodied, it receives the full sum; *Psal.* 16. 11. *In thy Presence is fulness of Joy*. This fulness of Joy is not to be expected, because not to be supported in this World. The Joy of Heaven would quickly make the hoops of Nature fly. When a good man had but a little more than ordinary of the Joy of Lord poured into his Soul, he was heard to cry, Hold, Lord, hold, thy poor Creature is but a clay Vessel, and can hold no more. These Pleasures the Soul hath

in

* *Arcana cœli, naturæ secreta, ordinem Universi scire, majoris felicitatis & dulcedinis est, quam cogitatione quic assueque potest, aut mortalis sperare.*

* *Talis est Mathematicum pulchritudo, ut his indignum sit divitiarum phalaras istas & bullas & puerilia spectacula comparari. † Dulce est extinguere Mathematicarum artium studio. Leon. Diggi.*

|| *Talis suavitatis ut cum quis ea degustaverit, quasi Circæ poculis captus, non potest unquam ab illis divelli. Cardan.*

* In qua simulacrum pedem posui, toribus pestilum obdormo, & in ipso æternitatis gremio inter tot illustres animas fidem mihi sumo, cum ingenti quidem animo ut subinde magnarum mileret, qui hanc satisfactionem ignorant. *Epist. Fin.*

in the Body, are of the same kind indeed with those in Heaven, but are exceeding short of them in divers other respects.

1. The Spiritual Pleasures the Soul hath in the Body, are but by *reflexion*; but those it enjoys out of the Body, are by immediate *intuition*, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. now in a glass, then face to face.

2. The Pleasures it hath now, tho' they be of a Divine nature, yet they are relished by the vitiated Appetite of a sick and disordered Soul; the embodied Soul is diseased and sickly, it hath many Distempers hanging about it. Now we know the most pleasant things lose much of their pleasure to a sick man; the separate Soul is made perfect, thoroughly cured of all Diseases, restored to its perfect health; and consequently Divine Pleasures must needs have a higher gust and relish in Heaven than ever they had on earth.

3. The Pleasures of a gracious Soul on earth are but rare and seldom, meeting with many and long interruptions? and many of them occasioned by the Body, which often calls down the Soul to attend its Necessities, and converse with things of a far different nature: But from these, and all other ungrateful and prejudicial Avocations, the separated Soul is discharged and set free; so that its whole Eternity is spent in the highest Delights.

4. The highest Pleasures of a gracious Soul in the Body, are but the Pleasures of an uncentred Soul, which is still gravitating and striving forward, and consequently can be but low and very imperfect, in comparison with those it enjoys, when it is centred and fixed in its everlasting Rest. They differ as the shadow of the Labourer for an hour in the day, from his Rest in his Bed when his Work is ended.

5. To conclude, The Pleasures it hath here, are but the Pleasures of Hope and Expectation, which cannot bear any proportion to those of sight and full fruition. O see the advantages of an unbodied state!

That Gracious Souls separate from the Body, do attain to the perfection of knowledge with more ease than they attained any small degree of knowledge whilst they dwelt in the Body.

Great are the Inconveniences and Prejudices, under which Souls labour in their Pursuits after knowledge in this Life, *Veritas in pteo*, Truth lies deep. And it is hard, even with much labour, pains, and study, to pump up one clear Notion; for the Soul cannot now act as it would, but is fain to act as it can, according to the Limitations and Permissions of the Body, to which it is confined: by heedful *Observations*, and painful *Searches*, it is forced to deduce one thing from another, and is too often deceived and imposed upon by such tedious, and manifold Connections.

Prop. 10.

Lumen supremum nunquam descendit sine indumento; impossibile est aliter nobis lucere radium divinum, nisi varietate facrorum velaminum circumvelatum. *Dionys. Areop. de eul. s. Hier. esp. 1.*

Beside, Truth now is forced in compliance with our weakness, and distance from the Fountain, to descend from Heaven under Vails, Shadows, and Umbrages, thereby to contract some kind of Affinity with our Fancies and exterior Senses first, that so it may with

more advantage transmit it self on our Understanding. It must come under some veil or other to us, whilst we are veiled with Mortality, because the Soul cannot behold it in its native lustre, nor converse otherwise with it.

And hence it was that *Augustin* made his rational Conjecture, Why Men use to be so much delighted with *Metaphors*, because they are so much proportioned to our Senses, with which our reason in this embodied state hath contracted such an intimacy and Familiarity: But when the Soul lays aside its veil of Flesh, Truth also puts off her veil, and shews the Soul her naked, beautiful, and ravishing face: It henceforth beholds all truth in God the fountain of Truth. There are five ways by which men attain the knowledge of God, say the *Schools*, four of which the Soul makes use of in this World; but the fifth, which is the most perfect, is reserved for the separate state. Men discern God here,

(1.) *In vestigio*, by his foot-steps in the Works of Creation. God hath impressed the marks of his Wisdom and Power upon the Creatures, by which impressions we do discern that God hath been there. Thus the very Heathen arrive to some knowledge of a God, *Rom.* 1. 20. *Acts.* 17. 24. 27.

(2.) *In Umbra*, by his shadow: if you see the shadow of a Man, you guess at his Stature and Dimensions thereby. Thus Christ made some discovery of himself to the World, in the *Mosaical Ceremonies*, and antient Types and Umbrages, *Heb.* 10. 1.

(3.) *In Speculo*, in a Glass: This gives us a much clearer representation of a person than either his *foot-steps* or *shadow* could: This is an imperfect or darker Vision of his face by way of reflection. And thus God is seen in his Word and Ordinances, wherein as in a glass we behold the glory of the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18.

(4.) *In Filio*, in his own Son, who is the living Image and express Character of his Father. Thus sometimes we see a Child so lively representing his Father in Speech, Gate, Gesture, and every Lineament of his face, that we may say, *Sic Oculos, sic ille Manus, sic Ora ferebat*: Just so his Father spake, so he he went, and just such a one he was,

Thus we know God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. who is the express image of his Father, *Heb.* 1. 3. and *John* 14. 9. This is the highest way of attaining the knowledge of God in this Life. But then, in the unbodied state we see him.

(5.) *Face to Face*, with a direct vision. This is to see him as he is: The Believer is a Candidate for this degree now, but cannot be invested with it, till divested of this Body of Flesh. Yet the Soul when unbodied and made perfect, attaineth, not to a *comprehensive knowledge* of God, for it will still remain a finite being, and so cannot comprehend that which is infinite. That question, *Job* 11. 7. *Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection*: may be put to the highest Graduate in Heaven. And yet,

1. To see God, face to face, and know him as he is, will be a knowledge of the Divine Essence it self. To see the Divine Essence, is to see God as he is, i. e. to see him so perfectly and fully

fully, that the understanding can proceed no farther in point of knowledge concerning that great Question, *What is God?* Thus no Man hath seen, or can see God in this World. Even *Moses* himself could not so see God, *Exod. 33. 18, 19, 20.* But the Spirits of the Just made perfect have satisfying apprehensions, tho' no perfect comprehensions of the Divine Essence.

2. In this light they clearly discern those deep Mysteries which they here rack'd their thoughts upon, but could not penetrate in this Life. There they will know what is to be known of the Union of the two Natures in the wonderful Person of our *Emmanuel*; and the manner of the subsistence of each Person in the most glorious and undivided Godhead, *John 14. 20.* The several Attributes of God will then be unfolded to our Understandings; for his Essence and Attributes are not two things, *Rev. 4. 8, 9, 10, 11.* Oh! what a ravishing sight will this be!

The Mysteries of the Scriptures, and Providences of God, will be no Mysteries then: Curiosity it self will be there satisfied.

3. This immediate knowledge and sight of God face to face, will be infinitely more sweet and ravishingly pleasant than any or all the views we had of him here by Faith ever were, or possibly could be. There is a joy unspeakable in the Visions of Faith, *1 Per. 1. 8.* but it comes far short of the facial Vision. Who can tell the full importance of that one Text, *Rev. 22. 4. The Throne of the Lamb shall be in it, and they shall see his face?* Oh for such a Heaven (said one) as but to look through the Key-hole, and get one glimpse of that lovely Face! Earth cannot bear such lights. This Light overwhelms and confounds the inadequate Faculties of imperfect and embodied Souls. But there is *lumen consonant*, a cheering, strengthening, pleasant light, as the light of the *Morning Star*, *Rev. 2. 28.*

4. This sight of God will be appropriate and applicative. We there see him as our own God and Portion. Without a clear Interest in him, the sight of him could never be beatifical and satisfying. Sight without Interest is like the Light of a Glow-worm, Light without Heat. All Doubts and Objections are solv'd and answer'd in the first sight of this blessed Face.

5. To conclude: This perfect and most comfortable Knowledge is attained without labour by the separate Soul. Here every degree of knowledge was with the price of much pains. How many weary hours and aching heads did the acquisition of a little knowledge stand us in! But then it flows in upon the Soul easily. It was the saying of a great Usurer, *I once took much pains to get a little, (meaning the first stock) but now I get much without any pains at all.* Oh lovely state of separation! That Body which interposed, clogg'd and clouded the willing and capable Spirit, being drawn aside (as a Curtain) by Death, the Light of Glory now shines upon it, and round about it, without any interception or lett.

PRO. XI. *The separated Souls of the Just do live in a more high and excellent way of Communion with God in his Temple-worship in Heaven, than ever they*
Vol.I.

did in the sweetest Gospel-Ordinances, and most spiritual Duties, in which they conversed with him here on Earth.

That Saints on Earth have real Communion with God, and that this Communion is the joy of their Hearts, the Life of their Life, and their relief under all pressures and troubles in this Life, is a Truth so firmly sealed upon their Hearts by experience, as well as clearly revealed in the Word, that there can remain no doubt about it among those that have any saving acquaintance with the Life and Power of Religion.

This Communion with God is of that precious value with Believers, that it unspeakably endears all those Duties and Ordinances to them, which as means and instruments are useful to maintain it.

At death, the people of God part with all those precious Ordinances and Duties, they being only designed for, and fitted to the present state of Imperfection, *Eph. 4. 12, 13.* but not at all to their loss, no more than it is to his that loses the light of his Candle by the rifting of the Sun. A Candle, a Star, is comfortable in the night; but useless when the Sun is up, and in its Meridian Glory. Christian, pray much, hear much, and drive as profitable a Trade as thou canst among the Ordinances of God, and Duties of Religion: For the time is at hand that you shall serve and wait on God no more this way.

But yet think not your Souls shall be discharged from all Worship and Service of God when you die: No, you will find Heaven to be a Temple built for Worship, and the Worship there to be much transcendent to all that in which you were here employ'd. The Sanctuary was a pattern of Heaven in this very respect, *Heb. 9. 23.* And on this very account it is called *Sion* in my Text, and the *heavenly Jerusalem*, as denoting a Church-state, and the spiritual Worship there performed by the Spirits of just Men made perfect.

Some help we may have to understand the nature thereof, by comparing it with that Worship and Service which we perform to God here in this state of Imperfection, and by considering the agreements and disagreements betwixt them. In this they agree, that the Worship above and below are both addressed and directed to one and the same Object, *Father, Son and Spirit*; all centers and terminates in God. They also agree in the general Quality, and common Nature; they are both spiritual Worship. But there are divers remarkable differences betwixt the one and the other, as will be manifest in the following Collation.

1. All our Worship on Earth is performed and transacted by Faith, as the instrument and mean thereof, *Heb. 11. 6. He that cometh to God must believe, &c.* In Heaven Faith ceaseth, and Sight takes place of it, *1 Cor. 13. 7.* There we see what here we only believe. There are now before us Ordinances, Scriptures, Ministers, and the Assemblies of Saints in the places of Worship: but if we have any Communion with God, by or among these, we must set our selves to believe those things we see not. By realizing and applying invisible things, we here get

C c c c

some-

sometimes, and with no small pains, a taste of Heaven, and a transient glance of that Glory. In this service our faith is put hard to it, it must work and fight at once; resolutely act, whilst Sense and Reason stand by contradicting and quarrelling with it. And if with much ado, we get but one sensible touch of Heaven upon our Spirits, if we get a little spiritual warmth and melting of our Affections towards God, we call that day a good day, and it is so indeed.

But in Heaven all things are carried at a higher rate, the Joy of the Lord overflows us without any labour or pains of ours to procure it. We may say of it there, as the Prophet speaks of the dew and showers upon the grass, which tarrieth not for Man, nor waiteth for the Sons of Men, Mic. 5. 7.

2. No Grace is or can be acted here, without the clog of a contrary corruption upon its heel: *Rom. 7. 21. When I would do good, evil is present with me.* Every beam of Faith is presently darkened by a cloud of Unbelief, *Mark 9. 24. Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief.* We often Read in the Book of Experience (saith one)

what an inconstant fickle thing the heart is in duties: Now it is with us, by and by it's fled away and gone; we know not where to find it: It is constant only in its inconstancy and lubricity. There is iniquity in our most holy things, which needs pardon, *Exod. 28. 38.* Our best Duties have enough in them to damn us, as well as our worst Sins: but in that perfect state above, Grace flows purely out of the Soul, as beams do from the Sun, or Chrystal streams from the purest Fountain. No impure, or imperfect acts proceed from Spirits made perfect.

3. Here the Graces of the Saints are never, or very rarely acted in their highest and most intense degree. When they love God most fervently, there is some coldness in their love. Who comes up to the height of that rule, *Mat. 22. 37. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy mind, and all thy strength?* When we meditate on God, it is not in the depth of our thoughts, without some wanderings and extravagancies; 'tis very hard if not impossible for the Soul to stand long in its full bent to God.

But in Heaven it doth so, and will do so forever, without any relaxation or remission of its fervour. Christ among the Saints and Angels in Heaven, is as a mighty Load-stone cast in amongst many Needles, which leap to him, and fix themselves inseparably upon him. They all act in glory as the fire doth here, to the utmost of their power and ability. There is no note lower, than Glory to God in the highest.

4. The most spiritual Souls on Earth, who live most with God, have and must have their daily and frequent intermissions. The necessities of the Body, as well as the defectiveness of their Graces; require and necessitate it to be so. Our hands with *Moses* will hang down, and grow weary. Our Affections will cool and fall, do what we can.

But as the Spirits of just Men made perfect know no remissions in the degree, so neither

any intermissions in the actings of their Grace: *They shall serve him day and night in his Temple, Rev. 7. 15.* You that would purchase the continuance of your spiritual Comforts but for a day, with all that you have in this World, will there enjoy them at full without any intermitting throughout eternity.

5. If the best hearts on earth be at any time more than ordinarily enlarged in spiritual comforts, they need presently some humbling providence to hide pride from their eyes. Even Paul himself must have a thorn in the flesh, a Messenger of Satan to buffet him. Bernard could never perform any duty with comfortable enlargement, but he seemed to hear his own heart whisper thus, *Bene fecisti, Bernarde, O well done Bernarde.*

But in Heaven, the highest comforts are enjoyed in the deepest humility, and the intire glory is ascribed to God without any unworthy defalcations. *Rev. 4. 10.* They put not the Crown upon their own heads, but Christ's: they cast down their own Crowns, and fall down at the feet of him that sitteth upon the Throne.

6. All Assemblies for Worship in this world are mixed: they consist of regenerate and unregenerate, living and dead Souls; this spoils the harmony, and allays the comfort of mutual Communion. In a Congregation consisting of a thousand persons, Ah! how few comparatively are there that are heartily concerned in the Duty! But it is not so above. There are ten thousand times ten thousand, even thousands of thousands before the Throne, loving, adoring, praising, and triumphing together, and not a jarring string in all their Harps.

7. Here the Worship of God is impured, mixed, and adulterated by the sinful additions and inventions of Men. The gracious Soul's groan under as a heavy burden, sighing and praying for Reformation; as knowing they can expect no more of God's Presence, than there is of his Order and Institution in Worship. But above, all the Worship is pure, the least pin in the heavenly Tabernacle is according to the perfect Pattern of the Divine Will.

8. We have here Duties of divers kinds and natures to perform. All our times is not to be spent in loving, praising, and delighting in God: but we must turn our selves also to searching, watching, and soul-humbling work. Sometimes we are called to get up our Hearts to the highest praise, and then to humble them to the dust for sin and judgments; one while to sing his Praises, and another while to sigh even to the breaking of our loins: but the Spirits of just Men made perfect, have but one kind of employment, viz. praising, loving and delighting in God. There is no groaning, sighing, searching or watching-work in that state.

9. The most illuminated Believers on earth have but dark and crude apprehensions of Christ's Intercession-work in Heaven, or of the way and manner in which it is there performed by him. We know indeed that our High Priest is for us enter'd within the Vail, *Heb. 6. 20.* That he appears in that most holy place for us, *Heb. 9. 24.* That he there represents his

Says in libro experientie legimus, quomodo a corde nostro relinquitur, nunc est nobiscum, nunc a nobis, nunc avolat, nunc recurrit: in sola lubricitate manens. Bern.

his sufferings for us to God, standing before him as a Lamb that had been slain, *Rev. 5. 6.* That he offers up our Prayers with his Incense to God, *Rev. 8. 3.*

But the immediate intuition of the whole performance by the person of Christ in Heaven, the beholding of him in his work there, with the smiles and honours, the delight and satisfaction of the Father in his Person and Work; certainly this must be a far different thing, and what must make more deep and suitable impressions upon our hearts than ever the most affecting view of them by Faith at this distance could do,

10. *In such ravishing sights, and joyful ascriptions of Glory to him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for evermore, all the separated Spirits of the Just are employed and wholly taken up in Heaven as they come in their several times thither; and will be so employed in that Temple-service unto the end of the world, when Christ shall deliver up the Kingdom to his Father, and thenceforth God shall be all in all.*

The illustration and confirmation of this Assertion we have in these two or three particulars.

(1.) That all the Spirits of just men from the beginning of the World, until Christ's ascension into Heaven, did enter into Heaven as a place of Rest, as a City prepared for them of God, *Heb. 11. 16.* and did enjoy Blessedness and Glory there: but yet there seems to be an alteration even in Heaven it self, since the Ascension of Christ into it, and such an alteration as advanceth the Glory thereof both to Angels and Saints. 'Heaven it self (saith 'one who is now there) 'was not what it is, 'before the entrance of Christ into the Sanctuary for the administration of his Office. Neither the Saints departed, nor the Angels themselves were participant of that Glory 'which now they are. Neither yet doth this 'argue any defect in Heaven, or the state thereof in its primitive constitution: For the perfection of any state hath respect unto that order of things which it is originally suited unto. Take all things in the order of the first Creation, and with respect thereunto, Heaven 'was perfect in Glory from the beginning, &c.

'Whatever were their rest, refreshment and 'blessedness; whatever were their enjoyments of the presence of God; yet was there no 'Throne of Grace erected in Heaven, no 'high-Priest appearing before it, no Lamb as 'it had been slain, no joint ascription of Glory 'unto him that sits upon the Throne, and to 'the Lamb for ever; *God having ordained some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect, Heb. 11. 40.*

Now both the Angels and Saints in Heaven do behold Christ in his Priestly Office within that Sanctuary, a sight never seen in Heaven before.

(2.) This frame of heavenly Worship will continue as it is until the end of the World, and then another alteration will be made in the manner of his dispensatory Kingdom: For then he must deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; and then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be All in All, as the Apostle speaks,

Vol. I.

1 *Cor. 15. 24. 28.* So that as the present state of Heaven is not in all respects, what it was before Christ's Ascension thither; so after the consummation of the Mediatorial Kingdom, and the gathering all the Elect into Glory, it will not in all respects be what now it is.

Christ will never cease to be the immediate Head of the whole glorified Creation. God having gathered all the Elect, both Angels and Men, unto a head in him, and he being the Knot or Center of that collective Body; the whole frame of the glorified Church would be dissolved, should he lose his relation of a Head to it. Yea, I doubt not but he will for ever continue to be the medium of Communication betwixt God and his glorified Church: God will still Communicate himself to us thro' Christ, and our adherence, love and delight, will still be thro' Christ: In a word; whatever change shall be made, the Person of Christ, and therein his humane nature, shall still continue to be the eternal Object of Divine Glory, Praise, and Worship, *Rev. 22. 4.*

But when he shall have gathered home all his Elect to Glory, he will resign his Dispensatory Kingdom, and become subject (as Man and as Head of that Body which he purchased) to his Father himself, that God may be All in All, as it is 1 *Cor. 15. 28.*

(1.) All in All, that is, All the Saints shall be filled and abundantly satisfied in and from God alone; there shall be no emptiness, no want no complaint: For as there is water enough in one Sea to fill all Rivers, light enough in one Sun to illuminate all the World; so all Souls shall be eternally filled, satisfied, and blessed in one God. Surely there is enough in God for Millions of Souls; for if there be enough in God for all the angels, *Mat. 18. 10.* yea enough in God for Jesus Christ, *Col. 1. 19.* there must be enough for all our Souls; the capacity of Angels is larger than ours; the capacity of Christ is larger than that of Angels: he that fills them, cannot and will therefore fill us, be all in all to us.

(2.) All in All, that is, complete satisfaction to all that the Saints in the absence of all other things, out of which they were wont to suck some comfort and delight in this World. He will now be instead of all; eminently all without them. We shall suck no more sweetness out of Food, Sleep, Relations, Ordinances, &c. there will be no more need or use of them, than there is of Candles in the Sunshine, *Rev. 22. 5.*

(3.) All in All, that is, God only shall be loved, praised, and admired by all the Saints, they shall love no Creature out of God, but all in God, or rather God in them all. This is that blessed state to which all things tend, for which the Angels and glorified Souls in Heaven long. Hence it is that there is joy in Heaven upon the conversion of any poor sinner on Earth; because thereby the Body of Christ mystical advanceth towards its fulness and completeness, *Luke. 15. 10.* No sooner is a poor Soul struck by the word to the heart, and sent home crying, O sick! sick! sick of sin, and sick for Christ! but the news of it is quickly in Heaven, and is matter of great joy there because they wait as well as Christ, for the

Ccc 2

time

Dr. Owen's Christologia, p. 158.

Page 355

Friskum ad nostra tempora pervenit est.

Nam si dispensativum hoc regnum nunquam transiret, nunquam regni naturalis usum plenam ederet, nunquam recepturus. *Junius.*

time of Consummation. To conclude, Those that went first to Heaven before Christ's Ascension, were fully at rest in God, and blessed in his enjoyment, and yet upon Christ's Ascension thither, their happiness was advanced: 'tis a new Heaven as it were to feed their eyes upon the *Man Christ Jesus* there. Those that now stand before the Throne, ravished with the Face of Christ, and ascribing Glory to him for ever, are also in a most blessed state, and are filled with the joy of the Lord. And yet, two things still remain to be farther done, before they are, as they shall be for ever, viz. the Restitution of their Bodies, which yet lie in the Dust, and the delivering up of the dispensatory Kingdom, upon the coming in of the fulness of all their fellow-Saints; and after that no more alteration for ever, but they shall be both in Soul and Body for ever with the Lord. What Tongue of Man or Angel can give us the complete, *Emphasis* of that word, *ever with the Lord*? or that, of God's being *All in All*? O what hath God prepared for them that love him!

Prop. XII. *It pleaseth God at some times, even in this life, to give some men the foresight and foretaste of those Blessedness, which holy separated Souls do now enjoy, and themselves shall shortly enjoy with God in Glory.*

Specimens and Earnests of Heaven are no unknown things upon Earth. As the Grapes of *Escol*, so the joy of Heaven may be tasted before we come thither, and these Foresights and Prelibations of Heaven are either,

1. Extraordinary, or
2. Ordinary.

1. *Extraordinary*, for the way and manner; when the Soul is either, (1.) Rapt from the Body for a short time, in an *Ecstasy*, when in a visional way heavenly things are presented to it: or, (2.) When the bodily eye is elevated and strengthened above its natural vigor and ability, to behold the astonishing objects of the other World.

(1.) Of the first sort and rank was that famous Rapture of *Paul*, mentioned, 2 Cor. 12. 2, 3. *I knew a Man in Christ fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the Body I cannot tell. God knoweth) such an one caught up to the third Heaven, &c.* * 'Tis

questionable indeed, whether the Soul of the *Apostle* was really separated from his Body, whilst he suffered that *Ecstasy*, or whether his senses were only laid as it were asleep for that time; he himself could not determine the Question, much less can any other: but whether so or so, this seems evident, that his senses were for that time utterly useless to him: If his Body was not dead, it

was all one as if it had been so, for any use his Soul then made of it. † In *Ecstasies* all the Senses and Powers are idle, except the Understanding: his Soul for that time seemed to be disjoined from his Body, much as a flame of fire, which you shall sometimes see to play and hover at a distance from the Wood, and then

catching the Fewel again. Probably this was that *Trance* he fell into, in the Temple when he was praying, mentioned in *Acts* 22. 17.

In this Rapture his Soul ascended above this World, it was caught up into *Paradise*, into the third Heaven, the place in which Christ's Soul was after his death: and there he heard those *ἄρρητα ῥήματα* unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a Man to utter: For alas! poor Mortals cannot pronounce the *Shibboleth* of Heaven; the heavenly Inhabitants talk in no other *Dialect*; but the Language of Heaven is not properly spoken by any but the Inhabitants of Heaven. Now *Paul* was not admitted into their Society at that time, as he was at his death, but was only a Spectator, a stander-by, as the Angels are in the Assemblies of the Saints here on Earth. But O what a day was that day to his Soul! It was as one of the days of Heaven; no words could signify to another man what he felt, what he tasted in that hour. Such favours will not be indulged to many; he was a *chosen Vessel*, and appointed to extraordinary Sufferings for Christ, and it was necessary his Supports and Encouragements should be answerable.

It was no less extraordinary and wonderful a Vision which *Isaiah*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, and *John* had: such Representations of God as overwhelmed them, and made Nature faint under them, and no wonder; for if the eyes of Creatures be so weak, that they cannot directly behold such a glorious Creature as the Sun; how much less can they bear the glorious Excellency and Majesty of God?

(2.) And sometimes without an *Ecstasy*, Representations of Christ and the Glory of Heaven have been made, and the very bodily eye fortified and elevated above its natural vigour and ability to behold them. Thus it was with *Stephen* at his Martyrdom, *Acts* 7. 55, 56. *Who being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.* That this was not a sight of Faith, but an extraordinary sight by the bodily eye, is evident from its effect upon his outward Man, it made his face shine as the face of an Angel.

2. There are also beside this, *ordinary* and more common foretastes of Heaven, and the Glory to come, with which many Believers are favoured in this World. And such are those which come into the heart upon the steady and more fixed views of the World to come by Faith, and the more raised and spiritual actings of Grace in Duty. *Believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. *ἡδονήσασιν*, with a glorified Joy, or a joy of the same kind and nature with the joy of glorified Spirits, tho' in an inferior and allayed degree.

And yet with the allowance of its Alloy and Rebatement, it is like new Wine put into old and crazy Bottles, which is ready to make them fly; and would do so, should they be of any long continuance. *Say me (saith the Spouse) with Flaggons, comfort me with Apples, I am sick of love*, Cant. 2. 5. The Sickness was not the sickness of Desire, or of Grief; of that he had complained before: but the sickness of Love.

(i. e.)

* Non constat, an Anima Pauli fu erit tunc a corpore separata, cum ipse id se necire fateretur. Unde quid illi circa abstractionem a sensibus reipia acciderit, affirmare non possumus: videlicet num mortuum Agnoscere, per separationem animae, extincti fuerint in eo sensus: vel non mortuo, consopiti duntaxat. Collig. Conimbr. lib. 3. Art. 3. p. 512.

† In ecstasy ferri omnes potentias praeter intellectum. Abulen.

(i. e.) She was ready to faint under the insupportable weight of Christ's manifested and sealed Love, not able to bear what she felt, pained with the Love of Christ; and the desired Core speaks this to be her case, *Stay me with Flagons, comfort me with Apples*. As if she had said, Lord, support and underprop my Soul, for it reels, staggers, and fails under the pressure and weight of thy Love. Much like the case of a holy Man, who cried out, under the overwhelming sense of the Love of Christ shed abroad into his heart in prayer, Hold, Lord, hold, thy poor Creature is a Clay vessel, and can hold no more. Tho' these Joys bring not the Soul into a perfect *Ecstasy*, they certainly bring it as near as may be to it. Mr. Fox. tells us of one *Giles of Brussels*, a godly Martyr, who in Prison spent most of his time apart from the rest in secret Prayer; in which his Soul was so ardent and intent, that he often forgot himself and the time; and when he was called to Meat, he neither saw nor heard those that stood by him, till he was lifted up by the arms; and then he would gently speak to them, as one newly awaked out of a sweet sleep. These foretastes of Heaven may, from the manner of their conveyance, be distinguished into,

1. Mediate: And, 2. Immediate.

1. *Mediate*, in and by the previous use and exercise of Faith, heart-examination, &c. the Spirit of God concurring with, and blessing of such Duties, as these, helps the Soul by them to a sight of its interest in Christ, and the Glory to come; which being gained, Joy is no more under the Soul's command. I have with good assurance this account of a Minister, 'who being alone in a journey, and willing to make the best improvement he could of that day's Solitude, set himself to a close examination of the state of his Soul, and then of the Life to come, and the manner of its being and living in Heaven, in the views of all those things which are now pure Objects of Faith and Hope. After a while he perceived his thoughts begin to fix, and come closer to these great and astonished things than was usual; and as his Mind settled upon them, his Affections began to rise with answerable liveliness and vigour.

'He therefore (whilst he was yet master of his own thoughts) lifted up his heart to God in a short ejaculation that God would so order it in his Providence, that he might meet with no interruption from Company, or any other Accident in that Journey, which was granted him: for in all that day's Journey, he neither met, overtook, or was overtaken by any. Thus going on his way, his thoughts began to swell and rise higher and higher like the waters in *Ezekiel's* Vision, till at last they became an overflowing flood. Such was the intention of his mind, such the ravishing tastes of heavenly Joys, and such the full assurance of his interest therein, that he utterly lost a sight and sense of this World, and all the concerns thereof; and for some hours knew no more where he was, than if he had been in a deep sleep upon his Bed. At last he began to perceive himself very faint, and almost choked with blood; which run-

ning in abundance from his nose, had discoloured his Clothes and his Horses from the shoulder to the hoof. He found himself almost spent and Nature to faint under the pressure of Joy unspeakable and unsupportable; and at last perceiving a Spring of water in his way, he with some difficulty alighted to cleanse and cool his face and hands which were drenched in Blood. Tears and Sweat.

'By that Spring he sat down, and washed; earnestly desiring if it were the pleasure of God, that it might be his parting-place from this World: he said, Death had the most amiable face in his eye that ever he beheld, except the face of Jesus Christ which made it so; and that he could not remember (tho' he believed he should die there) that he had one thought of his dear Wife or Children, or any other earthly Concernment.

'But having drank of that Spring, his Spirits revived, the Blood stented, and he mounted his Horse again; and on he went in the same frame of Spirit till he had finished a Journey of near thirty miles, and came at night to his Inn, Where being come, he greatly admired how he came thither, that his Horse, without his direction, had brought him thither and that he fell not all that day; which 'past not without several Trances of considerable continuance.

'Being alighted, the Innkeeper came to him, with some astonishment, (being acquainted with him formerly) O Sir, said he, what is the matter with you? You? look like a dead Man. Friend, replied he, I was never better in my life. Shew me my Chamber, cause my Cloak to be cleansed, burn me a little Wine, and that is all I desire of you for the present. Accordingly it was done, and a supper sent up, which he could not touch; but requested of the people, they would not trouble or disturb him for that night. All this night passed without one wink of sleep, tho' he never had a sweeter night's rest in all his life. Still, still, the Joy of the Lord, overflowed him, and he seemed to be an Inhabitant of the other World. The next morning being come, he was early on horseback again, fearing the Divertisement in the Inn might bereave him of his Joy; for he said it was now with him, as with a Man that carries a rich Treasure about him, who suspects every Passenger to be a Thief: but within a few hours he was sensible of the ebbing of the Tide; and before night, tho' there was a heavenly serenity and sweet peace upon his Spirit, which continued long with him, yet the Transports of Joy were over, and the fine edge of his delight blunted. He many years after called that day one of the days of Heaven, and professed he understood more of the Life of Heaven by it, than by all the Books he ever read, or Discourses he ever entertained about it. This was indeed an extraordinary foretaste of Heaven for degree, but it came in the ordinary way and method of Faith and Meditation.

2. There are also immediate lapses of heavenly Joy into the hearts of Believers at some times; of which we may speak as the Prophet doth

doth of the Dew and Rain, that it *carrieth not for Man, nor waiteth for the Sons of Men*; a surprising Light and Joy, like that *Cam. 6. 12. Or ever I was aware, my Soul made me like the Charivars of Aminadab.*

There is a Witnefs of the Spirit distinct from that of Water and Blood, *1 John 5. 8.* that is, a Witnefs, or Sealing, which comes not in an argumentative way, by reasoning from either Justification or Sanctification, but seems to come immediately from the Spirit. I know both sorts of Testimonies, how clear and sweet soever they are for the present, are liable afterwards to be called into question; but certainly, during the abode of them upon the Soul, they are no less than a *short Salvation*, a real participation of the Joy of the Lord. And that which makes them so ravishing and transporting, is,

(1.) The infinite weight with which the concerns of Eternity lie upon the hearts and thoughts of the People of God; nothing lies so near to their Spirits in all the World, as the matters of Salvation do, and have still done ever since God thoroughly awakened them in their first effectual Conviction. 'Tis said of *Luther**, *There was such a strong impression of God upon his Spirit in his first Conviction, that there was neither Heat, nor Blood, nor Sense, nor Speech discernable in him.* Tho' it rife to that height but in a few, yet it settles in a deep, serious, and most solemn sense and sollicitude in all. This heightens the Joy.

(2.) The restlessness of the Soul, whilst matters of Salvation hang in a dubious suspense, must needs proportionably overflow it with Joy when God shall clear it. It was the saying of one, and is the sense of many more, I have born (said she) seven Children, and they have all cost me dear; yet could I be well content to bear them all over again, for one glimpse of the Love of God to my Soul. This heightens the Joy above expression.

And now, having explained the substance of the Doctrine in these twelve Propositions, it remains, that as a Mantilla, or Cast upon the whole, I farther clear what belongs to this Subject, in the solution of several Queries about the Soul in its unembodied and separate state: and tho' the Nature of some of these Queries may seem too curious, yet I shall labour to speak according to the Rules of Sobriety, and contain my self within the line of Modesty, in what I shall speak about them: And the first is this,

Query 1. *Whether any Notion or Conception can be formed of a separate Soul? And if so, How we may be assisted duly to form it, and conceive of it?*

Sol. 1. It must be acknowledged not only very difficult, but an impossible task, for a Soul immersed in Matter, and so unacquainted with its own Nature and Powers, as it is in its embodied state, to gain a perfect, clear, and adequate Conception of what it shall be in the World to come. Expect not then a perfect Image, much less any magnificent Draught of this excellent Creature: this would be the same thing as to go about to depict the Sun in its Glory, Motions, and Influences, with a Pencil. I shall think I have done enough, if I can but give you any umbrage or faint representation of this sublime

and spiritual Being, and the manner of its subsisting and acting out of the Body. For seeing it is by Nature invifible, and in most of its Actions (whilst it is in the state of Composition) it makes the same use of the Body and natural Spirits, that a Scribe doth of his Pen and Ink, without which he cannot decipher the Characters which are formed in his fancy; it must needs be difficult to conceive how it subsists and acts in its separate state.

But tho' we acknowledge it to be a great difficulty to trace it beyond the limits of this world, tho' we perceive nothing to depart from the Body at the instant of its expiration but a puff of breath, which vanishes like smoke into the Air; and tho' Atheistical Wits daringly pronounce an immaterial Substance to be a meer *Jargon*, a contradiction in *terminis*; which being joined together, destroy one another: Yet all this doth not make the Notion of a separate Soul impossible, much less undermine its Existence in its unembodied and lonely state; the Scriptures having so abundantly obviated all these Atheistical Suggestions, by so many plain discoveries of the happiness of some, and misery of others after this Life. Yea, my Text answers us, that Death is so far from destroying or annihilating, that it *perfects* the Spirits of the Just.

There can be no more difficulty in conceiving of a separate Soul, than there is in conceiving of an Angel. For it is certain that a separated Soul and an Angel are the liveliest and clearest Representations of each other, in the whole number of created Beings. Some make the difference betwixt them little more, than of a Sword in the Scabbard from one that is naked. A Soul is but a *Genius* in the Body, and a *Genius* (or Angel) is a Soul out of a Body. An Angel (saith another) is a complete and perfect Soul, a Soul an imperfect and incomplete Angel.

The separate Soul doth not become an Angel by putting off the Body; they are, and still will be divers Species: but in this they agree, that in their common Nature they are both Spirits, that is, immaterial Substances, endued with Understanding, Will, and active Power. And I know not why the one should not be as intelligible as the other; or if there be any advantage, the Soul certainly must have it, seeing our acquaintance with Souls is much more intimate than with Angels. Angels indeed have larger Capacities, and have no natural inclination to be embodied as Souls have; but their common Nature, as they are Spirits, is the same: And if we can conceive of one, we may also of the other.

But the difficulty seems to lie in this, how the Soul can subsist alone without a Body; and how the habits of Grace, which were infused into it in this Life by Sanctification, do inhere in it, or can be reduced into act by it, when it hath no bodily Organs to work by.

As to the first, there is no difficulty at all, if we once rightly apprehend what is meant when we call it a *spiritual Substance*; that is, a Being by it self, independent upon any other Creature as to its existence, as was opened before: the Soul depends not for its Life upon the Body,

* Nec calor, nec languis, nec sensus, nec vox, superfluit, Ep. ad Melanct.

Hobbs's Leviathan, cap. 24.

Dr. More's Immortality of the Soul, l. 2. c. 17. § 4. Bell. de Anim. ments.

but the Body upon the Soul. It is the same Sword when it is drawn, as it was when sheathed in its Scabbard; the Soul is as much it self when separated from the Body, as it was when united with it; its Being is independent on it, it can live and act in a Body, and it can do so without it: for it is a distinct Being from its Body, a substantial Being by it self. And,

Sol. 5. As for the habits of Grace which accompany it to Heaven, it would much facilitate our apprehension of it, if we but compare acquired and infused habits with each other. 'Tis true, they are of different Natures and Originals, but the Soul is the subject of them both, and their Inhesion and improvement is much after the same manner.

Take we then an acquired habit into consideration, which is nothing else but a permanent Quality rendering the subject of it prompt and ready to perform a work with ease; suppose that of Music, or Writing, and we shall find these habits to be safely lodged in the Soul, as well when the Body is laid into the deepest sleep, which is the Image of Death, as when it is awake and most active; for they are both Artists when asleep, and need learn no new Rules to play or write when you awake them: which shews the habits to be permanently rooted in their minds.

Infused habits of Grace are as deeply rooted in the Soul, yea, deeper than any acquired habit can be: for when Knowledge and Tongues shall be done away, Love abideth, 1 Cor. 13. 8. viz. after Death, when the Body is asleep in the Grave.

Sol. 6. Add hereto, that these habits of Grace are inseparably rooted or lodged in a subject which is by nature a Spirit, that is to say, an intelligent active Being, able to use

¶ The Understanding and Will are the primary faculties of the Soul, and are therefore called Inorganical, because not affixed to any Member of the Body, as the sensitive Appetite and locomotive Powers are to their proper Organs. The Soul therefore hath the free use and exercise of them in its separate state.

Moreover, let this Spirit thus furnished with gracious habits be now considered in separation from the Body, in which state it enjoyeth and rejoiceth in a double Privilege it never had before, viz. Perfection both of it self, and of its Graces, and the nearest access it is capable of; 2 Cor. 5. 6. Absent from the Body, and present with the Lord. It hath now no Body to clog or cloud it, nor can it complain of distance from God as it did in this World. Oh! at what rate must we conceive the love and delight of a Soul under these great Advantages, to cast out their very Spirits, as I may say, in their glorious Activities and Exercises! Well then, here you find a Spirit naturally endued with Understanding, Will and Affections: in these Faculties and Affections the habits of Grace permanently rooted, which therefore accompany it in its ascension to Glory: an ability to use and exercise these Faculties and Graces, and that in a more excellent degree and manner, than it did or could in this World, the subject and

habits inherent being now both made perfect: the clog of Flesh knock'd off, and all distance from God removed, by its coming home to him, even as near as the capacity of the Soul can admit. Conceive such a Spirit so qualified; now rank'd in its proper order among innumerable other holy and blessed Spirits which surround the Throne of God, beholding his Face with infinite delectation, and acting all its Powers and Graces to the Highest in the worshipping, praising, loving, and admiring him that sitteth on the Throne, and the Lamb for evermore. And then you have a true, tho' imperfect Idea or Notion of the Spirit of a just Man made perfect.

I will not here make use of the other Glass, to represent a damned Soul, separate for a time from its Body, and for ever from the Lord: That will be shewn you in its proper place.

Whether there be any difference in the separation of gracious Souls from their Bodies? And if so, in what particulars doth the difference appear? Qu. 2.

For the clear stating and satisfying of this Sol. Question, I will lay down some things negatively, and some things positively about it. On the negative part I desire two things may be noted.

1. That there is no difference betwixt the separation of one gracious Soul and another, as point of safety. Every regenerate Soul is fully secured in and by Jesus Christ from the danger of perishing, and is out of hazard of the Wrath to come.

This must needs be so, because all that are in Christ are equally justified by the imputation of Christ's Righteousness, without difference, to them all; Rom. 3. 22. Even the Righteousness of God, which is by Faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference: By virtue whereof, they are all equally secured from Wrath to come, one as well as another. As all that failed with Paul, so all that die in Christ come safe to the shoar of Glory, and not one of them is lost. The sting of Death smites none that are in Christ.

2. There is no difference betwixt the departing Souls of just Men, in respect of the supporting presence of God with them in that their hour of distress; that Promise belongs to them all, Psal. 91. 15. I will be with him in trouble; and so doth that, Heb. 13. 5. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. Their God is certainly with them all, to order the circumstances of their death, and all the Occurrences of that day, to his Glory, and their Good. Supports I have (said a good Man in such an hour) tho' Spirits I want; and so they have also who meet with the hardest tug at death.

But notwithstanding their equality in these Privileges, there is a great difference betwixt the departing Souls of just Men. And this difference is manifest both in the

1. External } Circumstances of their
2. Internal } Death.

1. In the External Circumstances of their Death, all have not one and the same passage to Heaven in all respects; for,

(1.) Some

(1.) Some go thither by the ordinary road of a natural death from their Beds, and the arms of lamenting Friends, to the arms and bosom of Jesus Christ: But others swim through the Red Sea to *Canaan*, from a *Scaffold* to the *Throne*, from a *Gibbet* or *Stake* to their Father's house, from insulting Enemies to their triumphant Brethren, the Palm-bearing multitude. This is a rough, but honourable way to Glory,

(2.) Some lie long under the hand of death, before it dispatch them, it approaches them by slow and lingering paces, they feel every step of death distinctly as it comes on towards them: But others are favoured with a quick dispatch, a short passage from hence to Glory. *Hezekiah* feared a pining sickness, *Isa.* 38. 10. 12. what he feared, many feel. O how many days, yea weeks and months, have many gracious Souls dwelt upon the brink of the Pit, crying, How long, Lord, how long!

(3.) The pains and throes of Death are more acute and sharpe to some of God's people than to others: Death is bitter in the most mild and gentle form of it. To such dear and intimate friends as the Soul and Body are, cannot part without some tears, groans, or sighs; and those more deep and emphatical than the groans and sighs of the living use to be: But yet (comparatively speaking) the death of one may be filled sweet and easy to another's. *Latimer* and *Ridley* found it so, tho' burnt in the same flame.

In this respect all things come alike to all, and the same difference is found in the world, as well as in the best Men: Some like *Sheep* are laid in the Grave. *Psal.* 49. 14. others die in the bitterness of their Soul. *Job* 21. 25. and by this no Man knows either love or hatred.

2. There are besides these, some remarkable Internal differences in the dissolution of good Men: the sum whereof is in this,

1st. That some gracious Souls have a very hard, strait, difficult entrance into Heaven: just as it is with Ships that sail by a very bare wind, all their art, care and pains, will but just: weather some Head-land or Cape they steer fast by some dangerous Rock or Sand, and with a thousand fears and dangers, win their Port at last. Saved they are, but yet (to use the Apostle's phrase) scarcely saved, or saved as by fire. And this difficulty ariseth to them from one or all these causes:

(1.) It ordinarily ariseth from the weakness of their faith, which is in many Souls without either the light of evidence or strength of reliance; neither able to dissolve their doubts, nor steadily repose their hearts: and thus they die, much at the rate they lived, poor doubting and cloudy, tho' gracious Souls. They can neither speak much of the comfort of past experiences, nor of the present foretastes of Heaven.

(2.) The violent assaults and batteries of Temptations make the passage exceeding difficult to some. O the sharp conflicts and dreadful combats many poor Souls endure upon a death-bed! O the charges of hypocrisy fortified by neglects of duty, formality, and by-ends in duty, falls into sin after conviction

and humiliation, &c. all which the Soul is apt to yield to, and admit the dreadful conclusion.

These are the last, and therefore oft-times the most violent conflicts. The malice of Satan will send them halting to Heaven, if he cannot bar them out of it.

(3.) To conclude: The hiding of God's face, puts terror into the face of death, and makes a dying day a dark and gloomy day. All darkness disposes to fear, but none like inward darkness. They must like a Ship in distress, venture into the Harbour in the dark, tho' they see not their Land-marks.

2^{dly}. But others have the privilege of an *easy* death, a comfortable and sweet passage into Glory, through the broad gate of assurance, *2 Pet.* 1. 11, even an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom. What a difference doth God make, not only betwixt those that have Grace, and those that have none, but betwixt gracious Souls themselves in this matter; The things which usually make an easy passage to Heaven are,

(1.) A Pardon clear'd *Isa.* 33. 24. The sense of Pardon swallows up the sense of Pain.

(2.) A Heart weaned from this World, *Heb.* 11. 13, 9, 16. A Heart loosed from the World, is a foot out of the snare. Mortified limbs are cut off from the Body with little pain.

(3.) Fervent love to Christ, and longings to be with him, *Phil.* 1. 23. He that loves Christ fervently, must needs loath absence from Christ proportionably.

(4.) Purity and peace of Conscience make a death-bed soft and easy. The strains and wounds of Conscience in the time of life, are so many Thorns in our bed or pillow in the time of death, *1 John* 3. 21. But integrity gives boldness.

(5.) The work of obedience faithfully finished, or a steady course of holiness throughout our Life, is that which usually yields much peace and joy in Death, *Acts* 20. 24.

(6.) But above all, the presence of the Comforter with us in that cloudy and dark day, turns it into one of the days of Heaven, *1 Pet.* 4. 14. And thus you see, tho' all dying Christians be equally safe, and all supported and carried through by the power of God; yet their farewells to the Body are not alike cheerful. There are many external, and internal circumstantial differences in the deaths of good Men, as well as a substantial and essential difference betwixt all their deaths, and the death of a wicked Man.

Whether any Souls have notices, and forewarnings given them by Signs or Predictions in an extraordinary way, of their approaching Separation? Quest. III.

The terms of this Question need a little explanation. Let us therefore briefly consider what is meant by Signs, what by Predictions, and what by extraordinary Signs and Predictions.

A Sign is that which represents something else to us than that which is seen or heard. And a sign of death, is that which gives notice to our minds that our departure is at hand.

Prædicere
est ali-
quem do-
re aliqua
eventura
præmonere.

A *Prediction* is a fore-warning of a person more plainly and expressly of any thing which is afterwards to fall out or come to pass: and a *Prediction* of Death is an express notice or message informing us of our own, or of another's Death, to the end the mind may be actually disposed to an expectation thereof.

Of Signs, some are *ordinary*, and natural; some *extraordinary*, and supernatural, or at least preternatural.

There are natural Symptoms and Prognosticks of Death which are common to most dying persons, and by which Physicians inform themselves and others of the state of the Sick. These are out of this Question, we have nothing to do with them here; but I am enquiring after extraordinary Signs and Predictions by words, or things forewarning us immediately, or by others, of our approaching Death. The Question is, Whether such intimations of Death be at any time truly given unto Men; or whether we are to take them for fabulous reports, and superstitious fancies?

For the *Negative*, the following grounds are laid.

Reasons for
the Negative.

Reason I. The sufficient ordinary provision God hath made in this case, renders all such extraordinary notices and intimations of our Death needless: and be sure the most wise God doth nothing in vain. We have three standing, ordinary, and sufficient means to premonish us of our departure hence, viz. the Scriptures, Reason, and daily Examples of Mortality before our Eyes. The Scriptures tell us our life is but a vapour, which appears for a little while, and then vanishest away, James 4. 14. *That our days are but as a hand breadth, and that every man in his best estate is vanity*, Plal. 39. 5.

Reason tells us, so feeble a tie as our Breath is, can never secure our lives long. *The living know that they must die*, Eccles. 9. 5. The radical moisture which is daily consuming by the flame of life, must needs be spent ere long.

And all the Graves we see opened so frequently are sufficient warnings that we our selves must shortly follow. Therefore, as there was no need of *Manna* when Bread might be had in an ordinary way, so neither is there need of extraordinary signs when God hath abundantly furnished us with standing and ordinary means for this purpose.

Reason II. And as the Scriptures render such signs needless, so they seem to be directly against them. Christ commands us to watch, because we know not in what hour the Lord cometh. Yea, even *Isaac* himself, an extraordinary person, and endued with a Spirit of Prophecy, whereby he foretold the condition of his Sons after him, yet it's said, *Gen. 27. 2. That he knew not the day of his death*. And it is not reasonable to think that common persons should know that, which extraordinary and prophetic persons knew not.

Reason III. All Mankind belong either to God or the Devil. To such as belong to God, such extraordinary warnings are needless, for they have a watchful Principle within them, which continually prompts them to mind their change; and besides, death cannot endanger those that are in Christ, how suddenly or unexpectedly forever it should befall them.

And for wicked men, it cannot be thought God should favour and privilege them in this.

Vol. I.

matter above his own Children; and as for Satan, he knows not the time of their death himself: and if he did, it would thwart his design and interest to discover it to them, *Luke 11. 21.* So that upon the whole, it should seem such Signs and Predictions are of no use, and the relations and reports of them fabulous.

But tho' these Reasons make the common and daily use of such Signs and Predictions needless, yet they destroy not the credibility of them in all cases, and at all times. For,

1. There are recorded instances in Scripture of premonition and predictions of the Death of persons. Thus the Death of *Abijah* was foretold to his Mother by the Prophet, and the precise hour thereof, which fell out answerably, *1 King 14. 6, 12.* And thus the Death of the King of *Affrica* was foretold exactly both as to kind and place, *Isa. 37. 7, 37, 38.*

2. These Predictions serve to other ends and uses sometimes, than the preparation of the persons warned, even to display the foreknowledge, power and justice of God in marking out his Enemies for ruin. And thus the Lord is known by the judgments that he executeth, *Psa. 9. 16.*

Thus Mr. *Knox* predicted the very place and manner of the death of the *Laird of Grange*, *Lives, p. 277.* You have sometime seen the courage and constancy of the *Laird of Grange* in the cause of God, and now that unhappy Man is casting himself away. I pray you go to him from me (said Mr. *Knox*) and tell him that unless he forsakes that wicked course he is in, the Rock wherein he confideth, shall not defend him, nor the carnal Wildom of that Man (meaning the young *Lesington*) whom he counteth half a God, shall help him: but he shall be shamefully pull'd out of that Nest, and his Carcass hung before the Sun. And even so it fell out the following year, when the Castle was taken, and his Body hang'd out before the Sun. Thus God exactly fulfilled the Prediction of his Death.

The same Mr. *Knox* in the year 1566. being in the Pulpit at *Edinburgh* upon the Lord's day, a Paper was given up to him, among many others, wherein these words were scoffingly written concerning the Earl of *Murray*, who was slain the day before, *Take up the Man whom ye accounted another God*. At the end of the Sermon, Mr. *Knox* bewailed the loss of the Church and State by the Death of that virtuous Man; and then added, *There is one in this Company that makes this Murder the subject of his Mirth, for which all good men should be sorry; but I tell him he shall die where there shall be none to lament him*. The Man that wrote the Paper, was one *Thomas Metellan*, a young Gentleman, who shortly after, in his Travels, died in Italy, having none to assist, or lament him.

3. And others have had Premonitions and Signs of their own Deaths, which accordingly fell out. And these Premonitions have been given them, sometimes by strong irresistible Impressions upon their Minds, sometimes in Dreams, and sometimes by unusual Elevations of their Spirits in Duties of Communion with God.

(1.) Some have had strong and irresistible impressions of their approaching change made upon their Minds. So had Sir *Anthony Wingfield*, Sir *John Norris* the Expedition, who was slain at *Brest*, Anno 1594. At his undertaking of that Expedition, he was strongly

D d d d

per-

persuaded it would be his death; and therefore so settled and disposed of his Estate, as one that never reckoned to return again. And the day before he died, he took order for the payment of his debts, as one that strongly prefaged the time was now at hand, which accordingly fell out the next day.

Much of the same nature was that of the late *Earl of Marlborough*, who fell in the *Holland War*. He not only prefaged his own fall in that Encounter, (which was exactly answered in the event) but left behind him that memorably and excellent Letter, which evidenced to all the World, what deep fixed apprehensions of Eternity it had left upon his Spirit. Many examples of this nature might be produced, of such as have in their perfect health foretold their own death; and others who have dropt such passages as were afterwards better understood by their sorrowful friends, than when they first dropt from their lips.

(2.) Others have been premonished of their death by *Dreams*, sometimes their own, and sometimes others. The learned and judicious *Amyraldus* gives us this well attested relation of *Lewis of Bourbon*. That a little before his journey from *Dreux*, he dreamed that he had fought three successful Battels, wherein his three great Enemies were slain, but that at last he himself was mortally wounded; and that after they were laid one upon another, he also was laid upon the dead Bodies. The event was remarkable; for *Maréchal of St. Andre* was killed at *Dreux*, the *Duke of Guise* at *Orleans*, the constable of *Montmorancy* at *St. Denis*: and this was the *Triumvirate* which had sworn the ruin of those of the Reformed Religion, and the destruction of that *Prince*. At last he himself was slain at *Basac*, as if there had been a continuation of deaths and funerals.

Suetonius in the life of *Julius Cesar*, tells us that the night before he was slain, he had divers premonitions thereof, for that night all the doors and windows of his chamber flew open; his wife also dreamed that *Cesar* was slain, and that she had him in her arms. The next day he was slain in *Pompey's Court*, having received 23 wounds in his Body.

Pamelius in the life of *Cyprian* tells us for a most certain and well attested truth, that upon his first entrance into *Garbis* (the place of his banishment) it was revealed to him in a dream, or vision, that upon that very day twelvemonth, he should be consummate: which accordingly fell out; for a little before the time prefixed, there came suddenly two *Apparitors* to bring him before the new *Proconsul Gaius*, by whom he was condemned, as having been a Standard-bearer of his Sect, and an Enemy of the Gods. Whereupon he was condemned to be beheaded, a multitude of Christians following him crying, Let us die together with him.

And as remarkable is that recorded by the learned and ingenious *Dr. Sterne*, of *Mr. Usher of Ireland*, a man, saith he, of great integrity, dear to others by his merits, and my kinsman in blood: who upon the 28th day of *July 1657*. went from this to a better World. About four of the Clock the day before he died, a *Maaron*, who died a little before, and

whilst living was dear to *Mr. Usher*, appeared to him in his sleep, and invited him to sup with her the next night: he at first denied her, but she more vehemently pressing her request on him, at last he consented, and that very night he died.

I have also the fullest assurance that can be of the truth of this following Narrative. A Person yet living was greatly concerned about the welfare of his dear Father and Mother, who were both shut up in *London* in the time of the great Contagion in 1665. Many Letters he sent to them, and many hearty prayers to Heaven for them. But about a fortnight before they were infected, he fell about break of day into this dream, That he was in a great *Inn* which was full of company, and being very desirous to find a private room, where he might seek God for his parents life, he went from room to room, but found company in them all; at last casting his eye into a little chamber which was empty, he went into it, lockt the door, knelt down by the outside of the bed, fixing his eyes upon the plaister'd wall within side the bed; and whilst he was vehemently begging of God the life of his Friends, there appeared upon the plaster of the wall before him the Sun and the Moon, shining in their full strength. The sight at first amazed and discomposed him so far, that he could not continue his Prayer, but kept his eye fixed upon the body of the Sun; at last a small line or ring of black, no bigger than that of a Text-pen, circled the Sun which increasing sensibly, eclipsed in a little time the whole Body of it, and turned it into a blackish colour; which done, the figure of the Sun was immediately changed into a perfect Death's head, and after a little while vanished quite away; the Moon still continued shining as before; but whilst he intently beheld it, it also darkened in like manner, and turned also into another Death's head, and vanished. This made so great an impression upon the beholder's mind, that he immediately awaked in confusion and perplexity of thoughts about his dream; and awaking his wife, related the particulars to her with much emotion and concernment; but how to apply it he could not presently tell, only he was satisfied that the dream was of an extraordinary nature. At last *Joseph's* dream came to his thoughts with the like *Emblems*, and their interpretation, which fully satisfied him that God had warned and prepared him thereby for a sudden parting with his dear Relations, which answerably fell out in the same order, his Father dying that day fortnight following, and his Mother just a month afterwards.

I know there is much vanity in dreams, and yet I am fully satisfied some are weighty, significant, and declarative of the purposes of God.

(3.) Lastly, An unusual and extraordinary elevation of the Soul to God, and enlargement in Communion with him, hath been a signifying forerunner of the death of some good men. For as the Body hath its *levamen antefraterale*, lightning before death, and is more vegete and brisk a little before its dissolution; so it is sometimes with the Soul also. I have known some persons to arrive on a sudden to such heights of love to God, and vehement long-

Amyraldus of Divine Dreams, pag. 122. 123.

Pamelius in vita Cyprian.

Dr. Sterne's dissertation de morte, p. 163.

ings to be dissolved, that they might be with Christ, that I could not but look upon it, as Christ did upon the box of Ointment, as done against their death. And so indeed it hath proved in the event.

Thus it was with that renowned Saint, Mr. *Bremen of Stapleford*: as he excelled others in the holiness of his life, so he much excelled himself towards his death, his motions towards Heaven being then most vigorous and quick. The day before his last sickness, he had such extraordinary enlargements of heart in his Closet-Duty, that he seemed to forget all the concerns of his Body, and this lower World. And when his Wife told him, Sir, I fear you have done your self hurt with 'riling so early; he answered, 'If you had 'seen such glorious things as I saw this morning in private prayer with God, you would 'not have said so: for they were so wonderful and unspeakable, that whether I was in 'the Body, or out of the Body, with *Paul*, I cannot tell.

And so it was with learned and holy Mr. *River*, who seemed as a man in Heaven, just before he went thither. And so it hath been with thousands beside these. I confess it is not the lot of every gracious Soul, (as was shew'd you in the last Question) nor doth it make any difference as to the safety of the Soul, whatever it makes as to comfort. Let all therefore labour to make sure their Union with Christ, and live in the daily exercises of Grace in the duties of Religion; and then, tho' God should give them no such extraordinary warnings one way or another, they shall never be surprized by death to their loss, let it come never so unexpectedly upon them.

Quest.

It may be also queried whether Satan by his Instruments may not forget the death of some men? How else did the *Witch of Endor* forget the death of *Saul*? And the *Southsayers* the death of *Cesar* upon the *Ides*, (i. e.) the fifteenth day of *March*, which was the fatal day to him?

Sol. 4.

Foreknowledge of things to come which appear not in their next causes, is certainly the Lord's Prerogative; *Isa.* 41. 23. Whatever therefore *Satan* doth in this matter, must be done either by conjecture, or commission. As to the case of *Saul*, 'tis not to be questioned but that *Satan* knowing the Kingdom was made to *David* by promise, and that the Lord was departed from *Saul*, and seeing how near the *Armies* were to a Battle, might strongly conjecture and conclude, and accordingly tell him *To morrow thou shalt be with me*, 1 Sam. 28. 19.

And so for the death of *Cesar*, The Devil knew the Conspiracy was strong against him, and the Plot laid for that day; and so it was both easy to him to reveal it to the *Southsayers*, and his interest to do it, thereby to bring that cursed Art into reputation.

As for other signs and forwarnings of death, by the usual resort of doleful Creatures, as *Owls* and *Ravens*, vulgarly accounted ominous: *Wall-watches*, upon this account called *Death-watches*; and the eating of wearing-apparel by *Rats*: I look upon them generally as superstitious fancies not worthy to be regarded among Christians. God may, but

Vol. I.

I know not what ground we have to believe that he doth, commissionate such Creatures to bring us the message of death from him. To conclude therefore.

Let no man expect or depend upon any such extraordinary premonitions and warnings of his change, or neglect his daily work and duty of preparation for it. We have warnings in the Word, in the examples of Mortality frequently before us, in all the Distresses and decays we often feel in our own Bodies; and by the signs of the times, which threaten death and desolation. Be ye therefore always ready, for ye know not in what Watch of the night your Lord cometh.

Whether separated Souls have any knowledge of, Quest. IV. or commerce and intercourse with men in this life: and if not, What is to be thought of the Apparitions of the Dead?

1. By separated Souls, understand the departed Souls both of Godly and Ungodly indifferently, and not as it is restrained to one sort only in the Text; for both of it is pretended there are frequent Apparitions after death.

2. By the knowledge such Souls are supposed to have after death both of persons and things in this lower World, we understand not a general knowledge, which one sort of them have of the state and condition of the Church militant on earth; for this we think cannot be denied to the Spirit of the Just made perfect, seeing they are still fellow-Members with us of the same mystical Body of Christ, and do behold our High-Priest appearing before God, and offering up our prayers for us and long for the consummation of the Body of Christ, as well as cry for vengeance against the persecutors thereof, *Rev.* 6. 10. Nor do I think those words, *Isa.* 63. 16. repugnant hereunto, *Abraham is ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledgeth us not*: for I look upon the import of those words only as a humble acknowledgment of their defection, which rendered them unworthy that their Forefathers should own or acknowledg them any more for their Children; and not as implying their utter ignorance or total oblivion of the Churches state on earth.

But I here understand such a particular knowledge of our personal states and conditions, as they once had when they dwelt amongst us in the Body; and this seems to be denied them by those Scriptures alledged a-
Job 14.
21. Ecclesi.
9. 5, 6.
John 19.
25.

3. By commerce and intercourse; understand not their intercession with God for us which the *Papists* affirm; but their concerns about our natural or civil interests in this World, so as to be useful to our Persons, by warning us of death, or dangers, or to our Estates, by disquieting such as wrong us in not fulfilling the Wills and Testaments they once made; or by giving us notice by words or signs of the death of our friends who died at a distance from us, or come to some violent and untimely end.

The sense of the Words being thus determined, and the Question so stated, I will for the resolution of it give you,

I. The strength of what I find offered for the Affirmative.

D d d d a

II. The

II. The general Concessions, or what may be granted.

III. My own Judgment about it, with the grounds thereof.

I. Some there are even among the learned and judicious who are for the *Affirmative* part of the Question, and do with much confidence assert, That departed Souls both know our particular concerns in this World, and intermeddle with them: confirming their assertion both by reasons to convince us that *it may be so*, and variety of instances that *it is so*. I will produce both the one and the other, and give them a due consideration and censure.

The substance of what is pleaded for the *Affirmative*, I find thus collected and improved by Dr. *Sterne*, a learned Physician in Ireland, in his Book entitled, *A Dissertation concerning Death*; where he offers us these four Arguments to convince that it is possible for departed Souls thus to appear, and perform such Offices for their Friends on Earth.

Dissertatio
de morte,
à p. 208 ad
p. 214.

(1.) Angeli jussu Dei hominibus opulantur, haudquam ambigitur; unde animas à corpore solutas sese rebus humanis miscere comprobari videtur. Sequitur fundamentum duplex est, prius, quod Animæ separatae Angeli sunt, Altum Angelis æquales; posterius, quod magis idonei sunt quibus officium generi humano succurrendi demandetur, quam Spiritus inter quos & corpus nullus unquam intercedit nexus, &c.

employment than those who never had any Tie at all to a Body, unless we can imagine them to have lost the remembrance of all that ever they did and suffered in the Body, as also that they put off and buried all their Affections to us with their Bodies, which is hard to think. Even as Christ our High-Priest is qualified for that Office above all others in Heaven, because he once dwelt and suffered in a Body like ours here upon Earth; so separated Souls are qualified above all other Spirits who are unrelated to Bodies of Flesh.

(2.) Ecclesie est corpus unum, cuius membra quo meliora, eo magis ad alius ejusdem corporis membris opitulandum sunt propensius; hujus autem corporis pars altera est triumphans in cœlis, altera militans in terris; illa melior, hæc opus magis indigna, &c.

all good Offices for us; for else they should do less for us now they are in a state of the highest Perfection in Heaven, than they did, or were willing to do in their imperfect state on Earth.

(3.) Testamentum (Ulpianus dicitur) est voluntatis nostre iusta sententia, de eo quod post mortem nostram fieri volumus. Testamentum autem tanquam res sacra ab omnibus gentibus religiose observatur, Gal. 3. 15. Ratio autem tantæ religiose tamque universalis observantia est,

Argum. I. Angels by command from God are useful and helpful to Men; they are the *Saints Guardians*, and it is probable that each Christian hath his peculiar Angel: whence it will follow that separated Souls do mingle themselves with *human affairs*, and that because they are Angels, at least equal unto Angels, *Luke* 20. 36. Besides, they being Spirits that were once embodied, must needs be more fit for this em-

Argum. II. The Church triumphant and militant are but one Body; and by how much better the triumphant are than the militant, by so much the more propense they are to succour and help the other that stand in need of it. This being the case, we cannot imagine but they are inclin'd to perform

all good Offices for us; for else they should do less for us now they are in a state of the highest Perfection in Heaven, than they did, or were willing to do in their imperfect state on Earth.

Arg. III. A Will or Testament (as *Ulpian* defines it) is the just sentence or declaration of our minds concerning that which we would have done after our decease. These Testaments have always, and among all Nations, been religiously observed, as the Apostle witnesseth, *Gal.* 3. 15. The reasons of this so reli-

gious observance are a presumption that those who made them when alive, continue in the same mind and will after death; that they take care for the fulfilling of them, and revenge the non-performance upon the unjust Executors. For otherwise there can be no reason why so great a stress should be laid upon the Will of the Dead, if they care not whether their Wills be performed or no. Why should we be so solicitous and studious about it, and pay so great a reverence to it, but upon this account?

Arg. IV. The Scriptures forbid consultations with the dead, *Deut.* 18. 10, 11. This prohibition supposeth some did consult them, and received Answers from them; which must needs imply some commerce betwixt the living and the Souls that are departed. And considering he had before forbidden their consultation with the Devil, it appears that here we must needs understand the very Souls of the Dead, and not the Devil personating them only.

These are the Arguments of this learned Author for the *Affirmative*, which he closes with two necessary Cautions: *First*, That this lays no foundation for religious Worship or Invocation of departed Souls; those that are helpful to us, are not therefore to be worshipped. *Secondly*, That we must acknowledge our selves to be under much darkness as to the way and manner of the converse of Spirits with us.

The most acute and learned *Dr. *Morè* *Dr. More!* find of the same opinion. He affirms, that departed Souls are capable of a vital Union with an airy Vehicle (or Body) in which they can easily move from place to place, and appear to the living; and act in their Affairs. as in detecting Murders, rebuking injurious Executors, visiting and counselling their Wives and Children, forewarning them of such and such courses, &c. To which we may add the profession of the Spirit thus appearing, of being the Soul of such a one; as also the similitude of the person: And all this ado is in things very just and serious, unfit for a Devil with that care and kindness to promote; and as unfit for a good *Genius*, it being below so Noble a Nature to tell a Lie. All these things put together, and rightly weighed, the violence of prejudice not pulling down the balance; I dare appeal (faith he) to any, Whether it will not be certainly carried for the present Cause? and whether any indifferent Judge ought not to conclude, if these Stories which are so frequent every where, and in all Ages, concerning the *Ghosts* of Men appearing, be but true, That it is true also that they are their Ghosts, &c?

These are the strongest Arguments I meet with, for the *Affirmative*, that the matter is possible, it may be so, the matter seems to be determin'd.

To this purpose Dr. *Sterne* alleges several instances out of Scripture, as that appearance of *Samuel* unto *Saul*, and the conference betwixt them, as also the Letters that were sent to *Jehoram* by *Elijah*, after that *Elijah*

quoniam animas eorum qui Testamenta considerant, etiam suam post mortem, in eadem voluntate perverare, ejus complementa curare, ac deinceps ejus vel execratrices, vel non perferre vindictas esse presumunt.

(4.) In sacris Scripturis consilere mortuos passim prohibetur, ut *Deut.* 8. 10, 11. Sed si homines a mortuis non suscitantur, legibus haud opus est; & si mortui rogati non aliquando responderent, ab hominibus haudquam consuluntur. *Sterne de Mort. lib. sup.*

Dr. More!
*Immortal-
ity of the
Soul, l. 2.
c. 16.*

was translated to Heaven, as appears by comparing 2 *Chron.* 21. 12. with 2 *Kings* 3 11. In which appears that in *Jehoshaphat's* time who preceded this *Jehoram*, *Elijah* was dead, and yet in *Jehoram's* time who succeeded him, he is said to receive Letters from *Elijah*. The appearance and conference also betwixt *Christ* and *Moses* and *Elias* upon the Mount, in the presence of some of the Disciples, confirms it, *Matth.* 17. 3.

These are the principal Scripture-instances, others are almost innumerable. From among that vast heap I will select some few that are most material, and of clearest Credit.

* *Infularum Scotticarum incolæ ad ægros, cum pro deploratis habentur, accedunt, & rogant, ut certo a morte die, locoq; certo ipsos conveniant; quod & mortui tempore & loco præstitit præstant. Sæmæ ibid.*

* It is a thing (saith my Author) both known and frequent, that the Inhabitants of the *Scottish Isles*, when their Friends are dying, come to them, and request them that upon such or such a day after their Death, and in such a

place, they would meet them; which the Dead accordingly do at the time and place agreed upon, and have sometimes discourse with them.

Infinite Examples of Murders (saith Dr. *Morè*) have been discovered by Dreams, the Souls of the Persons murdered seeming to appear to some or other asleep, and to make their complaints to them; giving us a notable Example out of *Baronius of Marfilus Ficinus*, who having made solemn Vow with *Michael Mercatus*, (after they had been pretty warmly disputing of the Immortality of the Soul out of the Principles of their Master *Plato*) that whether of them two die first, he should appear to his Friend, and give him certain information of that Truth: It was *Ficinus* his fate to die first, and that not long after this mutual Resolution. He was mindful of his Promise when he had left the Body; for *Mercatus* being very intent at his studies, betimes on a Morning heard a Horse riding by with all speed, and observed that he stooped at his Window, and therewith heard the Voice of his Friend *Ficinus*, crying out aloud, *O Michael, Michael vera, vera, sunt illa*: That is, *O Michael, Michael*, those things are true, they are true. Whereupon he suddenly opened his Window, and espying *Marfilus* upon a white Steed, called after him, but he vanished out of his sight. He sent therefore presently to *Florence* to know how *Marfilus* did, and understood that he died about that hour he called at his Window.

Much to the same purpose is that so famous and well attested story of the apparition of Major *George Sydenham* to Captain *William Dyke*, both of *Somersetshire*, attested by the worthy and learned Dr. *Thomas Dyke* a near Kinsman of the Captain's, and by Mr. *Douch*, to whom both the Major and Captain were intimately known. The sum is this, The Major and Captain had many disputes about the Being of a God, and the Immortality of the Soul, in which points they could never be resolved, tho' they much fought for and desired it; and therefore it was at last fully agreed betwixt them, that he that died first, should the third night after his Funeral, come betwixt the hours of twelve and one, to the little house in the Garden adjoining to Major

Sydenham's, House at *Dulverton* in *Somersetshire*.

The Major died first, and the Captain happened to lie that very night which was appointed, in the same Chamber and Bed with Dr. *Dyke*; he acquainted the Doctor with the appointment, and his resolution to attend the place and hour that Night, for which purpose he had got the Key of that Garden. The Doctor could by no means divert his purpose, but when the hour came he was upon the place, where he waited two hours and a half, neither seeing nor hearing any thing more than usual. About six weeks after the Captain and Doctor went to *Emon*, and lay both in the same Inn, but not in the same Chamber, as before at *Dulverton*.

The morning before they went thence, the Captain staid longer than was usual in his Chamber, and at length came into the Doctor's Chamber, but in Visage and Form much differing from himself, with his Hair and Eyes staring, and his whole body shaking and trembling: Whereat the Doctor wondering, demanded what is the matter, Cousin Captain? The Captain replies, I have seen my Major: At which the Doctor seeming to smile, the Captain said, If ever I saw him in my life, I saw him but now; adding as followeth: This morning (said he) after it was light, some one came to my Bed-side, and suddenly drawing back the Curtains, calls, *Cap, Cap*, (which was the term of familiarity that the Major use to call the Captain by) to whom I replied. What, my Major? To which he returns, I could not come at the time appointed, but I am now come to tell you, That there is a God, and a very just and terrible one; and if you do not turn over a new leaf, you will find it so. This stuck so close to him, little Meat would go down with him at dinner, tho' a handfom Treat was provided; these words were sounding in his ears frequently, during the remainder of his life: he was never shy or scrupulous to relate it to any that asked him concerning it, or ever mentioned it but with horror and trepidation. They were both men of a brisk Humour and jolly Conversation, of very quick and keen parts, having been both *University* and *Inns-of-Court* Gentlemen.

The Apparition of the Ghost of Sir *George Villiers*, Father of the Duke of *Buckingham*, giving three solemn Warnings, by three several Apparitions to his Servant Mr. *Parker*, is a known and credible Story. But I will wade no farther into Particulars, they are almost innumerable; let these suffice for a taste.

II. In the next place therefore I will lay down some,

Concessions about this Matter: And the First Concession is this: That the separated Souls or Spirits of Men are capable of performing and executing any Ministry or Service for God, (if he should please to commission them so to do) as well as Angels are, whom we know he frequently employs about the Persons and Affairs of his People on Earth.

Tho' they become not Angels by their separation, as *Maximus Tyrius* calls them, but remain Spirits Specifically distinct from them, yet are they Spiritual Substances as the Angels are: This their Nature capacitates them either to live and act out of the Body, or to assume

assume (as Angels do) an *aerial Body* for the time of their ministry: Nor do I know any thing in Scripture or *Philosophy* repugnant hereunto.

Concl. 2. *It cannot be doubted but upon some special and extraordinary reasons and occasions, some departed Souls have returned to, and appeared in this World by order and commission from God.*

This is too manifest to be doubted by any that understand and believe the Instances recorded in Scripture. *Moses* and *Elias*, long after their departure, appeared to, and talked with *Christ* upon the holy Mount, in the presence of some of his *Apostles*, *Mat. 17. 3.* nor is there any reason to question the reality of their Apparition, or to think it to be no more than a *Phantasm*, or imaginary resemblance of these Persons, but very *Moses* and *Elias* themselves: For they came to be Witnesses to *Christ's* Prophetic Office; and it was not fit for great a Point should be attested by imaginary Witnesses, or that they should be called *Moses* and *Elias* if they were not the very same Persons.

'Tis therefore most likely they both appeared in their own Bodies: for *Moses's* Body we know was hidden by the Lord, and *Elias's* his Body immediately translated with his Soul to Heaven: when therefore the Lord would send them upon this solemn Errand, the Soul of *Moses* probably reassembled that Body which was never found by Man, and *Elias* was already embodied, and fit immediately for his Expedition.

In like manner we read *Mat. 27. 52, 53.* that at the Resurrection of our Lord, many Bodies of the Saints arose, and appeared unto many: these were no *Phantasms*, but the very Souls of the departed Saints returned (having reassembled their own Bodies) unto this World, not only to confirm the truth of *Christ's* Resurrection, and adorn that great Day, but as a specimen or handful of the Resurrection of all the Saints in the virtue of his Resurrection at the great Day.

Nor will I deny, but upon some lesser (tho' never without weighty and solemn) Occasions and Reasons, God may sometimes send the Souls of the Dead back again into this World, as in the cases before recited, to evidence against the *Atheism* of Men, &c. *Augustine* relates a memorable Example which fell out at *Milvain*, where a certain Citizen being dead, there came a Creditor to whom he had been indebted, and unjustly demanded the Money of his Son. The Son knew the Debt was satisfied by his Father; but having no Acquittance, to shew, his Father appeared to him in his sleep, and shew'd him where the Acquittance lay: whether it were the very Soul of his Father, or rather an Angel, as *Augustine* thinks, is not certain, tho' the one as well as the other be possible. But tho' rarely, and upon some weighty and solemn Occasions some Souls have returned and appeared; yet I judge this is not frequently done upon light and ordinary Errands: And therefore to give you my own thoughts, I judge,

Concl. 3. *That those Apparitions which seem to be, and are generally reputed and taken for the Souls of the Dead, are not indeed so, but other Spirits putting on the Shapes and Resemblances of*

the Dead, and (for the most part) tricks of the Devil to delude or disquiet Men.

In this I think the learned Dr. *Brown* delivered his Judgment more solidly and orthodoxly, than in some other Points, where he saith, 'I believe that the whole Frame of a Beast doth perish, and is left in the same state after death, as before it was materialled into life: that the Souls of Men know neither contrary, nor corruption: that they subsist beyond the Body, and continue by the Privilege of their proper Nature, and without a Miracle: that the Souls of the Faithful, as they leave Earth, take possession of Heaven: that those Apparitions and Ghosts of departed Persons, are not the wandering Souls of Men, but the unquiet Walks of Devils, prompting and suggesting us unto *Mischief, Blood, and Villany.* And with this Opinion I concur as to the ordinary and common Apparitions of the Dead: And my Reasons are,

(1.) Because the Scriptures every where describe the state of departed Souls as a fixed state either in Heaven or in Hell; and assign the good or evil done in this World by Spirits, not to the departed Spirits of Men, but to Angels or Devils: and it is our duty to regulate our Conciets by Scripture, and not according to the vain Philosophy of the Heathens, or the superstitious Traditions and Opinions of Men.

As for the Souls of the Godly, they are at rest with *Christ*, *Rev. 14. 13. Isa. 57. 2.* and as fixed as Pillars in the House of God, *Rev. 3. 12.*

And for the Wicked, their Spirits are confined and secured in Hell as in a Prison, *1 Pet. 3. 19.* there is a fixed Gulph betwixt them and the living, *Luke 16. 27 -- 31.*

What good Offices are to be done by Spirits for us, the Angels are God's Commission-Officers to do them, *Heb. 1. 14.* They are all ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation: These are the Spirits sent forth to walk to and fro through the Earth, *Zec. 1. 10.* Their Ministry was emblematically represented in *Jacob's* Vision, where they were seen ascending and descending as upon a Ladder, betwixt Heaven and Earth, *Gen. 28. 12.* Yea, their very name Angel is a name of Office, signifying a Messenger, or one sent.

And for the mischief done by Spirits in this World, the Scriptures ascribe that to the Devils; those unquiet Spirits have their Walks in this World, they compass the whole Earth, and walk up and down in it, *Joh. 1. 7.* and *1 Pet. 5. 8.* they can assume any shape; yea, I doubt not but he can act their Bodies when dead, as well as he did their Souls and Bodies when alive: How great his Power is this way, appears in what is so often done by him in the Bodies of *Witches.* They are not ordinarily therefore the Spirits of Men, but other Spirits that appear to us.

(2.) If God should ordinarily permit the Spirits of Men inhabiting the other World, a liberty so frequently to visit this, what a gap would it open for *Satan* to beguile and deceive the living? What might he not by this means impose upon weak and credulous Mortals? There hath been a great deal of Superstition and

Non enim
convenit
ut veritas
mendacio,
vel
imagina-
riis testi-
bus probaretur.
*Maldon.
Capellus in
loc.*

Credibili-
us est ve-
re copori-
bus suis
apparuit.
*Pereus in
loc.*

Aug. in lib.
de cura
pro mor-
tuis agen-
da.

Religio
Med. Secd
37. p. 82.

Quid enim idololatriam inter Ethnicos & Christianos magis propagavit? Hinc fluxerunt multæ peregrinationes, Monasteria, Delubra, Dies festi, & alia, Lev. in Feb. 33.

and Idolatry already introduce under this pretence: he hath often personated Saints departed, and pretended himself to be the Ghost of some venerable person, whose love to the Souls of the people, and care for their Salvation drew him from Heaven to reveal some special Secret to them. Swarms of Errors, and superstitious and idolatrous Opinions and Practices are this way conveyed by the tricks and artifices of Satan among the Papists, which I will not blot my Paper withal; only I desire it may be considered, that if this were a thing so frequently permitted by God, as is pretended, upon what dangerous terms had he left his Church in this World, seeing he hath left no certain marks by which we may distinguish one Spirit from another, or a true Messenger from Heaven from a counterfeit and pretended one.

But God hath tied us to the sure and standing rule of his Word; forbidding us to give heed to any other voice or spirit leading us another way, *Ista*. 8. 19. 2 *Thef.* 2. 1, 2. *Gal.* 1. 8. It was therefore a discreet reply which one of the Antients made, when in a Prayer a Vision of Christ appeared to him, and told him, thy prayers are heard, for thou art worthy: the good man immediately clapt his hands upon his eyes, and said, *Nolo hic videre Christum*, &c. *I will not see Christ here, it is enough for me that I shall behold him in Heaven.*

To conclude. My Opinion upon the whole is this, that altho' it cannot be denied, but in some grand and extraordinary cases, as at the Transfiguration and Resurrection of Christ, God did, and perhaps sometimes tho' rarely, may order or permit departed Souls to return into this World; yet for the most part I judg those Apparitions are not the Souls of the dead, but other Spirits, and for the most part evil ones.

Of this Judgment was St. *Augustine*, who when he had at full related the Story above of the Father's Ghost directing his Son to the Acquittance; yet will not allow it to be the very Soul of his Father, but an *Angel*: where he farther adds, If (saith he) the Souls of the dead might be present in our affairs, they would not forsake us in this sort; especially my Mother *Monica*, who in her life could never be without me, surely she would not thus leave me being dead,

Obj. 1. But it was pleaded before, that we allow the Apparitions of Angels; and departed Souls, if they be not Angels, at least are equal unto Angels, and in respect of their late relation to us, are more propense to help us, than Spirits of another sort can be supposed to be.

Sol. It seems too bold and imposing upon Sovereign Wisdom to tell him what Messengers are fittest for him to lend and employ in his service: who hath taught him, or been his Counsellor?

Obj. 2. But these Offices seem to pertain properly to them as they are not only fellow-members, but the most excellent members of the mystical Body, to whom it belongs to assist the meemner and weaker.

Sol. If there be any force of reason in this Plea, it carries it rather for the Angels than for departed Souls: for Angels are gather'd under the same common head with the Saints;

the Text tells us, we are cometo an innumerable company of Angels: they and the Saints are fellow-Citizens, and we know they are a more noble order of Spirits; and as for their love to the Elect, it is exceeding great, as great to be sure as the departed Souls of our dearest Relatives can be. For after death they sustain no more civil Relations to us: all that they do sustain is as fellow-members of the same body, or fellow-Citizens, which Angels also are as well as they.

Object. 3. But, saith the Doctor, the reason why all Nations pay so great honour and religious care to the Will of the Dead, is a supposition that they still continue in the same mind after death, and will avenge the Falsifications of Trusts upon injurious Executors, else no reason can be given why so great a stress should be laid upon the Will of the Dead.

Sol. This is *gratis dictum*, to say no worse, a cheap and unwary expression: Can no reason be given for the religious observance of the Testaments of the dead but this Supposition? I deny it: for tho' they that made them be dead, yet God, who is witness to all such acts and trusts, liveth: and tho' they cannot avenge the frauds, and injustice of men, he both can and will do it, 1 *Thef.* 4. 6. which I think is a weightier ground and reason to enforce duty upon men than the fear of Ghosts. Besides, this is a case wherein all the living are concerned, all that die must commit a trust to them that survive; and if frauds should be committed with impunity, who could safely repose confidence in another; *Quod tangit omnes, tangi debet ab omnibus*: that which is of general concernment, and becomes every man's interest, infers a general obligation upon all.

As for the Letters of *Elijah*, 'tis a vanity to think they came post from Heaven; no, no, they were doubtless left behind him out of due care to the Government, and produced in that fit occasion.

Object. 4. But what need of a Law to prohibit Necromancy or consultation with the dead, if it were not practicable?

Sol. I do not think the wicked Art there prohibited enabled them to recal departed Souls; but it was a conversing with the Devil who personated the dead, and therein a kind of homage was paid him to the dishonour of God; or he might possibly raise the Bodies of wicked men, and appear in them: but I think the Spirits of the dead return not, except as was before limited.

Object. 5. But the matters they discover are found to be true and the causes in which they concern themselves are just; real Murders are detected by them, and real Fraud and Injuries corrected are rectified: but the Devil being himself a Liar and Deceiver, would never do it; 'tis not his interest to discover or discourage such things.

Sol. Tho it be not his interest merely to discover it, yet it is certainly his interest to precipitate wicked men, and hasten their ruin by the hand of Justice; and he will speak the truth, and seem to own a righteous cause to bring about his great design of ruining the Souls and Bodies of men. I will shut up with three Cautions,

Caution. 1. Strain not Conscience to enrich posterity:

posterity: be true to the trusts committed to you by the Dead, or by the Living, remembering, that tho' they be dead and cannot avenge the wrong, yet the Lord lives, and will surely do it in a feverer manner than they could, should they appear in the most terrible and frightful forms to you: Besides, your own Consciences will haunt you worse than a Ghost. Be just and true therefore in all your Promises and Trusts, for God is the Avenger.

Caution II Finish your work for Eternity before you die: for as the Cloud is consumed, and vanished away, so he that goes down to the Grave shall come up no more; he shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more, Job 7. 9, 10. Your Souls will be fixed in Eternity soon after they are loosed from your Bodies: when Death comes, away you must go, willing or unwilling, ready or unready; but no returning hither how willing forever.

Caution III. Keep your selves from that heathenish and accursed practice of consulting the Devil about your absent or dead Relations; a practice too common in Sea-port Towns, and of deep and heinous guilt before God: *Isa. 8. 19. And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar Spirits, and unto Wizards that peep and mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?*

You need not call the Devil twice, that subtle and officious Spirit draws the living into his Net by such a bait as this: You meet your mortal Enemy under the disguise of your dead Friend.

Query 5. *Whether the separated Souls of the Just in Heaven, have any converse or communication with each other? and how that can be, seeing all the Organs and Instruments of speech and hearing are laid aside with their Bodies;*

It seems impossible that separated or unbodied Spirits should converse together, seeing the Instruments by which the thoughts are communicated from one to another, are perished in the Grave. Suppose the Tongue of a man to be cut out, his Eyes and Hands perished or made useless whilst the Soul remains in the Body; it may enjoy its own thoughts within it self, but it is impossible to signify them to another by words or signs.

Or suppose a Man in a deep sleep (wherein the Senses are only bound for a little time) he may indeed exercise his own fancy in a pleasant Dream, but another cannot understand how it is entertained; but in death the Senses are not bound but extinguished.

Beside, we must not think the felicity of the departed holy Souls to consist in mutual Conferences one with another, but in their ineffable Visions of God, and Communion with him. To him who is Omniscient, and understands their most inward thoughts, they can freely communicate them, and receive his, as well as pour forth their own love; but to do it to their fellow-Creatures, who see not as God doth, seems impossible.

I indeed it was never doubted, but after the Resurrection they shall both know and talk with one another in a more excellent and perfect manner than now they do; but till that time, the Reasons above seems to persuade us,

that all the Conferences above are only betwixt God and them, which indeed is enough to make them happy: and indeed, if this ability be allowed to separated Souls, it seems to render the Resurrection of their Bodies needless: for they are well enough without them. But certainly the Spirits of just Men are not *Mutes*: such an August Assembly of holy and excellent Spirits do not live together in their Father's House without mutual Converse and Fellowship with each other, as well as with God.

That acute and judicious Divine, Mr. Joseph Symonds, in the Epistle to his Book, entitled, *Sigh and Faith*, expresseth himself about this matter thus. 'I often think (saith he) of the Communion of the Spirits of Men, which certainly is more than many are acquainted with: tho' we act one upon another in our present state, by the help of sense; yet we are wrought and designed to a more excellent way. Angels and the Spirits of Men made perfect, converse and trade in a mutual Communication, not without sense, but without such sense as ours. This, as eternal Life, begins here, and is found in some degrees in this mortal State, tho' not in so visible appearances as to lie open to much observation.

'Angels good and bad do act upon our Spirits, and our Spirits hold converse with them, and with the Father of Spirits, which may be discerned in secret Parlies and Discourses betwixt them and us; much of this appears in David's Psalms: and there passeth not only an inward speech, but there are invisible approaches, entertainments and touches, which Paul found when bound in the Spirit, and under the working of God, which wrought in him mightily, Col. 1. 29. it is also most certain that our Souls are not mute and shut out from all mutual Traffick with each other, except what they have by the mediation of Senses.

'Instances are found, that (as they say of two Needles touch'd with the Load-stone) the Spirit of one at a distance hath found it self affected with the motion and state of another. And this we are all sensible of, that there is a strong desire in us to Communion of Spirits; and that because the way most ready and convenient to our bodily state is by sense, we are carried with much inclination to maintain intercourse of our minds and Spirits by sense; but as being made to a better way, our Souls are not satisfied with this present way, as being both painful, and short. We cannot give an exact Copy of our Apprehensions, Desires, Delights, and other affections by these two great Mediators of Communion, the Eye, and the Ear: but because we are in so great a measure confin'd to this course, our Souls, as it were, stand in these two gates, to send and receive mutual Embassies each from other. Which way, as it is short in it self, so it is much shorned by distances, disaffections, impotencies, and disparities.

I cannot imagine that Men in the state of Imperfection should have so many ways to communicate their Minds, as by speaking, writing, &c. yea. that the very Birds and Beasts are by nature enabled to signify to each other

each other their Inclinations; and that the Spirits of just Men which are the best of all humane Spirits, and that when made perfect too, which is the best and highest state attainable by them) should have none, but live at a greater disadvantage in this respect, than they did, or the very Birds and Beasts in this World do. The sum of my thoughts about this matter, I will lay down in the following Sections.

SECT. 1. The State of Heaven (as was at large open'd in our eleventh Proposition) being an Association of Angels and blessed Souls for the glorifying and praising of God in his Temple there, and this Worship being carried on by joint consent, as appears by their joint ascriptions of Glory to God, *Rev. 7. 9. 10. 11. 12.* they must of necessity for the orderly carrying on of this Heavenly Worship, understand each others mind, and communicate their thoughts: for without this 'tis not imaginable how a joint or common Service, in which thousands of thousands are employed, can be decorously and orderly managed, except we conceive of them as so many *Machines*, or wind-Instruments that are managed by an intelligent Agent, tho' themselves be senseless, and merely passive: Certainly their consent is a different thing from that of the Keys of a *Harpicord*, or strings of a *Lute*; they are intelligent Beings, who understand their own and each others mind: and besides, without this ability, that Society in Heaven would be less comfortable, as to mutual refreshing Fellowship, than the Society of the Saints is here. So that it is not to be doubted, but these noble and excellent Spirits can, and do communicate their thoughts to each other, and that in a most excellent way.

SECT. 2. But yet we cannot imagine these Communications betwixt them to be by words formed by such Instruments and Organs of Speech as we now use, for they are bodiless Beings: words and articulate sounds are fitted to the use and service of embodied Spirits. It is therefore probable, that they convey and communicate their minds to one another, as the blessed Angels do, not with Tongues of flesh, (tho' we read of the *Tongues of Angels*, 1 Cor. 13. 1.) but in a way some what analogous to this, tho' much more noble

Constat Angelos linguas non habere; est autem in his aliquid *divinæ* linguæ, per quod conceptus sibi mutuo tradunt *Light*.

and excellent. For look as the Scripture files the most excellent Food, Angels Food; so the most excellent Speech, or most eloquent Tongues Angels Tongues. The purest Rhetoric that ever flowed from the lips of the most charming Orator, is but babbling, to the Language of Angels, or of Spirits made perfect.

When Paul as wrapt into the third Heaven, where he was admitted to the sight and hearing of this blessed Assembly, it's said he heard *divina* *incomprehensibilia* words unspeakable, spiritual Language, such as his Tongue neither could, or ought to utter, such as none but heavenly Inhabitants can speak: and Dan 8. 13. *I heard* (saith Daniel) *one Saint speaking, and another Saint said unto that certain Saint that spake*, &c. He heard the enquiries of the Angels, desiring to know the Mystery from the mouth of Christ. A Language they have, but not like ours.

Vol. I.

SECT. 3. The Communications of Angels and Souls in Heaven, is therefore conceived to be an ability in those blessed Spirits silently

Dicimur nobis ipsis in animo loqui, cum aliquid actu cogitamus, & animo volvimus: cogitamus autem actu, ex voluntatis imperio, hoc est, cum volumus. *Zanch.*

There are two ways by which the Souls of Men speak, one outwardly, by the Instruments of speech, or sensible signs the other inwardly without sound or sign. This inward silent Speech is nothing else but an act of the Will, calling forth such things into our actual Thoughts and Meditations, which before lay hid and quiet in the Memory, or habit of knowledge. These thoughts, or actual revolvings of things in the mind, are in Scripture called *דברים לבב*, a Word of Speech in the Heart, *Deut. 15. 9.* Take heed to thy self, that there be not a wicked word in thy Heart, we translate it a wicked thought: thoughts are the words and voice of the Soul. And so *Math. 9. 3.* they spake within themselves i. e. their Souls spake, tho' their lips moved not. All Meditation is an inward

Speech in the Soul, and therefore *מחשבה* indifferently signifies both to speak, and to meditate. The Objects which we revolve in our thoughts, are so many Companions with whom we converse: and thus a Man (like *Heinsius*) may be in the midst of abundance of excellent Company when he is alone. And this is silent talk to our selves, without any sound or noise.

אמר *in auribus*, *מחשבה* cum puncto sinistro, locus est ore, aut corde cogitavi, meditatus est.

Object. But you will say, *Tho' the Spirit of a Man can thus talk to or with it self; yet this can signify nothing to others*: For what Man, knoweth the things of a Man save the Spirit of a Man that is in him? 1 Cor. 2. 11. *It is not therefore enough to open this internal door of the Will; for except we open also the external door of lips, no Man can know our minds, or be admitted into the secrets of our Souls: should we never so earnestly desire that another should know our mind, except we please also to discover it by word or sign, he cannot know it; and therefore an act of the Will is not sufficient without some external signification superadded. And these Souls being bodiless, can give no such outward signification.*

Sol. 'Tis indeed needful among Men in this World to unlock another door beside that of their Will, to communicate the Secrets of their hearts to others; but Angels, and the Spirits of Men having no Bodies, consequently have but one door, to wit, that of the Will, to open; and the opening thereof (which is done by one act or desire in a moment) is enough to discover so much of their minds, as they would have discovered to

Duo sunt officia aliorum respectu, quorum nisi utrumque a te referretur, fieri non potest, ut quæ tu habes in intellectu, & corde tuo occulta, ea aliis habere, & cognoscere queat. Unum ex parte animi est voluntas; nisi enim quæ occulta latent in corde tuo, ea velis aliis patefieri, quis ea percipiat? alterum est ipsum corpus carneum; ac proinde licet quæ apertio priori interiorique ostio velis, quæ in animo volvis, alicui patefacere, nisi tamen hoc etiam alterum externum referes, nullo modo ab aliis hominibus cognosci poterunt. *Zanch. de operibus Dei, lib. 3. cap. 19.*

Quoniam igitur Angeli in carent crassis corporibus, idcirco nihil impedit, quo minus quæ unus Angelus in sua versat mente, ea alter videat, nisi ejus voluntas: si enim ea nolit ab altero referri, nunquam, nisi Deo revelante, referentur. *Zanch. ubi supra.*

E e e e

another

another Spirit. If they keep the door of their Will shut, no Angel or Spirit can know what is in their thoughts, without a Revelation from God; and if they but will or desire others should know, no words can so fully manifest one Man's mind to another, as such an act of the Will doth manifest theirs. And this, faith learned *Zanoby*, is the Tongue of *Angels*, and the same way the Spirits of Men have to make known their minds in the unbodied state. It is but the turning the Key of the Will, and their thoughts or desires are presently seen and known by others, to whom they will discover them, as a Man's face is seen in a glass, when he pleaseth to turn his face to it. Would one Spirit make known his mind to another? it is but to will he should know it, and it is immediately known.

Scil. 4. This internal way of speaking and communication among Spirits, is much more noble, perfect, and excellent, than that which is in use among us by words and signs: And that in two respects, *viz.*

1. Of clearness.

2. Of dispatch and speed

1. Spiritual Language is more clearly expressive of the Mind and Thoughts, than Words, Writings, or any other external signs can be. The greatest Masters of Language do often cloud their meaning for want of words fit and full enough to express it; Truth suffers by the poverty and ambiguity of words: many Controversies are but meer strifes about words, and scufflings in the dark, by the mistakes of each others sense and meaning: few have the ability of putting their own meanings into apt, proper and full expressions; and if they can, yet others to whom they speak, want an answerable ability of understanding, and clearness of apprehension to receive it. If we could discern the true and natural sense of things, just as it is in the mind of the Speaker or Writer, how many Controversies would be thereby quickly ended?

But Spirits unbodied to convey their sense and mind to one another, that there can be no mistakes, no darkening of Counsel by words without knowledge; but one receives it just as it lies in the other's mind.

2. Spiritual Language is more easy, and of quicker dispatch. Some Men have voluble Tongues, and are much more ready and presential than others, their Tongues are as the Pen of a ready Scribe; and others, no less ready with their hands, which keep pace with, yea, out-run the Tongue of the Speaker, as *Martial* notes,

*Current verba licet, minus est velocior illis;
Nondum lingua, sumum dextra peregit opus.*

Yet all this is but bungling work to the ready dispatch of Spirits, one act of the Will opens the Window to discern the mind of another clearly; so that the converse of Spirits must needs be more excellent in both respects, than any we are accustomed to, or acquainted with in this World. I will shut up this Question with

ONE COROLLARY.

Long to be associated with the Spirits of just Men made perfect. You that are going to join that blessed Assembly, will even in this respect gain an invaluable advantage. 'Tis true, there

is much of comfort in the present Converse of embodied, and imperfect Saints: 'tis sweet to fast and pray, to sigh and groan together; 'tis sweeter to rejoice and praise our God together. 'Tis sweet to talk of Heaven with our faces thitherward: but alas! what is this to the Converse that are among the Spirits of just Men made perfect! With what melting hearts have we sometimes fate under the Doctrine of the Gospel! How have our ears been chained with delight to the Preacher's lips, whilst he hath been discoursing of those ravishing subjects, *Christ* and *Heaven*! But alas! how dry and dull a thing is the best of this, to the Language of Heaven! Three things debase and spoil the Communications of the Saints on Earth, *viz.* the darkness, dulness, and frothiness thereof

1. The darkness and ignorance of our Understandings. How crude, weak, and indigested are our highest and purest Notions of spiritual things! We speak of them but as Children, *1 Cor.* 13. 11. For alas, the veil is yet upon our faces. The Body of sin, and the Body of flesh, cast a very dark shadow upon the World to come; but the apprehensions of separated Souls are most bright and clear. This darkness begets mistakes, mistakes beget so many quarrels and janglings, that our fellowship on Earth loseth at once both its profit and pleasure.

2. There is much dulness and deadness accompanying the Communion of Saints on Earth, abundance of precious time is wasted among us in unprofitable silence; and when we engage in discourses of Heaven, that discourse is often little better than silence; our words freeze betwixt our lips, and we speak not with that concernedness and warmth of Spirits which suits with such subjects.

It is not so among our Brethren above; their Affections are at the highest Peg, giving Glory to God in the highest.

3. To conclude; in the discourses of the best Men on Earth, there is too much froth and vanity. Many words, like water, run away at the waste spout; but there God is the Center in which all terminates. O therefore let us long to be among the unbodied people. This World will never sute us with Companions in all things agreeable to the desires of our hearts. The best Company are got together in the upper Room; an Hour there is better than an Age below. Whatever fellowship Saints leave on Earth, they shall be sure to find better in Heaven.

Whether the separated Souls of the Just in Heaven, do incline to a reunion with their own Bodies? and how that reunion is at last effected?

That these blessed Souls have no such inclination or desire, these Reasons seem to persuade.

1. That their Bodies, whilst they lived in them, were no better than so many Prisons. Many were the prejudices, damages and miseries they sustained and suffered in them. It kept them at an uncomfortable distance from the Lord, *2 Cor.* 5. 6. Their bemoaning cries spake their uneasy state. How often hath every gracious Soul thus lamented it self! *Woe is me that I dwell in Meshech*. It inclosed their Souls within its mud walls, which intercepted the

Animam conceptu suo ob-
struit, & obscurat, & con-
cretionem carnis infestat; unde
illi velut per caracum
specular oblietior lux re-
rum est. Proculdubio cum
vi mortis exprimitur de
concretionem carnis, & in se
expressione colatur, certe
de oppanfo corporis erum-
pit in apertum, ad meram,
& puram, & suam lucem.
Term. de Anima.

the Light and Joy of God's Face.
Death therefore did a most
friendly office when it set it at
liberty, and brought it forth
into its own pure and pleasant
Light and Liberty. These
blessed Spirits now rejoyce as
Prisoners do in their recovered
liberty: and can it be sup-
posed, after all these sufferings,
groans and sighs to be dissolved

they can be willing to be embodied again? Surely there is as little reason for Souls at liberty, to desire to be again embodied, as there is for a Bird got out of the Snare or Cage, to fly back again to its place of confinement and restraint. Yea, when we consider how lothsome holy Souls, when under the excruciating pains of sickness, and as yet in the sight of this alluring World, have been to hear of a return to it by the recovery of their health; we cannot think, but being quite out of the sight of this, and in the fruition of the other World, the thoughts of the Body must needs be more loathsome to them than ever.

We read, that when a good Man in time of his sickness, was told by his Friends, that some hopeful signs of his recovery began now to appear; he answered, And must I then return to this Body? I was as a Sheep driven out of the storm, almost to the Fold; and then driven back into the storm again: Or as a weary Traveller near his home, who must go back again to fetch something he had neglected: Or as an *Apprentice* whose time was almost out, and then must begin a new Term. Of some others it hath been also noted, that the greatest Infirmities they discovered upon their Death-bed, have been their too passionate desires to be dissolved, and their unsubmitiveness to God's Will in their longer stay in the Body. Now, the Bodies of the Saints being so cheerfully forsaken, and that only upon a foretaste of Heaven by Faith; how can it be thought they should find any inclination to a reunion, when they are so abundantly satisfied with the Joys of his face in Heaven? Certainly the Body hath been no such pleasant habitation to the Soul, that it should cast an eye or thought that way, when it is once delivered out of it. If it were burdensome here, a thought of it would be loathsome there.

2. We have shew'd before, that the separate Soul wants not the help of the Body, but lives and acts at a more free and comfortable rate than ever before. 'Tis true, it is not now delighted with meat and drink, with smells and sounds as it was wont to be: but then it must be considered, that it is happiness and perfection not to need them. It is now become equal to the Angels in the way and manner of its living; and what it enjoyed by the ministry of the Body, it eminently and more perfectly enjoys without it. What perfections can the Soul receive from matter? What can a lump

of flesh add to a Spirit? And if it can add nothing to it, there is no reason why it should hanker after it, and incline to a re-union with it. It added nothing of happiness to it, but much of trouble, and there-

3. The supposition of such a propension and inclination, seems no way to fite with that state of perfect rest which the Souls of the Just enjoy in Heaven. The Scriptures tell us that at death they enter into Rest, *Isa. 57. 2. Heb. 4. 9.* That they rest from their labours, *Rev. 14. 13.* But that which inclines and desires (especially when the desired enjoyment, as in this case, is suspended so long) must be as far from Rest, as it is from satisfaction in the enjoyment of the thing desired. We know what *Solomon* hath observed of such a life, (and his observation is experimentally true) that *hope deferred, makes the heart sick*, *Prov. 13. 12.* Who finds not his own desires a very rack to him in such cases? If we be kept but a few days in earnest expectation and desire of an absent Friend, and he comes not, what an uneasy life do we live? But here we must suppose some have such an unsatisfied life for hundreds, and others for thousands of years already; and how much longer they may remain so, who can tell? We use to say, Lovers hours are full of Eternity. These reasons seem to carry it for the Negative.

But if the matter be weighed once more, with the following reasons in the counter-scale, and prejudice do not pull down the balance; we shall find the contrary Conclusion much more strong and rational. For.

Argum. I. The Soul and Body are the two essential constitutive parts of Man; either of these being wanting, the Man is not complete and perfect. The good of the whole, is the good of the parts themselves; and every thing hath a natural desire and appetite to its own good and perfection. 'Tis confessed, the Soul, for as much as concerns it self singly, is made perfect and enjoys blessedness in the absence of the Body; but this is only the perfection and blessedness of one part of Man; the other part, viz. the Body, lies in obscurity and corruption: and till both be blessed, and blessed together in a state of composition and re-union, the whole Man is not made perfect. For this therefore the Soul must wait.

Anima separata ad unionem corporis propensa est, nam illa vult totius compositi actualem constitutionem; cum propter hanc tanquam finem illa sit, & in entium latitudine invenitur. Atque hæc est illa perfectio quam anima obtinet ex illo appetitu: nam bonum totius compositi, est bonum ipsarum partium. Affirmandum itaque est, animam separatam naturaliter desiderare resurrectionem. Alstedii Nat. Theol. pars prima, p. 214, 215.

Argument. II. Tho' Death hath dissolv'd the Union, yet it hath not destroyed the relation betwixt the Soul and Body; that dust is more to it than all the dust of the whole earth. Hence it is that the whole person of a Believer is sometimes denominated from that part of him, namely his Body, which remains activated by death in the grave. Hence *2 Thes. 4. 15.* dead Believers are called *those that sleep*, which must needs properly respect the Body, for the Soul sleeps not, and shews what a firm and dear relation still remains betwixt these absent Friends. Now we all know the mighty power of Relation, if it be at least among *Entities*, yet surely it is one of the greatest things in the World in efficacy.

It is difficult to bear the absence of our dear relatives, especially if we be in prosperity, and they in adversity: as the case here is betwixt

E e e e z

the

Anima rationalis nihil perfectionis recipit a materia, quod extra illam non posset recipere; ergo cum separata fuerit, in illam propensa non dicitur. Contin.

Vol. I. fore becomes justly undesirable to it.

Gen. 42.
29, 30, 31.

the Spirit in Heaven, and its Body in the Grave; this associated with Angels, that prey'd upon by Worms. *Joseph's* case is the liveliest Emblem that occurs to my present thoughts to illustrate the point in hand. He was advanced to be Lord over all Egypt, living in the greatest pomp and splendor there: but his Father and Brethren were at the same time ready to perish in the land of Canaan. He had been many years separated from them, but neither the length of time, nor honours of the Court could alienate his affections from them. O see the mighty power of Relation! No sooner doth he see his Brethren, and understand their case, and the pining condition of *Jacob* his Father, but his bowels yearned, and his compassions rolled together for them. Yea, he could not forbear, nor stifle his own affections, tho' he knew how injurious his Brethren had been to him, and betrayed him, as the Body hath the Soul: Yet all this notwithstanding, he breaks forth into tears and outcries over them, which made the house ring again with the news that *Joseph's* Brethren were come. Nor could he be at rest in the lap of honour and plenty, until he had gotten home his dear and ancient Relations to him. Thus stands the case betwixt Soul and Body.

Argument III. The regret, reluctance, and sorrows expressed by the Soul at parting, do strongly argue its inclination to a re-union with it, when it is actually separated from it. For why should we surmise that the Soul which mourn'd and groan'd so deeply at parting, which clasp'd and embraced it so dearly and affectionately, which fought, struggled and disputed the passage with Death every foot and inch of ground it got, and would not part with the Body till by plain force it was rent out of its arms, should not, when absent, desire to see and enjoy its old and endeared friend again? Hath it lost its affection, tho' it continue its relation? that's very improbable, Or doth its advancement in Heaven make it regardless of its Body, which lies in contempt and misery? that's an effect which Christ's personal Glory never produced in him towards us, nor a good man's preferment would produce in him to his poor and miserable friends in this World, as we see in the case of *Joseph* but now instanced in. It is therefore harsh and incongruous to suppose the Soul's love to the Body was extinguished in the parting hour, and that now, out of sight, out of mind.

Object.

But was it not urged before in opposition to this assertion, that the Souls of the righteous looked upon their Bodies as the Prisons, and sighed for deliverance by death, and greatly rejoiced in the hope and foresight of that Liberty death would restore them to? How doth this consist with such reluctancies at parting, and inclinations to re-union?

Sol.

The Objection doth not suppose any man to be totally free from all reluctancies and unwillingness to die. The holiest Souls that ever lived in Bodies of flesh will give an unwilling thrug when it comes to the parting point, 2 Cor. 5. 2. But this their willingness to be gone arises from two other grounds, which make it consistent enough with its reluctancies at parting, and inclination to a second meeting.

(1.) This willingness to die, doth not suppose the Soul's love to the Body to be utterly

extinguished, but mastered and overpowered by another and stronger love. There is in every Christian a double love, one natural, to the Body, and the things below; the other supernatural, to Christ, and the things above: the latter doth not extinguish, tho' it conquer and subdue the other. Love to the Body pulls backward, love to Christ pulls forward, and finally prevails. This is so consistent with it that it supposes natural reluctance and unwillingness to part.

(2.) The willingness of God's people to be dissolved, must not be understood absolutely, but comparatively: In that sense the Apostle will be understood, 2 Cor. 5. 8. *We are confident I say, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and present with the Lord.* (i. e.) Rather than to live always a life of sin, sorrow and absence from God, Death is not desirable in and for it self, but only as it is the Soul's outlet from sin, and its inlet to God.

So that the very best desire is but comparatively, and it is but few who find the love of this animal life subverted and overpowered by high raised acts of faith and love. The generality even of good Souls feel strong renitencies, and suffer sharp conflicts at their dissolution. All which discovers with what lothness and unwillingness the Soul unclaps its arms to let go its Body. Now as *Divines* argue the frame of Christ's heart in Heaven towards his People on earth, from all those endearing passages and demonstrations of love he gave them at parting; so we here argue the continued love and inclination of the Soul to its Body after it is in Heaven, from the manifold demonstrations it gave of its affection to it in this World, especially in the parting hour. No considerations in all the World, less than the more full fruition of God, and freedom from sin, could possibly have prevailed with it to quit the Body, tho' but for a time, and leave it in the dust. Which is our third Argument.

Argument IV. And as the dolorous parting hour evidenceth it, so doth the Joy with which it receives it again at the Resurrection. If it part from it so heavily, and meet it again with joy unspeakable; sure then it still retaineth much love for it, and desire to be re-espoused to it, in the interval. Now, that its meeting in the Resurrection is a day of Joy to the Soul, is evident, because it is 'called the time of Refreshment, Acts 3. 19. And they awake with singing out of the dust, Isa. 26. 19. If the direct and immediate scope of the Prophet point not (as some think it doth) at the Resurrection, yet it is allowed by all to be a very lively allusion to it; which is sufficient for my purpose. And indeed none that understands and believes the design and business of that day, can possibly doubt but there was reason enough to call it a time of refreshment, a singing morning; for the Souls of the Righteous come from Heaven with Christ, and the whole host of shouting Angels; not to be spectators only, but the subjects of that day's Triumph. They come to re-assume, and be re-espoused to their own Bodies, this being the appointed time for God to vindicate and refine them from the tyrannical power of the Grave, to endow them with spiritual qualities at their second marriage to their Souls, that in both parts they may

may be completely happy. O the joyful clasplings and dear embraces betwixt them, who but themselves can understand! And by the way, this removes the Objection forementioned, of the miseries and prejudices the Soul suffered in this World, in and from the Body: For now it receives it a spiritual Body, (i. e.) so subdued to, and fitted for the use of the Spirit, as never to impede, clog, or obstruct its motions and inclinations any more, 1 Cor. 15. 44. In this hope it parted from it, and with this consolation it now receives it again.

Argum. V. There are many Scriptures which very much favour, if they do not positively conclude the Soul's inclination to, and desire to be re-united with its own Body, even whilst it is in the state of its single glorification in Heaven. Certainly our Souls leave not our Bodies at death, as the *Oftrich* doth her Eg in the Sand, without any farther regard to it, or concernment for it; but they are represented as crying to God to remember, avenge, and vindicate them, Rev. 6. 10, 11. How long, Lord, how long wilt thou not avenge our Blood? Our Blood, speaks both the continued Relation and suitable Affection they have to their absent Bodies.

And to the same sense a judicious and learned Pen expounds that place, Job. 14. 14. (which is commonly, but I know not how fitly, accommodated to another purpose) *All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*; which words, by a diligent comparing of the Context, appear to have this for their proper scope and sense.

Job in the former Verse had expressed his confidence by way of petition, that at a set and appointed time God would remember him, so as to recal him out of the Grave; and now minded to speak out more fully, puts the Question to himself, *If a Man die, shall he live again?* And thus answers it, *All the days of my appointed time* (that is, of the appointed time which he mentioned before, when God should revive him out of the Dust) *will I wait till my change come*; that is, that glorious change, when the corruption of a loathsome Grave should be exchanged for immortal Glory: which he amplifies and utters more expressly, ver. 15. *Thou shalt call, and I will answer: thou shalt have a desire to the work of thy hands*; thou wilt not always forget to restore and perfect thine own Creature. And surely this waiting is not the act of his inanimate sleeping Dust, but of that part which should be capable of such an Action; *q. d. I*, in that part which shall be still alive, shall patiently wait the appointed time of reviving me in that part also, which Death and the Grave shall insult over in a temporary triumph in the mean time.

Upon these grounds I think the inclination of the separated Spirits of the Just to their own Bodies to be a justifiable Opinion. As for the Damned, we have no reason to think such a re-union to be desirable to them; for alas! it will be but the increase and aggravation of their Torments; which consideration is sufficient to over-power and rattle the inclination of Nature, and make the very thoughts of it horrid and dreadful: To what end (as the Prophet speaks in another case) is it for them to desire

that day? It will be a day of darkness and gloominess to them; re-union being designed to complete the Happiness of the one, and the Misery of the other.

But before I take off my hand, and dismiss this Question, I must remember that I am Debtor to two Objections.

Object. 1. *The Soul can both live and exist separate from the Body, it needs it not; and if it don't want, why should it desire it?*

Sol. The life and actions of the glorified are considerable two ways, (1.) Singly and abstractedly for the life and action of one part: and so we confess the Soul lives happily, and acts forth its own powers freely in the state of separation. (2.) Personally, or concretely, as it is the life and action of the whole Man, and so it doth both need and desire the conjunction or re-union of the Body: for the Body is not only a part of Christ's Purchase as well as the Soul, and is to have its own Glory as well as it, but it is also a constitutive part of a complete glorified Person; and so considered, the Saints are not perfectly happy till this re-union be effected, which is the true ground and reason of this its desire.

Object. 2. *But this Hypothesis seems to thwart the account given in Scripture of the rest, and placid state of separate Souls: for look at Bodies which gravitate and propend do not rest, so neither do Souls which incline and desire.*

Sol. There is a vast difference betwixt the tendencies and propensions of Souls in the way to Glory, and in Glory: we that are absent from the Lord, can find no rest in the way; but those that are with the Lord can rest in Jesus, and yet wait without anxiety, or self-torturing impatience, for the accomplishment of the Promises to their absent Bodies, Rev. 6. 10, 11.

Corollary. Let this provoke us all to get sanctified Souls to rule and use these their Bodies now for God. This will abundantly sweeten their parting at Death, and their meeting again at the Resurrection of the Just: else their parting will be doleful, and their next meeting dreadful. And so much for the Doctrine of Separation.

The Uses of the Point.

OUR way is now open to the Improvement and Use of this excellent Subject and Doctrine of Separation; and certainly it affords as rich an entertainment for our Affections as for our Minds, in the following Uses; of which the first will be for our Information in six practical Inferences.

If this be the life and state of gracious Souls after their separation from the Body, *Then holy persons ought not to entertain dismal and terrifying thoughts of their own dissolution.*

The apprehensions and thoughts of Death should have a peculiar pleasantness in the minds of Believers. You have heard into what a blessed Prefence and Communion Death introduceth your Souls; how it leads you out of a Body of Sin, a World of Sorrows, the Society of imperfect Saints, to an innumerable company of Angels, and to the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, to that lovely Mount Zion, to the heavenly Sanctuary, to the blessed Visions of the Face of God. Oh! methinks there hath been enough said, to make all the Souls in whom the well-grounded hopes of the life of Glory are found, to cry out with the Apostle, *We are confident,*

confident, I say, yea, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and present with the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. 8.

When good Musculus drew near his end, how sweet and pleasant was this Meditation to his Soul! Hear his Swanlike Song:

Melchior
Adams in
vita Mus-
culi. p. 385.

*Nil superest vite frigus precordia capat;
Sed tu Christe mihi vita perennis ades:
Quid trepidas anima, ad sedes abitura quietis?
En tibi dulcor adest Angelus ille suus. (ruentem;
Lingue domum hanc miseram, nesci in sua fata
Quam tibi fida Dei dextera reficiet.
Peccasti? Scio, sed Christus credentibus in se,
Peccata expurgat sanguine cuncta suo.
Horribilis mors est? Fateor, sed proxima vita est,
Ad quam te Christi gratia certa vocat.
Presso est de Satana peccato & morte triumphans
Christus, ad hunc igitur lata alacrisque migra.*

Which may be thus translated.

*Cold Death my heart invades, my life doth flee.
O Christ, my everlasting life draw nigh.
Why quiverest thou, my soul, within my Breast?
Thine Angel's come to lead thee to thy rest.
Quit cheerfully this drooping house of clay;
God will restore it in th' appointed day.
Has't sinn'd? I know it, let not that be urg'd;
For Christ thy Sins with his own Blood hath purg'd.
Is Death affrighting? True, but yet withal
Consider Christ thro' Death to Life doth call.
He triumphs over Satan, Sin, and Death;
Therefore with joy resign thy dying breath.*

Much in the same cheerful frame was the heart of dying Bullinger, when his mournful Friends exprest their sense of the loss they

*Si Deo visum fuerit me a
opera ulterius in Ecclesie
ministerium uti, ipse vires
sufficit, & libens illi pare-
bo; si me voluerit (quod
opto) ex hac vita evocare,
paratus sum illius voluntati
obsequi; ac nihil est quod
iucundius possit mihi con-
tingere, quam ex hoc misero
& corruptissimo seculo
ad Christum Salvatoretem
meum migrare. item ibid.*

should sustain by his removal. Why, said he, if God will make any farther use of my Labours in the Ministry, he will renew my strength, and I will gladly serve him: But if he please (as I desire he would) to call me hence, I am ready to obey his Will; and nothing more pleasant can befall me, than to leave this sinful and miserable World to go to

my Saviour Christ. O that all who are out of the danger of death, were thus got out of the dread of death too.

Let them only tremble and be convuls'd at the thoughts and sight of Death, whose Souls must fall into the hands of a sin-revenging God by the stroke of Death; who are to breathe out their last hope with their last breath. Death is yours, saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 3. 22. your Friend, your Privilege, your Passage to Heaven; 'tis your ignorance of it which breeds your tears about it,

Infer. II. *Gather from hence the absolute indispensable necessity of your Union with Christ, before your dissolution by Death.*

Who to that Soul which shall be separated from its Body before it be united with Christ: none but the Spirits of just men are made perfect at death. Righteous Souls are the only qualified Subjects of Blessedness.

'Tis true, every Soul hath a natural capacity of Happiness, but gracious Souls only have an actual meetness for Glory. The Scriptures tell us in round and plain words, that *without Holiness no man shall see the Lord*, Hebr. 12. 14. *that except we be regenerate and born again*

we cannot see the Kingdom of God, John 3. 3. You make the greatest adventure that ever was made by man; indeed an adventure infinitely too great for any man to make, when you shoot the Gulph of vast Eternity upon terms of hazard and uncertainty.

What thinkest thou, Reader? darest thou adventure thy Soul and eternal Happiness upon it, that the work of Regeneration and Sanctification, that very fame work of Grace which the Spirit of God hangs all thy hopes of Heaven upon in these Scriptures, is truly wrought by him in thy Soul? Consider it well, pause upon it again and again before thou go forth. Should a mistake be committed here, (and nothing is more easy or common all the world over than such mistakes) thou art irrecoverably gone. This venture can be made but once, and the miscarriage is never to be retrieved afterwards; thou hast not another Soul to adventure, nor a second adventure to make of this. Well might the Apostle Peter call for all diligence to make our calling and our election sure: That can never be made too sure, which is so invaluable in its worth, and to be but once adventured.

Infer. III.

How prejudicial is it to dying men to be then incumbered, diverted and distracted about earthly concerns, when the time of their departure is at hand!

The business and employment of dying persons is of so vast importance and weight, that every moment of their time, need to be carefully saved, and applied to this their present and most important concern. How well soever you have improved the time of life, believe it you will find work enough upon your hands at death: dying hours will be found to be busy and laborious hours, even to the most painful, serious and industrious Souls, whose Life hath been mostly spent in preparations for Death. Leave not the proper business of other days to that day; for that day will have business enough of its own. Sufficient for that day are the labours thereof. Let a few Considerations be pondered to clear and confirm this Inference.

Confid. 1. The business and employment of dying Persons is of the most serious, awful and solemn nature and importance; it is their last preparatory work on earth, to their immediate appearance before God their Judge, Heb. 9. 27. it is their shooting the Gulph into Eternity, and leaving this World, and all their acquaintance and interests therein for ever, Isai. 28. 11. It is therefore a Work by it self to die; a Work requiring the most intense, deep and undisturbed exercises of all the abilities and Graces of the inner man; and all little enough.

Confid. 2. Time is exceeding precious with dying men; the last sand is ready to fall, and therefore not to be wasted as it was wont to be. When we had a fair prospect of many years before us, we made little account of an hour or day; but now one of those hours which we so carelessly lavished away, is of more value than all this World to us, especially if the whole weight of Eternity should hang upon it, (as oftentimes it doth) then the loss of that portion of time, is the loss of Soul, Body, and Hope for evermore.

Confid. 3.

Confid. 3. Much of that little precious time of departing Souls will be unavoidably taken up and employed about the inexcusable pressing calls and necessities of distressed Nature; all that you can do for your Souls must then be done only by fits and snatches, in the midst of many disturbances and frequent interruptions: So that it is rarely found that a dying man can pursue a serious Meditation with calm and fixed thoughts; for besides the pains and faintings of the Body, the Abilities of the Mind usually fail. Here also they fall into a sad *Dilemma*; if they do not with the utmost intention of mind fix their hearts and thoughts on Christ, they lose their comfort if godly, and their Souls if ungodly; and if they do, *Friends* and *Physicians* assure them they will destroy their Bodies. These are the straits of men bordering close upon Eternity; they must hastily catch a few moments in the intervals of pain, and then are put by all again.

Confid. 4. There is no man living but hath something to do for his own Soul in a dying hour, and something for others also.

Suppose the best that can be supposed, that the Soul be in real Union with Christ, and that Union be also clear; yet it is seldom found but there are some assaults of *Satan*; or if not, yet how many Relations and Friends need our Experiences and Counsels at such a time? How many things shall we have to do after our great and main work is done? And others have a great deal more to do, tho' as safe as the former, O the Knots and Objections that are then to be dissolv'd and answer'd! The unusual Onsets and Assaults of *Satan* that are then to be resisted! And yet most dying persons have much more upon their hands than either of the former. The whole work of Repentance and Faith is to do when time is even done.

Confid. 5. Few, yea very few are found furnished with Wisdom, Experience and Faithfulness to give dying Persons any considerable Assistance in Soul affairs: it may be there may be found among the Visitants of the Sick now and then a person who hath a word of Wisdom in his heart; but then either he wants opportunity, or courage and faithfulness to do the part of a true spiritual Friend. *Elihu* describes the person so qualified as he ought for this work, *Job* 33. 23, 24. and calls him *one among a thousand*. Some are too close and reserved, others too trifling and impertinent: Some are willing, but want ability; others are able, but want faithfulness: some cut too deep by uncharitable censoriousness, others skin over the wound too slightly, speaking Peace where God and Conscience speak none. So that little help is to be expected.

Confid. 6. How much therefore doth it deserve to be lamented, that where there is so much to do, so little time to do it, and so few to help in the best improvement of it, all should be lost as to their Souls by earthly incumbrances and worldly affairs, which might have been done sooner and better in a more proper season! O therefore let me persuade all men to take heed of bringing the proper business of healthful days to their sick beds.

Infer. IV. What an excellent Creature is the Soul of Man, which is capable, not only of such preparations for

God whilst it is in the Body, but of such sights and enjoyments of God when it lives without a Body?

Here the Spirit of God works upon it in the way of Grace and Sanctification, *1 Ph.* 2. 10. The scope and design of this his Workmanship, is to qualify and make us meet for the Life of Heaven, *2 Cor.* 5. 5. For this self-same thing, or purpose, our Souls are wrought or moulded by Grace into quite another frame and temper than that which Nature gave them: and when he hath wrought out and finished all that he intends to be wrought in the way of Sanctification, then shall it be called up to the highest Enjoyments and Employments for ever that a Creature is susceptible of.

Herein the Dignity of the Soul appears, that no other Creature in this World beside it, hath a natural capacity, either to be sanctified inherently in this World, or glorified everlastingly in that to come, to be transformed into the Image, and filled with the Joy of the Lord. There are *Myriads* of other Souls in this World besides ours, but to none of them is the Spirit of Sanctification sent, but only to ours. The Souls of *Animals* serve only to move the dull and sluggish matter, and take in for a few days the sensitive Pleasures of the Creation, and so expire, having no natural capacity of, or designation for any higher Employment or Enjoyment.

And it deserves a most serious animadversion, that this vast capacity of the Soul for eternal Blessedness, must of necessity make it capable of so much the more misery and self-torment, if at last it fail of that blessedness: For it is apparent they do not perish because they are *incapable*, but because they are *unwilling*; not because their Souls wanted any natural Faculty that others have, but because they would not open those they have to receive Christ in the way of Faith and Obedience, as others did.

Think upon this you that live only to eat, and drink, and sleep, and play, as the Birds and Beasts of the field do; what need was there of a reasonable Soul for such sensual Employments? Do not your noble Faculties speak your designation for higher uses? and will you not wish to exchange Souls with the most vile and despicable *Animal* in this World, if it were possible to be done? Certainly it were better for you to have no capacity of eternal Blessedness, (as they have not) if you do not enjoy it; and no capacity of torment beyond this life, (as they have not) if you must certainly endure it.

If our Souls and Bodies must be separated shortly, Infer. V. how patiently should we bear all lesser Separations, that may or will be made betwixt us and any other Enjoyments in this World?

No Union is so intimate, strict, and dear, as that betwixt your Souls and Bodies. All your Relations and Enjoyments in this World, hang looser from your Souls than your Bodies do: and if it be your duty patiently and submissively to suffer a painful parting pull from your Bodies; it is doubtless your duty to suffer meekly and patiently a separation from other things, which are but a prelude to it, and a meer shadow of it. 'Tis good to put such Cases to our selves in the midst of our pleasant enjoyments.

I have now many comfortable *Relatives* in the World, Wife, Children, Kindred, and Friends; God hath made them pleasant to me, but he may bereave me of all these. Doth not Providence ring such changes all the World over! Are not all Kingdoms, Cities, and Towns, full of the sighs and laments of Widows, Orphans, and Friends bereaved of their pleasant and useful Relations? But if God will have it so, 'tis our duty to bound our sorrows, remembering *the time is short*, 1 Cor. 7. 29. In a few days we must be stript much nearer, even out of our own Bodies by death.

God may also separate betwixt me and my health by sickness, so that the pleasure of this World shall be cut off from me; but sickness is not death, tho' it be a prelude and step towards it: I may well bear this with patience who must submissively bear sharper pains than these ere long. Yea, and well may I bear this submissively, considering that by such imbittering and weaning Providences God is preparing me for a much easier dissolution, than if I should live at ease in the Body all my days, till death come to make so great and sudden a change upon me.

God may also separate betwixt me and my liberty by restraint. It hath been the lot of the best Men that ever were in the World; and if it should be ours also, we should not be much startled at it, considering these Bodies of ours must be shortly pent up in a straiter, darker, and more loathsome place of confinement, than any Prison in this World can be. The Grave is a darker place, Job 17. 13. and your abode there will be longer, Eccl. 11. 8.

These and all other our outward Injoynments are separable things, and it's good thus to alleviate our loss of them.

Infer. VI.

How heavenly should the tempers and frames of those Souls be who are Candidates for Heaven, and must be so shortly numbered with the Spirits of just Men made perfect!

'Tis reasonable that we all begin to be, that which we expect to be for ever; to learn that way of living and conversing, which we believe must be our everlasting Life and Business in the World to come. Let them that hope to live with *Angels* in Heaven, learn to live like *Angels* on Earth, in Holiness, Activity, and ready Obedience.

There is the greatest reason that our minds be there where our Souls are to be for ever. A spiritual mind will be found *possible, congruous, sweet, and evidential* of an Interest in that Glory, to all those holy Souls who are preparing and designed for it.

1. It is *possible*, notwithstanding the clogs and entanglements of the Body, to be heavenly minded. Others have attained it Phil. 3. 20. Two things make a heavenly Conversation possible to Men, *viz.*

- (1.) The natural Abilities } of the Mind.
- (2.) The gracious Principles }

(1.) The natural Abilities of the mind, that can in a minute's time dispatch a nimble Messenger to Heaven, and mount its thoughts from this to that World in a trice. The power of Cogitation is a rich Indowment of the Soul. Such as no other creature on earth is participant of. Tho' spiritual thoughts be not the natural growth of the Soul, yet thoughts

capable of being spiritualized are. And without this ability of projecting thoughts, all intercourse must have been cut off.

(2.) The gracious Principles implanted in the Soul, do actually incline the mind, and mount its thoughts Heavenward. Yea, this will prove more than a possibility of a Conversation in Heaven; whilst Saints tabernacle on Earth in Bodies of flesh, it will almost prove an impossibility that it should be otherwise, For these spiritual Principles setting the bent and tendency of the heart Heavenward, we must act against the very Law of our new Nature, when we place our Affections elsewhere.

2. A mind in Heaven is most *congruous*, decorous and comely for those that are the enroll'd Inhabitants of that heavenly City. Where should a Christian's Love be, but where his Lord is? Our hearts and our homes do not use to be long asunder. It becomes you so to think, and so to speak now, as those who make account to be shortly singing *Hallelujahs* before the Throne.

3. 'Tis most *sweet* and delightful: no pleasure in all this World comparable to this pleasure; Rom. 8. 6. *To be spiritually minded is life and peace.* 'Tis a young Heaven born in the Soul in its way thither.

4. To conclude: it is *evidential* of your Interest in it: An agreeable frame is the surest title, Col. 3. 1, 2. *Marth.* 6. 21. If Heaven attract your minds now, it will center them for ever.

This Doctrine of the separation of the Spirits of the Just from their Bodies, as it lies before you in this Discourse, affords a singular help to all the People of God, to entertain lovely and pleasant thoughts of that Day, to make Death not only an unregretted, but a most pleasant and desirable thing to their Souls.

I know there is a pure, simple, natural fear of Death, from which you must not expect to be perfectly freed by all the Arguments in the World. And there is a reverential awful fear of Death, which it would be your prejudice and loss to have destroyed. You will have a natural, and ought to have a reverential fear of Death: the one flows from your *sensitive*, the other from your *sanctified* nature.

But it is a third sort of fear which doth you all the mischief, a fear springing in gracious Souls out of the weakness of their Graces, and the strength of their unmortified Affections; a fear arising partly out of the darkness of our minds, and partly out of the sensuality and earthliness of our hearts; this fear is that which so convulseth our Souls when death is near, and embitters our lives, even whilst it is at a distance. He that hath been over-heated in his affections to this World, and over-cooled by diversions and temptations, neglects and intermissions, to that World, cannot chuse but give an unwilling shrug, if not a frightful screech at the appearance of Death.

And this being the sad case of too many, good and upright Souls for the main: and there being so few even amongst serious Christians that have attained to that *courage* and *complacency* in the thoughts of Death which the Apostle speaks of, 2 Cor. 5. 8. to be both *confident* and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord;

Lord; I will from this Discourse furnish them with some special assistance therein. But without, I must tell you upon what great disadvantages I am here to dispute with your fears: so strong is the current of natural and vicious fear, that except a special hand of God back and set on the Arguments that shall be urged, they will be as easily swept away before it, as so many straws by a rapid Torrent; nor will it be to any more purpose to oppose my breath to them, than to the Tides and Waves of the Sea.

Moreover, I am fully convinced by long and often experience, how unsteady and inconstant the frames and tempers of the best hearts are; and that if it be not full home, yet it is next to an impossibility to fix them in such a temper as this I aim at. Where is that Man to be found, who after the revolutions of many years, and in those years various dispensations of Providence without him, altering his condition, and greater variety of temptations within, can yet say, notwithstanding all these various Aspects and Positions, his heart hath still held one steady and invariable tenour and course?

Alas, there be very few (if any) of such sound and athletick temper of mind, whose Pulse beats with an even stroke, through all inequalities of condition, alike free and willing at one time as another, to be unclothed of the Body, and to be with Christ. This height of Faith, and depth of Mortification; this strength of love to Christ, and ardour of holy desire, are degrees of Grace to which very few attain.

The Case standing thus, it is no more than needs, to urge all sorts of Arguments upon our timorous and unsteady hearts; and it's like to prove a hard and difficult task to bring the heart but to a quiet and unregretting submission to the appointment of God herein, tho' submission be one of the lowest steps of Duty in this Case.

If it be hard to fix our thoughts but an hour on such an unpleasing subject as Death, how hard must it be to bring over the consent of the will? If we cannot endure it at a distance in our thoughts, how shall we embrace and hug it in our bosoms? If our thoughts fly back with distaste and impatience, no wonder if our will be obstinate and refractory. We must first prevail without our thoughts to fix themselves, and think close to such a subject, before it can be expected we cheerfully resign our selves into the hands of Death. We cannot be willing to go along with Death, till we have some acquaintance with it; and acquainted with it we cannot be, till we accustom our selves to think assiduously and calmly of it. They that have dwelt many years at Death's door, both in respect of the condition of their Bodies, and disposition of their Minds, yet find reluctancy enough when it comes to the point.

Objct. But if separation from the Body be (as it is) an enemy to Nature, and there be no possibility to extinguish natural aversion: to what purpose is it to argue and persuade, where there is no expectation of success?

Sol. Death is considerable two ways by the people of God:

1. As an Enemy to Nature,
2. As a Medium to Glory.

If we consider it simply in it self, as an Enemy to Nature, there is nothing in it for which

Vol. I.

we should desire it: but if we consider it as a Medium or passage into Glory, yea, the only ordinary way through which all the Saints must pass out of this into a better state; so it will appear not only tolerable, but desirable to prepared Souls. Were there not a *Shoar* of Glory on the other side of these black Waters of Death, for my own part I should rather chuse to live meanly than to die easily. If both parts were to perish at Death, there were no reason to persuade one to be willing to deliver up the other. It were a madness for the Soul to desire to be dissolv'd, if it were so far from being better out of the Body than in it; that it should have no being at all. But, Christians, let me tell you, Death is so far from being a *Bar*, that it is a *Bridge* in your way to Glory, and you are never like to come thither but by passing over it: except therefore you will look beyond it, you will never see any desirableness in it. *I desire to be dissolv'd* (saith Paul) *and to be with Christ, which is far better.* To be with Death is sad, but to be with Christ is sweet; to endure the pains of Death is doleful, but to see the face of Christ is joyful; to part with your pleasant habitations is irksome, but to be lodged in the heavenly Mansions is most delightful; a parting hour with dear Relations is cutting, but a meeting hour with Jesus Christ is transporting; to be rid of your own Bodies is not pleasing, but to be rid of Sin, and that for ever, what can be more pleasing to a gracious Soul?

You see then in what sense I present Death as a desirable thing to the people of God, And therefore seeing Nature teacheth us (as the Apostle speaks) to put the more abundant comeliness upon the uncomely parts; suffer me to drels up Death in its best ornaments, and present it to you in the following Arguments, as a beautiful and comely Object of your conditional and well regulated desires. And.

If upon a fair and just account there shall appear to be more gain to Believers in Death, than there is in Life: Reason must needs vote Death to be better to them that are in Christ, than Life can be; and consequently it should be desirable in their eyes.

'Tis a clear dictate of reason in case of choice to chuse that which is best for us. Who is there that freely exercises reason and choice together, that will not do so?

What Merchant will not part with a hundred pounds worth of Glass Beads and Pendants for a Tun of Gold? A few Tinsel Toys, for as many rich Diamonds? *Mercatura est amittere, ut lucreris*; that is true Merchandize, to part with things of lesser, for things of greater value.

Now, if you will be tried and determined by God's Book of Rates, then the case is determined quickly, and the advantage appears exceedingly upon Death's side, *Philip. 1. 21. To me to live, is Christ; and to die, is gain.*

True, it might be so to Paul, who was eminent in Grace, and ripe for Glory; but it may be lost to others, who have not attained the height of his holiness or assurance.

The true and plain sense of the Objection is *Sol.* this, Whether Heaven and Christ be as much gain to him that enjoys them, tho' behind others both in Grace and Obedience, as it is

F f f

to

to them who are more eminent in Grace, and have done and suffered more for their sake? And let it be determined by your selves. But if your meaning be, that *Paul* was ready for Death, and so are not you; his work and course was almost comfortably finished, and so is not yours; his death therefore must needs be gain to him, but it may be loss to you, even the loss of all that you are worth for ever.

To this I say, The Wisdom of God orders the time of his Peoples Death, as well as all other circumstances about it: and in this, your hearts may be at perfect rest, That being in Christ, you can never die to your loss, die when you will. I know you will reply, That if your Union with Christ were clear, the Controversie were ended: but then you must also consider, they are as safe who die by an act of recumbency upon Christ, as those that die in the fullest assurance of their interest in him.

And beside, your reluctancies and averfations to Death are none of your way to assurance; but such a strong averfation to Sin, and such a vehement desire after, and love to Christ, as can make you willing to quit all that is dear and desirable to you in this World for his sake, is the very next door or step to assurance: and if the Lord bring your hearts to this frame, and fix them there, it is not like you will be long without it.

But to return. *Paul* had here valued life, with a full allowance of all the benefits and advantages of it; *To me to live, is Christ*; that is, If I live, I shall live in Communion with Christ, and service for Christ, and in the midst of all those comforts which usually result from both. Here's Life with the most weighty and desirable benefits of it laid in one Scale, and he lays Death, and probably a violent Death too, (for of that he speaks afterwards, *Ch. 2. 17.*) in the other Scale. Thus he fills the Scale, and the Balance breaks on Death's side, yea, it comes down with a *καὶ ὁ κέρδιον κέρδιον*, a far far better.

But here falls in (as an excellent Person observes) a rub in the way: there are in this case two Judges, the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*, and they cannot agree upon the values, but contradict each other. Nature saith, It's far far better to live than to die, and will not be beaten off from it. What then? I hope you will not put blind and partial Nature in competition with God also, as you do Life with Death. But seeing Nature can plead so powerfully, as well as Grace, let us hear what those strong Reasons are, that are urged by the *Flesh on Life's side*, and what the Soul hath to reply and plead on Death's side, (for the Body can plead, and that charmingly too, tho' not by words and sounds) and then determin the matter as we shall see cause: but be sure prejudice pull not down the Balance.

And here the doleful Voice of Nature laments, pleads, and bemoans it self to the willing Soul:

'Oh my Soul! what dost thou mean by these thy desires to be dissolved? Art thou in earnest, when thou saist thou art willing to leave thine own Body and be gone? Consider, and think again e'er thou bid me farewell, what thou art to me, and what I have been and am to thee; thou art my Soul, that is, my Prop, my Beauty, my Honour, my Life, and

indeed all that is comfortable to me. If thou depart, what am I but a Spectacle of Pity, an abhor'd Carcase in a few moments? a prey to the Worms, a Captive to Death? If thou depart, my Candle is put out, and I am left in the horrors of darkness.

'I am thy House, thy delightful Habitation, the House in which thou hast dwelt from the first moment of thy Creation, and never lodgedst one night in any other: every Room in me hath one way or other been a Banqueting-room for thy entertainment, a room of pleasure; all my Senses have been *Purveyors* for thy Delight; my Members have all of them been thine Instruments and Servants to execute thy Commands and Pleasure. If thou and I part, it must be in a shower: thou shalt feel such pains, such travelling throes, such deep emphatical groans, such sweats, such agonies as thou never felt'st before. For Death hath somewhat of anguish peculiar to it self, and which is unknown, tho' guessed at by the living. Besides, whenever thou leavest me, thou leavest all that is and hath been comfortable to thee in this World: thy house shall know thee no more, *Job 7. 10.* thy Lands, thy Money, thy Trade, which have cost thee so many careful thoughts, and yielded thee so many refreshments, shall be thine no longer; Death will strip thee out of all these, and leave thee naked.

'Thou hast also, since thou becamest mine, contracted manifold Relations in the World, which I know are dear unto thee. I know it by costly experience. How hast thou made me to wear and waste my self in Labours, Cares, and Watchings for them? But if thou wilt be gone, all these must be left exposed, God knows to what wants, abuses, and miseries! for I can do nothing for them or my self, if once thou leave me. Thus it charms and pleads; thus it layeth as it were violent hands upon the Soul, and saith, 'Oh my Soul! thou shalt not depart. It hangs about it much as the Wife and Children of good *Galeacius Carracciolus* did about him, when he was leaving *Italy* to go to *Geneva* (a lively Emblem of the Case before us.) It saith to the Soul, as *Joab* did to *David*, *Thou hast shamed my face this day, in that thou lovest thine Enemy, Death, and hatest me thy friend.* 'Oh my Soul! my Life! my Darling! my dear and only One! let nothing but unavoidable necessity part Thee and Me. All this the *Flesh* can plead, and a great deal more than this, and that a thousand times more powerfully and feelingly than any words can plead the case. And all its Arguments are back'd by Sense: Sight and Feeling attest what Nature speaks.

Let us in the next place weigh the Pleas and Reasons, which, notwithstanding all this, do overpower and prevail with the believing Soul to be gone, and quit its own Body, and return no more to the Elementary World.

And thus the Power of Faith and Love enable it to reply:

'My dear Body, the Companion and Partner of my Comforts and Troubles in the days of my Pilgrimage on Earth, great is my Love, and strong are the Bonds of my Affections to thee. Thou hast been tenderly, yea, excessively beloved by me; my cares and fears for thee,

* Mr. How in Mrs. Margaret Baxter's Funeral Sermon.

1. The Pleas of Nature for Life, and against Dissolution.

2. The Pleas of Faith in behalf of Death.

'thee have been unexpressible, and nothing but the love of Jesus Christ is strong enough to gain my consent to part with thee; thy interest in my affections is great; but as great as it is, and as much as I prize thee, I can shake thee off, and thrust thee aside to go to Christ.

'Nor may this seem absurd or unreasonable, considering that God never designed thee for a *Mansion*, but only a temporary *Tabernacle* to me: 'tis true, I have had some comfort during my abode in thee; but I enjoyed those Comforts only in thee, not from thee; and many more I might have enjoyed, hadst thou not been a snare and clog to me.

'Tis thou that hast eaten up my Time, and distracted my Thoughts, enshrouded my Affections, and drawn me under much sin and sorrow. However, tho' we may weep over each other as *Accessories* to the sins and miseries we have drawn upon our selves, yet in this is our joint relief, that the Blood of Christ hath cleansed us both from all sin.

'And therefore I can part the more easily and comfortably from thee, because I part in hope to receive and enjoy thee in a far better condition than I leave thee. It is for both our interests to part for a time: for mine, because I shall thereby be freed and delivered from sin and sorrow, and immediately obtain rest with God, and the satisfaction of all my desires in his presence and enjoyment, which there is no other way to obtain, but by separation from thee: and why should I live a groaning, burdened, restless life always, to gratify thy fond and irrational desires? If thou lovedst me, thou wouldst rejoice, and not repine at my happiness. Parents willingly part with their Children at the greatest distance for their preferment, how dearly soever they love them: and dost thou envy or repine at mine: I lived many months a suffering obscure life with thee in the Womb, and neither thou nor I had ever tasted or experienced the Comforts of this World, and the various Delights of Sense, if we had not cast the *Secundine*, and struggled hard for an entrance into this World. And now we are here, alas! tho' thou art contented to abide, I live in thee, but as we both lived in the Womb, an obscure, uneasy, and unsupportable life. Thou canst feed upon material bread, and delight thy self amidst the variety of sensitive Objects thou findest here: but what are all these things to me? I cannot subsist by them; that which is Food to thee, is but Chaff, Wind, and Vanity to me. If I stay with thee, I shall be still sinning, and still groaning: when I leave thee, I shall be immediately freed from both, and arrive at the sum and perfection of all my hopes, desires, and whatsoever I have aimed at, and laboured for, in all the duties of my life. Let us therefore be content to part.

'Shrink not at the horror of a Grave: 'tis indeed a dark and solitary house, and the days of darkness may be many: but to thee, my dear Companion, it shall be a bed of rest; yea, a perfumed bed, where thy Lord Jesus lay before thee. And let the time of thy abode there be never so long, thou shalt not measure it, nor find the least tediousness in it: A thousand years there shall seem no more in

Vol. I.

the morning of the Resurrection, than the sweetest Nap of an hour long seemed to be, when I was wont to lay thee upon thy bed to rest.

'The Worms in the Grave shall be nothing to thee, nor give thee the thousandth part of that trouble that a Flea was wont to do. And tho' I leave thee, Jesus Christ shall watch in the mean time over thy Dust, and not suffer a grain of it to be lost. And I will return assuredly to thee again at the time appointed: I take not an everlasting farewell of thee, but depart for a time, that I may receive thee for ever. To conclude, there is an unavoidable necessity of our parting; whether willing or unwilling, we must be separated: but the consent of my Will to part with thee for the enjoyment of Jesus Christ, will be highly acceptable to God, and as a lump of Sugar to sweeten the bitter Cup of Death to us both.

This, and much more, the gracious Soul hath to say for its separation from the Body, by which it is easy to discern where the gain and advantage of Death lies to all Believers; and consequently how much it must be every way their interest to be unbodied.

To be weary of the Body upon the pure account and reason of our hatred to sin, and longing desires after Jesus Christ, argues strongly Grace in truth, and Grace in strength: it is both the *Test* of our sincerity, and the *Measure* of our attainment and maturity of Grace; and upon both accounts highly covetable by all the people of God.

It is so great an evidence of the truth of Grace, that the Scriptures have made it the *descriptive Periphrasis* of a Christian: So we find it in 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. the *Crown of Life* is there promised to all them that love the appearance of Christ; i. e. those that love to think of it, that delight to steep their thoughts in subjects belonging to the other World, and cast many a yearning look that way: and, 2 *Per.* 3. 12. they are described to be such as are *looking for, and hastening to the coming of the day of God*. Their earnest expectations and longings do not only put them upon making all the haste they can to be with Christ, but it makes the interposing time seem so tedious and slow, that with their most vehement wishes and desires, they do what they can to accelerate and hasten it, as *Rev.* 22. *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly*. Lovers hours, saith the *Proverb*, are full of Eternity. 'Oh, said Mr. *Rutherford*, that Christ would make long strides! Oh that he would fold up the Heavens as an old Cloak, and shovel time and days out of the way! Such desires as these can spring from none but gracious and renewed Souls: for Nature is wholly disaffected to a removal hence upon such motives and considerations as these. If others wish at any time for Death, 'tis but in a pet, a present passion provoked by some intolerable anguish, or great distress of Nature. But to look, and long, and hasten to the other World, out of a weariness of sin, and a hearty willingness to be with Christ, supposes necessarily a deep-rooted hatred of sin, abhorring it more than Death itself, the greatest of natural evils; and a real sight of things invisible by the eye of Faith, without which it is impossible any man's heart should be thus framed and tempered.

F i f f 2

And

And as it evidenceth the truth, so also the strength and maturity of Grace: For, alas! how many thousands of gracious Souls that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, are to be found quite below this temper of mind! Oh! 'tis but here and there one among the Lord's own people that have reached this height and eminence of Faith and Love. It is with the fruits of the Spirit just as it is with the fruits of the Earth; some are green and raw, others are ripe and mellow: the first stick fast on the Branches, you may shake and shake again, and not one will drop; or as those fruits that grow in the Hedges, with their Coats and integuments enwrapping them, as *Nuts*, &c. you may try your strength upon them, and sooner break your Nails than disclose and separate them, so fast and close do their husks stick to them: but when time and the influences of Heaven have ripened and brought them to their perfection, the Apples drop into your hands without the least touch, and the Nut falls out of its case of its own accord: So, much more so, doth the Soul part from its Body when matured, and come to its strength and vigour.

Arg. III. It may greatly prevail upon the Will and Resolution of a Believer, to adventure boldly and cheerfully upon Death, that our Bodies, of which we are bereaved and deprived by Death, shall be most certainly and advantageously restored to us by the Resurrection. The Resurrection of the Dead is the encouragement and consolation of the dying. The more our Faith is establish'd in the Doctrine of the Resurrection, the more we shall surmount the fears of Dissolution. If Paul urged it as an Argument to reconcile Philemon to his Servant Onesimus, v. 15. *That he therefore departed for a season, that Philemon might receive him for ever*; the same Argument may reconcile every Believer to Death, and take off the prejudice of the Soul against it. You shall surely receive your Bodies again, and enjoy them for ever.

Now the Doctrine of the Resurrection is as fire in it self, as it is comfortable to us; the depth and strength of its foundation fully answers to the height and sweetness of its consolation. Be pleas'd to try the two Pillars thereof, and see which of them may be doubted or shaken, *Matth. 22. 29. You err* (saith Christ to the Sadducees, who denied this Doctrine) *not knowing the Scriptures, and the power of God.* This is the ground and root of their Error, not knowing the Scriptures, and the Power of God: *q. d.* did you know and believe the Scriptures of God, and the Power of God, you would never question this Doctrine of the Resurrection, which is built upon them both. The Power of God convinceth all men that know and believe it, that it *may be so*; and the Scriptures of God convince all that know and believe them, that it *must be so*. As for his Power, who can doubt it? At the Command and Fiat of God, the Earth brought forth every living Creature after his kind, *Gen. 1. 24, 25.* at his Command Lazarus came forth, *John 11. 43.* And was there not as much difficulty in either of these, as in our Resurrection? By this Power our Souls were quickened and raised from the Death of Sin and Guilt, to the spiritual Life of Christ, *Eph. 1. 19.* And is it not as easie to raise a dead Body as a dead Soul? But what

stand I arguing in so plain a case, when we are assured this mighty Power is able to subdue all things to it self? *Phil. 3. 21:*

And then, for his Promise that it shall be so, what can be plainer? See *1 Thess. 4. 15, 16. This we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, &c. (i. e.) in the Name or Authority of the Lord,* and by Commission and Warrant from him. He first opens his Commission, shews his Credentials, and then publishes the comfortable Doctrine of the Resurrection, and the Saints preeminence to all others therein.

Well then, what remains in Death to fright and scare a Believer? Is it our parting with these Bodies? Why, it is not for ever that we part with them; as sure as the Power and Promises of God are true, firm, and sufficient to accomplish it, we shall see and enjoy them again. This comforted *Job. chap. 19. 25, 26.* over all his Discafes, when of all his Enjoyments that once he had, he could not say, my Friends, my Children, my Estate; yet then he could say, my Redeemer. When he looked upon a poor, wasted, withered, loathsome Body of his own, and saw nothing but a Skeleton, an Image of Death, yet then could he see it a glorious Body, by viewing it believably in this Glass of the Resurrection. So then all the damage we can receive by Death, is but the absence of our Bodies for a time; during which time the Covenant-relation betwixt God and them holds good and firm, *Matth. 22. 32.* He therefore will take care of them, and in due time restore them with marvelous improvements and endowments to us again, divested of all their Infirmitates, and clothed with heavenly Qualities and Perfections, *1 Cor. 15. 43, 44.* And in the mean time the Soul attains its rest, and happiness, and satisfaction in the blessed God.

The consideration of what we part from, Arg. IV. and what we go to, should make the Medium by which we pass from so much Evil to so great Good, lovely and desirable in our eyes, how unpleasant or bitter soever it be in it self.

No man desires Physick for it self. There is no pleasure in bitter Pills and leathorn Potions, except what rises from the end, *viz.* the disburdening of Nature, and recovery of health; and this gives it a value with the sick and pained. Under a like consideration is Death desired by sick and pained Souls, who find it better to die once, than groan under burdens continually.

Death certainly is the best Physician next and under Jesus Christ, that ever was employed about them; for it cures radically and perfectly, so that the Soul never relapses more into any Dis temper. Other Medicines are but *Anodynes*, or at best they relieve us but in part, and for a time; but this goes through the work, and perfects the Cure at once. Methinks that call of Christ which he gives his Spouse in *Cant. 4. 8. (Come with me from Lebanon (my Spouse) with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amanah, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the Lions dens, from the Mountains of Leopards)* scarce suits any time so well as the time of Death. Then it is that we depart from the *Lions Dens*, and the Mountains of *Leopards*, places uncomfortable and unsafe. More particularly at Death the Saints depart,

1. From

1. From Defiling Corruptions
2. From heart-linking Sorrows
3. From entangling Temptations
4. From distressing Persecutions
5. From pinching Wants
6. From distracting Fears
7. From deluding Shadows

- into
1. Perfect Purity.
 2. Fulness of Joy.
 3. Everlasting Freedom.
 4. Full Rest.
 5. Universal Supplies.
 6. Highest Security.
 7. Substantial Good.

1. From defiling Corruptions into perfect Purity. No sin hangs about the *separated*, tho' it do about the *sanctified* Soul. They come out of the Body suitable to that Character and Endowment, *(Cant. 4. 7. Thou art all fair, my Love, there is no spot in thee.)* It doth that for the Saints which all their Graces and Duties, all their Mercies and Afflictions, could never do. Faith is a great purifier, Communion with God a great cleanser, sanctified Afflictions a Refiner's fire and Fuller's soap; these have all done their parts, and been useful in their places: but none of them, nor all together, perfected this Cure till Death come, and then the work is done, and the cure perfected.

All weeping, all praying, all believing, all hearing, all Sacraments, all the means and instruments in the World, cannot do what Death will do for thee. One dying hour will do what ten thousand praying hours never did, nor could do. In this hour the design of all those hours is accomplished; as he that is dead by mortification is at present freed from sin in respect of imputation and dominion, *Rom. 6. 7.* so he that is justified and mortified, when dead naturally, is immediately freed from the very indwelling and existence of sin in him. We read of the washing of the Robes of the Saints, in *Revel. 7. 14.* The Blood of the Lamb cleanse them from every spot; but it doth it gradually. The last spot of Guilt indeed was fetch'd out by one act of Justification; but the last spot of Filth is not fetch'd out till the time of their dissolution; when they are come out of the Agonies of Death (which the Scripture calls *great Tribulation*) then, and not till then, are they perfectly cleansed. Sin brought in Death, and Death carries out Sin.

Oh! what a pure, lovely, shining Creature, is the separated Spirit of a Just Man! how clear is its Judgment, how ordinate its will, how holy and altogether heavenly are all its Affections now! and never till now it feels it self perfectly well, and as it would be.

2. From heart-linking Sorrows into fulness of Joy. The life we now live is a groaning life, *2 Cor. 5. 2.* where is the Christian, that if his inside could be seen, and his Heart laid naked, would not be found wounded from many hands? from the hand of God, of Enemies, of Friends, of Satan; but especially by the hands of its own Corruptions? Christ our Head was stiled a *Man of Sorrows*, from the multitude of his Sorrows; and it is the lot of all his to be in a state of Sorrow in the Body. *In the World (saith he) you shall have trouble.* When I consider how oft the Candle of Sorrow is held to the Thral of Life, I justly wonder how it is protracted to such a length. What Friend, what Enjoyment had we ever in this World, from which no sorrow, nay, many sorrows have not sprung up to us? And if the best Comforts bring forth Sorrows, what do the worst things we meet with here bring forth? I suppose there are many thousands of God's People this day in the World, that have as much reason to af-

fume the same new Name that *Naomi* did, and say, Call me *Marah*. Look as Day and Night divide all Time betwixt them; so do our Comforts and our Sorrows, only with this difference, that our Nights of Sorrow, like Winter-nights, are long, cold, and dark; and our Days of Comfort short, and frequently over-cast.

But when we put of these Bodies, we put off our mourning garments with them, and shall never sorrow any more: thenceforth God wipes away all Tears from his Peoples eyes, *Rev. 2. 4.* And that is not all, but they enter into their Master's Joy, even fulness of Joy and Pleasures for evermore. Groans are turned into Triumphs, and Sighs and Tears into joyful Acclamations and Songs of Praise. Oh that we were once made sensible throughly of the advantages that come by this exchange!

3. From entangling Temptations into everlasting Freedom. 'Tis this Body, and the interests and concerns of it, upon which Satan raises most of his Batteries against our Souls: 'tis our Flesh that causeth our Souls to sin; and whilst the Soul dwells in the Body, it is within Satan's reach to tempt, and defile, and trouble it. Oh what grievous things do the best Souls endure and suffer on this account!

Temptations are of two sorts; ordinary and mediate, by Satan's exciting and managing our Corruptions, by presenting Objects to them; or extraordinary and immediate, like fiery Darts shot immediately out of Hell into the Soul, which puts it all into a flame and combustion: Of the former you read in *1 Ja. 1. 14.* the latter in *1 Eph. 6. 16.* and upon the account of the one and other, the People of God are weary of their lives. Think what a grief it must be to a Soul that loves God, to feel in it self such things as militate against and wound the Name and Honour of God, which is, and ought to be dearer to it than its life.

But by the door of Death every gracious Soul makes its escape from the tempting power of Satan: he can no more touch or affect the Soul with any temptation, than we can batter the body of the Sun with Snow-balls: for as Satan can have no access to that place of blessedness where the Souls of the Saints are; so if he could, he can find nothing in them to fasten a temptation upon. The *School-men* give this as the reason why the Saints in Heaven are impeccable, because all their thoughts and affections are everlastingly fixed in, and employed about the blessed God, whose Face they continually behold in Glory.

4. From distressing Persecutions into full and perfect Rest. As Death sets us free from the Power of Satan, so from the reach of all Persecutors; *There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest*, as it is in *Job 3. 17.* The price of one *Ahab*, who had sold himself to work wickedness, was a stock sufficient to purchase many years trouble to all *Israel*, *1 King. 18. 17.* *Wicked men are as the unquiet troubled Sea which cannot rest*, *Isa. 57. 20.* They cannot rest from troubling the Saints, till they cease to be wicked or to live: when God puts out the Candle of their lives, they are sleat in darkness, *1 Sam. 2. 9.* And when God puts out the Candle of our life, we are at rest, tho' they rage never so much in this World. Death is the

Saints

Saints *quietus est*, their full and final discharge from persecuting Enemies. When we are dying, we may say, as *Psal. 9. 6. O thou Enemy, Destructions are come to a perpetual end.*

God may put an end to these Persecutions before Death, and such a time according to promise is to be expected, *when our Officers shall be Peace, and our Exaltor Righteousness*, *Ila. 60. 17.* but if the accomplishment of the Promise be reserved for Ages to come, and we must spend our days under the oppression of the Wicked; yet this is our comfort, we know when we shall be far enough out of their reach.

5. From pinching Wants to universal Supplies. This is the day in which the Lord abundantly satisfies the desires, and supplies the needs of all his People. There are two sorts of wants upon the People of God. *Spiritual and Temporal.*

Spiritual Wants are the just Complaints of all gracious Souls. You read *1 Thes. 3. 10.* of that which is lacking in the Faith of the Saints: there are none but find many things lacking to the perfection of every Grace: Our *Knowledge of God wants Cleanness and Efficacy*; our *Love to God Fervour and Constancy*; our *Faith wants Strength and Stability*: Darkness mixes it self with our Knowledge, Deadness with our Love, Unbelief with the purest acts of Faith. Go where you will, you shall find God's People every where complaining of their Spiritual wants; one of a dark Head, another of a dead Heart, another of a treacherous Memory. Thus they are loading one another with their Complaints.

Temporal, outward wants pinch hard also upon many of God's People: the greatest number of them consist of the Poor of this World, *Jam. 2. 5.* Those whose Souls are discharged and acquitted by God, whose Debts are paid by Jesus Christ, may yet be entangled in a brake of Cares and Troubles in the World, and know not which way to turn themselves in their straits and difficulties. But by Death the Saints pass from all their wants inward and outward to a state of complete Satisfaction, where nothing is lacking: from that day all their Spiritual wants are supplied; for they are now arrived to the measure of the stature of the Fulness of Christ, to a perfect Man. *Eph. 4. 13.* Now that which is perfect is come, and all that was in part is done away, *1 Cor. 13. 10.*

And for outward wants, they shall feel them no more: for putting off the Body, we must needs put off all cares and concerns about it. *Means for the Belly, and the Belly for Means, God shall destroy both it and them, 1 Cor. 6. 13.*

6. From distracting Fears into the highest security and rest of thoughts for evermore. The Fears of God's People are either about their Souls, or about their Bodies; the fears they have about their Souls are inexpressible. Two things especially exercise their Fears about their Souls. (1.) Whether they be really united to Christ. (2.) Whether they shall be able to continue and persevere in the ways of Christ to the end; they are afraid of their *Sincerity* and of their *Stability*: and these Fears accompany many of God's People from their Regeneration to their Dissolution. O what would they not give, what would they not do, yea, what would they not endure to get full

satisfaction in those things! Every working of Corruption, every discovery made by Temptation, puts them into a fright, and makes them question all that never was wrought in them.

And as their fears are great about the inward, so also about the outward Man; especially when such bloody preparations seems to be making by the same Enemies that have acted such, and so many bloody Tragedies already in the World.

But at Death they enter into a perfect peace and security, *Ila. 57. 2.* No wind of fear shall ever ruffle and disturb their Souls, and put them into a storm any more.

7. From deluding shadows into substantial Good. This World is the World of Shadows, and delusive Appearances. Here we are imposed upon and baffled by empty and deceitful Vanities. All we have here, is little else but a Dream: at death the Soul awakes out of its Dream, and finds it self in the World of Realities, where it feeds upon substantial good to satisfaction, *Psal. 17. 15.*

Now the advantages accruing to the Soul by Death, being so great, and many; tho' the Medium be harsh and ungrateful in it self, yet there is all the reason in the world we should covet it for the benefits that come by it.

Argum. V. The foretastes we have had of Heaven already in the Body, should make all the Saints long to be unbodied for the full and perfect fruition of that Joy; seeing it cannot be fully and perfectly enjoyed by the Soul, till it hath put off the Body by death.

That there are Prelibations, First-fruits, and Earnests of future Glory given at certain seasons to Believers in this life, is put beyond all doubting, not only by Scripture-testimonies, but frequent Experiences of God's People. I speak not only with the Scriptures, but with the clear experience of many Saints; when I say, here are to be felt and tasted, even here in the Body, the Earnests of our Inheritance, *Eph. 1. 14. The first-fruits of the Spirit, Rom. 8. 23. The sealing of the Spirit, Eph. 1. 13. The very Joy of the Lord, 1 Pet. 1. 8.* of the same kind, tho' in a remissor degree, with that of the Glorified.

That the fulness of this Joy cannot be in us whilst we tabernacle in Bodies of flesh, is as plain. When *Moses* desired a sight of that face which the Spirits of just Men made perfect do continually behold and adore, the Answer was. *No Man can see my face and live, Exod. 33. 18, 19, 20. q. d. Moses, thou askest a great thing, and understandest not how unable thou art to support that which thou desirest: should I shew thee my Glory in this compounded state thou now art, it would confound thee, and swallow thee up.* Nature, as now constituted, cannot support such a weight of Glory: a Ray, a glimpse of this Light overpowers Man, and breaks such a clay Vessel to pieces: which is the reason why the Resurrection must intervene betwixt this state, and that of the Body's Glorification.

And it is not to be doubted, but one main end and reason why these foretastes of Heaven are given us in the Body, is to embolden the Soul to venture through Death it self for the full enjoyment of those Delights and Pleasures.

They

They are like the Grapes of *Esheol* to the faint-hearted *Israelites*; or the sweet Wines of *Italy* to the *Gauls*, which once tasted, made them restless till they had conquered that good Country where they grew. *Rom.* 8. 23. *We which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves do groan within our selves, waiting for the Adoption, viz. the Redemption of our Bodies.*

Well then, reflect seriously upon those sweet tastes that you have had of God and his Love in your sincere and secret addresses to him, and converse with him. What a holy forgetfulness of all things in this World hath it wrought! How insipid and tasteless hath it rendered the sweetest Creature-enjoyments! What willingness to be dissolved for a more full fruition of it! God this way brings Heaven nigh to your Souls, out of design to overcome your Reluctancies at death, through which you must pass to the enjoyment of it. And after all those sights and tastes both of the truth and goodness of that state, shall we still relucate and hang back, as if we had never tasted how good the Lord is! O you may justly question, whether you ever had a real taste of Jesus Christ, if that taste do not kindle Coals of fire in your Bosoms, I mean ardent longings to be with him, and to be satiated with his Love.

If you have been privileged with a taste of that hidden *Manna*, with the sight of things invisible, with Joys unspeakable and full of Glory, and yet are loth to be gone to the Fountain whence also this flows; certainly you herein both cross the design of the Spirit in giving them, and cast a vile disgrace and reproach upon the blessed God, as thinking there is more bitterness in Death, than there is sweetness in his Presence. Yea, it argues the strength of that Unbelief which still remains in your Hearts, that after so many tastes, and trials as you have had, you still remain doubtful and hesitating about the certainty and reality of things invisible.

O what ado hath God with his froward and peevish Children! If he had only revealed the future state to us in his Word, as the pure Object of Faith, and required us to die upon the meer credit of his Promise, without such Pawns, Pledges, and Earnests as these are; were there not reason enough for it? but after such, and so many wonderful and amazing Condescensions, wherein he doth as it were say, Soul, if yet thou doubtest, I will bring Heaven to thee, thou shalt have it in thy own hand, thy eyes shall see it, thy hands shall handle it, thy mouth shall taste it; how inexcusable is our Reluctancy?

Argum. VI. It should greatly fortify the People of God against the fears of Dissolution, to consider that Death can neither destroy the being of their Souls by Annihilation, nor the hopes and expectations they have of Blessedness by disappointment and frustration. *Prov.* 14. 32. *The Righteous hath hope in his Death.* Tho' all earthly things fail at Death (upon which account dying is expressed by failing, *Luke* 16. 19.) yet neither the Soul, nor the well-grounded hopes can fail. The Anchor of a Believer's hope is firm and sure, *Heb.* 6. 18; It will not come home in the greatest Storm that can beat upon the Soul. For, (1.) God hath foreknown and chosen them to Salvation before the World

was 1 *Per.* 1. 2. *And this Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, the Lord knoweth who are his.* 2. *Tim.* 2. 19. His Decrees are as firm as Mountains of Brass, *Zeck.* 6. 1. (2.) God hath justified their Persons, and therein destroy'd the power of Death over them, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, 56, 57. *O Death where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin, the Strength of Sin is the Law.* If all the hurtful power of Death lies in Sin, and all the destructive power of Sin rises from the Law; then neither Death, nor Sin have any power to destroy the Believer, in whom the Righteousness of the Law is fulfilled, *Rom.* 8. 4. namely, by the imputation of the Righteousness of Christ to them, in respect of which they are as righteous, as if in their own persons they had perfectly obeyed all its Commands, or suffered all its Penalties. Thus Death loseth its Sting, its Curse, and killing power over the Souls of all that are in Christ. (3.) God hath sanctified their Natures, which Sanctification is not only a sure evidence of their Election and Justification, 2 *The.* 1. 5, 6. *Rom.* 8. 1. but a sure Pledge of their Glorification also, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4, 5. Yea (4.) He hath made a sure and an everlasting Covenant with Believers, and among other gracious Privileges thereby conferred upon them, Death is found in the Inventory, 1 *Cor.* 13. 21. *Death is ours;* to die is gain to them: it destroys their Enemies, and the distance that is betwixt Christ and them. (5.) He hath sealed them to this Glory by the holy Spirit, *Eph.* 4. 30. So that their hopes are too firmly built to be destroyed by Death: and if it cannot destroy their Souls, nor overthrow their hopes, they need not fear all that it can do besides.

It may greatly encourage and embolden the Arg. VII. People of God to die, considering that tho' at Death they take the last sight and view of all that is dear to them on Earth; yet then they are admitted to the first immediate sight and blessed Vision of God, which will be their happiness to all Eternity.

When *Ezekiah* was upon his supped Death-bed, he complained, *Isa.* 38. 11. *I shall see Man no more with the Inhabitants of the World.* We shall see thenceforth these Corporal People no more. We shall see our Habitations and dwelling places no more, *Joh* 7. 9, 10, 11. We shall see our Children and dear Relations no more, *Joh* 14. 21. *His Sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not.* These things make Death terrible to men; but that which cures all this trouble is, that we shall neither need, nor desire them being thenceforth admitted to the beatifical Vision of the blessed God himself.

It is the expectation and hope of this, which comforteth the Souls of the Righteous here, *Psal.* 17. 15. *When I awake, I shall behold thy Face in righteousness.* Those weak and dim representations made by faith at a distance are the very joy and rejoicing of a Believer's Soul now, 1 *Per.* 1. 7, 8. but how sweet and transporting soever these Visions of Faith be, they are not worthy to be named in comparison with the immediate and beatifical Vision, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. This is the very sum of a Believer's Blessedness: and what it is we cannot comprehend in this imperfect state only in general, we may gather these Conclusions about it, from the account given of it in the Scriptures.

Lumen gloriæ est actualis illustratio, (i. e.) influxus Dei supernaturalis elevans intellectum ad visionem essentiae divinæ. *Smiling Trail.*
2. *Dij. 6. N. 33.*

1. That it will not be such a sight of God as we now have by the mediation of Faith, but a direct, immediate and intuitive Vision of God, 1 Joh. 3. 2. *We shall see him as he is,* 1 Cor. 13. 12. *Then face to face.* Which far transcends the Vision of Faith, in clearness and in comfort. This seems to import no less than the very sight of the Divine Essence, that which *Moses* desired on Earth to see, but could not, *Ex. 33.* nor can be seen by any man dwelling in a Body, 1 Tim. 6. 16. nor by unbodied Souls comprehensively, so God only sees himself: our Eyes see the Sun, which they cannot comprehend, yet truly apprehend. God will then be known in his Essence, and in the glory of all his Attributes: this light of the Attributes of God gives the occasion and matter of those ascriptions of Praise and Glory to him, which is the proper employment of glorified Souls, *Rev. 4. 11.* and 5. 12, 13. which is the proper employment of Angels, *Isa. 6. 3.* Oh how different is this from what we now have through Faith, Duties, and Ordinances! See the difference betwixt knowledge by reports, and immediate sight, in that example of the *Queen of the South*, 1 Kings 10. 5. the former only excited her desires, the latter transported and wrapt her very Soul.

Some may think such a Vision of God to exceed the abilities of Nature, and capacity of any Creature. But, as a learned Man rightly observes, if the Divine Nature be capable of union with a Creature, as it's evident in the Person of Christ, it is also capable of being the Object of Vision to the Creature. Beside, we must know the light of Glory hath the same respect to this blessed Vision, that assisting Grace hath to the Acts of Faith and Obedience performed here on Earth. It is a comforting, Soul-strengthening light, not to dazzle and overpower, but comfort, strengthen, and clear the eye of the Creatures understanding: *Rev. 2. 28. I will give him the morning Star, Lumen confortans;* and *Psal. 36. 9. In thy Light we shall see light.*

2. It will be a *satisfying* sight, *Pf. 17. 15.* so perfectly quieting and giving rest to the Soul in all its powers, that they neither can proceed, nor desire to proceed any farther. The Understanding can know no more, the Will can will no more; the Affections of Joy, Delight and Love are at full rest and quiet in their proper Centre. For all good is in the chiefest Good eminently; as all the light of the Candles in the World is in the Sun, and all the Rivers in the World in the Sea. That which makes the Understanding, Will, and Affections move farther, as being restless, and unsatisfied in all discoveries and enjoyments here, is the limited and imperfect nature of things we now converse with; as if you bring a great Ship that draws much Water into a narrow and shallow River, she can neither sail nor swim, but is presently aground: but let that Ship have Sea-room enough, then she can turn and sail before the Wind, because there is depth of Water, and room enough: So 'tis here; all that delighted, but could never satisfy you in the Creature, is eminently in God; and what was imperfectly in them, is perfectly to be enjoyed

in Him, 1 Cor. 15. 28. *God shall be all in all;* the Comforts you had here were but drop by drop, inflaming, not satisfying the appetite of the Soul: but then *the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne shall feed them, and lead them unto fountains of living Waters,* *Rev. 7. 17.* The Object fills the Faculties.

3. It will be an *appropriating* Vision of God; you shall see him as your own God, and proper Portion; else it could never be a satisfying Vision, *Job 19. 27. Whom I shall see for my self:* Not look on him as another's God, but as my God and Portion for ever. *Balaam* saw Christ by a Spirit of Prophecy; but he had no comfort, because no interest in him, *Numb. 24. 17.* The Wicked shall see him, but without joy, yea, with weeping eyes, and gnashing of teeth, because they cannot see him as their Lord, *Luke 13. 28.* 'Tis but a poor comfort to starving Beggars to stand quivering and famishing in the streets in a cold dark night, and see the lights in the Bridgroom's house, the noble Dishes served in, and to hear the Music and Mirth of the Guests that feast within. Here it will be as clear that he is *our God*, as that he is *God*. Assurance is that which many Souls have desired, prayed, and panted for, but cannot attain. There be many rubs and stumbling-blocks in the way to that sweet enjoyment; but here we find what we have been so long seeking: there be no doubts, scruples, objections, puzzling cases, to exercise your own, or others thoughts. But as these did arise from one of these grounds, *viz.* the working of corruption, the efficacy of temptation, or divine withdrawals, and the hidings of God's face: so all these being removed perfectly and for ever in that state, the Heavens must needs be clear, and not a cloud of doubt or fear to be seen for ever.

4. It will be a *deeply-affecting* sight; your eye will now so affect your hearts, as they were never affected before. The first view of God will snatch away your hearts to him, as a greater flame doth the less. Love will not now distil from the heart as Waters from a cold Still, but gush out as from a Sluce or Flood-gate pulled up. The Soul will not move after God so deadily and slowly as it doth now, but be as the Chariots of *Aminadab*, *Cant. 6. 12.* We may say of the frames of our hearts there, compared with what they are here, as it is said *Deut. 12. 8. 9. You shall not love, or delight in, God as you do this day.* If the perfection of that state would admit shame or sorrow, how should we blush and mourn in Heaven to think how cold our love, and how low our delights in God were on Earth! 1 John 4. 16. *God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God.* Look as Iron put into the fire becomes all fiery, so the Soul dwelling in the God of Love, becomes all love, all delight, all joy. Oh what transports must that Soul feel, that abides under the line of Love! feels the perpendicular beams of electing, creating, redeeming, preserving love, beating powerfully upon it, and melting it in to love! See some of their transports, *Rev. 5. 13. 14.*

5. It will be an *everlasting* vision of God, 1 Thes. 4. 17. *So shall we be ever with the Lord, [ever with the Lord.]* Who can find words to open the deep sense of these few words? *Fac abimus* &

Norton's
Cribnotes.
Evang. P.
329.

& *videbimus, videbimus & amabimus, amabimus & laudabimus in fine sine fine*, faith blessed *Austin*. This is the everlasting Sabbath which hath no night, *Rev.* 22. 4, 5. The eternal happiness purchased for the Saints by the invaluable Blood of Christ. If one hour's enjoyment of God in the way of Faith be so sweet, and no price can be put upon it, nothing on earth taken in exchange for it; what must a whole Eternity in the immediate, and full Visions of that blessed Face in Heaven be!

Well then, if such sights as these immediately succeed the sight you have on Earth, either by sense of things natural, or by reason of things intellectual, or by faith of things spiritual, who that believes the truth, and expects the fulfilling of such promises as these, would not be willing to have his eyes closed by Death as soon as God shall please? I have read of a holy Man that had sweet Communion with God in Prayer, who in the close of his Duty cried out, *Claudimini oculi mei, claudimini*, &c. *Be shut, O my eyes, be shut; you shall never see any thing on Earth like that I have now seen.* Ah! little do the friends of dead Believers think what Visions of God, what ravishing sights of Christ, the Souls of their friends have, when they are closing their eyes with tears.

Arg. VIII. The consideration of the evil days that are to come, should make the people of God willing to accept of a biding place in the grave, as a special favour from God.

It is accounted an act of favour by God, *Isa.* 57. 1, 2. to be taken away from the evil to come. There are two kinds of evils to come, the evil of *sin*, and the evil of *sufferings*. Sins to come are terrible to gracious hearts, when temptations shall be at their height and strength. Oh what warping and shrinking, what dissembling, yea, downright denying the known truths and ways of God, may you see everywhere? Many Consciences will then be wounded and wasted. Many scandals and rocks of Offence will be rolled into the way of godliness. Christ will be exposed and put to open shame. Should we only be spectators of such Tragedies as these, it were enough to overwhelm a gracious and tender heart: but what upright heart is there without fears and jealousies of being brought under the guilt of these evils in it self, as well as the shame and grief for them in others? Oh! it were a thousand times better for you to die in the purity and integrity of your Consciences, than to protract a miserable life without them. Oh! think what a World it is that you are like to leave behind you in respect of sin to come.

And as there are many evils of Sin to come, so there are many evils of Sufferings coming on: *The days of visitation are come, the days of recompence are come, and Israel shall know it.* *Hos.* 9. 7. All the Sufferings you have yet met with, have been in Books and Histories; you never saw the Martyrdom of the Saints, but in the Pictures and Stories: but you will find it quite another thing to be the *Subjects* of these Cruelties, than to be the mere *Readers* or *Relators* of them. 'Tis one thing to see the painted Lion on a Sign-post, and another to meet the living Lion roaring upon you. Ah! little do we imagin how the hearts of Men are convuls'd, what fears, what faintings invade their Spirits when they are to meet the King of Terrors, in the frightful for-

Vol. I. malities of a violent Death.

The consideration of these things will discover to you the reason of that strange wish of *Job*, chap. 14. 13. *Oh that thou wouldst bide me in the grave; that thou wouldst keep me in secret till thy wrath be past!* And it deserves a serious thought, that when the Holy Ghost had, in *Rev.* 14. 9, 10, 11, 12. described the miserable plight of those poor Souls, who being overcome by their own fears, and the love of this World, should plunge themselves first into a deep guilt, by compliance with *Antichrist*, and receiving his Mark; then into a Hell upon Earth, the remorse and horror of their own Consciences, which gives them no rest day nor night; he immediately subjoins, ver. 13. *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; yea, from henceforth, faith the Spirit, &c.* Oh! 'tis a special blessing and favour to be hid out of the way of those temptations and torments in a seasonable and quiet grave.

Your fixed aversion and unwillingness to die, will provoke God to imbitter your lives with much more afflictions than you have yet felt, or would feel if your hearts were more mortified and weaned in this point.

You cannot think of your own Deaths with pleasure, no nor yet with patience. Well, take heed, lest this draw down such troubles upon you, as shall make you at last to say with *Job*, chap. 10. 1. *My Soul is weary of my life; an expression much like that, 2 Sam. 1. 9. Anguish is come upon me, because my life is whole in me.* My Soul is hardened, or become cruel against my life, as the *Chaldee* renders it.

There is a twofold weariness of life; one from an excellency of Spirit, a noble Principle, the ardent love of Jesus Christ, *Phil.* 1. 23. *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.* Another from the meer pressures of affliction and anguish of Spirit, under heavy and successive strokes from the hand of God and Men. Is it not more excellent and desirable to groan for Death under a pressure of love to Christ, than of afflictions from Christ?

I am convinced that very many of our afflictions come upon this score and account, to make us willing to die.

Is it not sad that God is forced to bring Death upon all our comfortable and desirable things in this World, before he can gain our consents to be gone? Why will you put God upon such work as this? Why cannot he have your hearts at a cheaper rate? If you could die, many of your Comforts, for ought I know, might live. Had *Joab* come to *Absalom* when he sent for him the first or second time, *Absalom* had never set his Field of Barley on fire, *2 Sam.* 14. 30. And were you more obedient to the Will of God in this matter, 'tis likely he would not consume your Health, and Estates, and Relations, with such heavy strokes as he hath done, and will yet farther do, except your Wills be more compliant.

Alas! to cut off your comforts one after another, and make you live a groaning life, the Lord hath no pleasure in it; but he had rather you should lose these things, than that he should lose your hearts on Earth, or company in Heaven: *Impatients agrotus crudelem facit Medicum.*

The Decree of Death cannot be reversed, nor is there any other ordinary passage for the Soul into Glory,

G g g g

Glory, but through the gates of Death. Heb. 9 27. It is appointed for all men once to die, but after that the Judgment.

There is but one way to pass out of the obscure suffocating Life in the Womb, into the more free and nobler Life in the World, viz. through the throes and agonies of Birth: And there is ordinarily but one way to pass from this sinning, groaning Life we live in this World, to the enjoyment of God and the Glory above, viz. through the agonies of Death. You must cast, as it were, your *Secundine* once again, I mean this vile Body, before you can be happy. Heaven cannot come down to you, you cannot see God and live, *Exod.* 33. 20. It would certainly confound and break you to pieces like an earthen Pitcher, should God but ray forth his Glory upon you in the state you now are; and it is sure you cannot expect the extraordinary favour of such a translation as *Enoch* had, *Heb.* 11. 5. or as those Believers shall have, that shall be found alive at Christ's coming, *1 Thess.* 4. 17. You must go the common road that all the Saints go; but tho' you cannot avoid, you may sweeten it. God will not reverse his Decree, but you may, and ought to arm your selves against the fears of it. *Ahazuerus* would not recal the Proclamation he had emitted against the *Jews*, but he gave them full liberty to take up arms to defend themselves against their Enemies. 'Tis much so here, the Sentence cannot be revoked; but yet he gives you leave, *you*, he commands you to arm your selves against Death, and defy it, and trample it under the feet of Faith.

When you find your hearts reluctant at the thoughts of leaving the Body, and the comforts of this World, then consider how willingly and cheerfully *Jesus Christ* left Heaven, and the Bosom of his Father, to come down to this World for your sakes. *Prov.* 8. 30. 31. *Psal.* 40. 7. *Lo, I come, &c.*

Compare the frames of your hearts with his in this point, and shame your selves out of so unbecoming a temper of Spirit.

(1.) He left Heaven, and all the Delights and Glory of it, to come down to this World to be abased and humbled to the lowest; you leave this World of sin and misery to ascend to Heaven, to be exalted to the highest. He came hither to be impoverished, you go thither to be enriched, *2 Cor.* 8. 9. yet he came willingly, and we go grudgingly.

(2.) He came from Heaven to Earth, to be made sin for us, *2 Cor.* 5. 21. we go from Earth to Heaven, to be fully and everlastingly delivered from sin; yet he came more willingly to bear our sins, than we go to be delivered from them.

(3.) He came to take a Body of Flesh, to suffer and die in, *Heb.* 2. 24. you leave your Bodies that you may never suffer in or by them any more.

(4.) As his Incarnation was a deep abasement, so his Death was the most bitter death that ever was tasted by any from the beginning, or ever shall be to the end of the World; and yet how obediently doth he submit to both at the Father's Call, *Luke.* 12. 50. I have a Baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Ah Christian, your Death cannot have the ten thousandth part of that

bitterness in it that Christ's had. I remember one of the Martyrs being asked, why his heart was so light at death? returned this answer, because Christ's heart was so heavy at his death. O there is a vast difference betwixt one and the other; the Wrath of God, and Curse of the Law were in his death, *Gal.* 3. 13. but there in neither Wrath nor Curse in your death who die in the Lord, *Rom.* 8. 1.

God forsook him when he hanged upon the Tree in the Agonies of death; *Matth.* 27. 46. My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? But you shall not be forsaken; He will make all your Bed in sickness, *Psal.* 41. 3. He will never leave you nor forsake you, *Heb.* 13. 5.

Yet he regretted not, but went as a Sheep or Lamb, *Isa.* 53. 7. O reason your selves out this Reluctancy at death, by this great Example and Pattern of Obedience.

Lastly, Let no Christian be afrighted at Death, *Arg. XII.* considering that the death of Christ is the death, of Death, and hath utterly disarmed it of all its destructive Power.

If you tremble when you look upon Death, yet you cannot but triumph when you look believably upon Christ.

For, (1.) Christ died (O Believer) for thy Sins, *Rom.* 4. 25. his Death was an expiatory Sacrifice for all thy Guilt, *Gal.* 3. 13. so that thou shalt not die in thy Sins: the Pangs of Death may, and must be on thy outward Man, but the guilt of Sin, and the Condemnation of God shall not be upon thy inner Man.

(2.) The Death of Christ in thy room hath utterly destroyed the power of Death, which once was in the hand of Satan, *Heb.* 2. 14. *Col.* 2. 14, 15. his Power was not authoritative, but executive: Not as the power of a King, but of a Sheriff; which is none at all when a Pardon is produced.

(3.) Christ hath assured us, that his Victory over Death shall be complete in our Persons. It is already a complete personal Victory, in respect of himself, *Rom.* 6. 9. he dieth no more, Death hath no more dominion over him. It's an incomplete Victory already as to our Persons. It can dissolve the Union of our Souls and Bodies, but the Union betwixt Christ and our Souls it can never dissolve, *Rom.* 8. 38, 39. and as for the power it still retains over our Dust, that also shall be destroyed at the Resurrection, *1 Cor.* 15. 25, 26. compared with *ver.* 54, 55, 56, 57. so that there is no cause for any Soul in Christ to tremble at the thoughts of a separation from the Body, but rather to embrace it as a privilege; *Death* is ours.

O that these Arguments might prevail! O that they might at last win the consent of our Hearts to go along with Death, which is the Messenger sent by God to bring us home to our Father's House.

But I doubt when all is said, we are where we were, all this suffices not to overcome the Regrets and Reluctancies of Nature; still the matter sticks in our minds, and we cannot conquer our disinclined Wills in this matter. What is the matter? Where lie the rubs and hindrances? O that God would remove them at last!

This is a common Plea with many, I am not ready and fit to die; were I ready, I should be willing to be gone.

(1.) How

Sol. (1.) How long soever you live in the Body, there will be somewhat still out of order, something still to do: for you must be in a state of imperfection while you remain here, and according to this Plea, you will never be willing to die. (2.) Your willingness to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, is one special part of your fitness for Death: and till you attain it in some good measure, you are not so fit to die as you should be. (3.) If you be in Christ, you have a fundamental fitness for Death, tho' you may want some circumstantial preparatives. And as to all that is wanting in your Sanctification or Obedience now, it will be completed in a moment upon your dissolution.

Obj. 2. Others plead, the desire they have to live, is in order to God's farther service by them in this world. Oh, say they, it was David's happiness to die, when he had served his generation according to the will of God, Acts 13. 36. If we had done so too, we should say with Simcon, Now testifi thou thy Servant depart in peace.

Sol. (1.) God needs not your hands to carry on his Service in the World: he can do it by other hands when you are gone. Many of greater gifts and graces than you are daily laid in the grave to teach you, God needs no man's help to carry on his Work.

(2.) If the Service of God be so dear to you, there is higher and more excellent Service for you in Heaven, than any you ever were, or can be employ'd in here on Earth. Oh! why don't you long to be amidst the thick of Angels and Spirits made perfect in the Temple-Service in Heaven?

Obj. 3. O but my Relations in the world lie near my heart, what will become of them when I am gone?

Sol. (1.) 'Tis pity they should lie nearer your hearts than Jesus Christ: If they do, you have little reason to desire Death indeed.

(2.) Who took care of you, when Death snatch'd your dear Relations from you, who possibly felt the same workings of heart that you now do? Did you not experience the truth of that word, *Psal. 27. 10. When Father and Mother forsake me, then the Lord taketh me up?* And if you be in the Covenant, God hath prevented this Plea with his Promise, *Jer. 49. 11. Leave thy fatherless Children to me, I will keep them alive; and let their Widows trust in me.*

Obj. 4. But I desire to live to see the felicity of Zion before I go hence, and the answer of the many Prayers I have sown for it; I am loth to leave the people of God in so sad a condition.

Sol. The publickness of thy Spirit, and love to Zion, is doubtless pleasing to God: but it is better for you to be in Heaven one day, than to live over again all the days you have lived on Earth in the best times that ever the Church of God enjoyed in this World: the Promises shall be accomplished, tho' you may not live to see their accomplishment; die you in the faith of it, as *Joseph did, Gen. 50. 24.*

But, alas! the matter doth not stick here: this is not the main hindrance. I will tell you where I think it lies: (1.) In the hesitancy and staggering of our Faith about the certainty and reality of things invisible. (2.) In some special guilt upon the Conscience, which appals us. (3.) In a negligent and careless course of life, which is not ordinarily blessed with much evidence or comfort. (4.) In the deep engage-

Vol. I.

ments of our hearts to earthly things: they could not be so cold to Christ, if they were not over-heated with other things. Till these distempers be cured, no Arguments can prosper that are spent to this end. The Lord dissolve all those Ties betwixt us and this World, which hinder our consent and willingness to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.

And now we have had a glance and glimmering light, a faint umbrage of the state of separated Souls of the Just in Heaven: it remains that I shew you somewhat of the state and case of the damned Souls in Hell. A dreadful Representation it is; but it is necessary we hear of Hell, that we may not feel it.

I P E T. iii. ver. 19.

Of which also he went and preached to the Spirits in Prison.

IN the former Discourse we have had a view of Heaven, and of the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, the Inhabitants of that blessed Region of Light and Glory.

In this Scripture we have the contrary glass representing the unspeakable misery of those Souls or Spirits which are separated by Death from their Bodies for a time, and by Sin from God for ever; arrested by the Law, and secured in the Prison of Hell, unto the Judgment of the great day.

A Sermon of Hell may keep some Souls out of Hell, and a Sermon of Heaven be the means to help others to Heaven. The desire of my heart is, that the Conversations of all those who shall read these Discourses of Heaven and Hell might look more like a diligent flight from the one, and pursuit of the other.

The scope of the Context is a persuasive to Patience, upon a Prospect of manifold Tribulations coming upon the Christian Churches, strongly enforced by Christ's Example, who both in his own Person, *ver. 18.* and by his Spirit in his Servants, *ver. 19.* exercised wonderful patience and long-suffering, as a pattern to his People.

This 19th Verse gives us an account of his long-suffering towards that disobedient and immorigerous generation of Sinners, on whom he waited an hundred and twenty years in the Ministry of Noah.

There are difficulties in the Text. *Esius* Locust reckons no less than ten Explications of it, and omnium fith it is a very difficult Scripture in the judgment of almost all Interpreters. But yet I must say those difficulties are rather brought to it, than found in it. It is a Text which hath been rack'd and tortur'd by Popish Expositors to make it speak Christ's local descent into Hell, and to confess their Doctrine of Purgatory; things which it knew not.

But if we will take its genuine sense, it only relates the sin and misery of those contumacious persons, on whom the Spirit of God waited so long in the Ministry of Noah, giving an account of,

1. Their Sin on Earth.

2. Their Punishment in Hell.

1. Their Sin on Earth, which is both specified

G g g g 2

fied and aggravated. (1.) *Specified*; namely their disobedience: they were sometimes disobedient and unperfuadable; neither Precepts nor Examples could bring them to repentance. (2.) This their disobedience is *aggravated* by the exence of God's patience upon them for the space of a hundred and twenty years, not only forbearing them so long, but striving with them, as *Moses* expresseth it; or waiting on them, as the Apostle here: but all to no purpose, they were obstinate, stubborn, and unperfuadable to the very last.

2. Behold therefore, in the next place, the dreadful, but most just and equal punishment of these Sinners in *Hell*; they are called *Spirits in Prison*, i. e. the Souls now in *Hell*.

At that time when *Peter* wrote of them, they were not entire Men, but *Spirits* in the proper sense, i. e. separated Souls, bodiless and lonely Souls: whilst in the Body, it is properly a Soul; but when separated, a Spirit, according to Scripture-language, and the strict Notion of such a Being.

These Spirits or Souls in the state of separation are said to be in a *Prison*, that is, in *Hell*, as the word elsewhere notes, *Rev. 20. 7.* and *Jude v. 6. comp.* Heaven and Hell are the only receptacles of departed or separated Souls.

Thus you have in a few words the natural and genuine sense of the place, and it is but a waste of time to repeat and retel the many false and forced Interpretations of this Text, which corrupt Minds and mercenary Pens have perplex'd and darkened it withal. That which I level at, is comprized in this plain Proposition,

That the Souls or Spirits of all men who die in a state of unbelief and disobedience, are immediately committed to the Prison of Hell, there to suffer the wrath of God due to their sins.

Hell is shadowed forth to us in Scripture by divers Metaphors; for we cannot conceive spiritual things, unless they be so clothed and shadowed out unto us.

Angustine gives this reason for the frequent use of Metaphors and Allegories in Scripture, because they are so much proportioned to our senses, with which our senses have contracted an intimacy and familiarity; and therefore God, to accommodate his Truth to our capacity, doth as it were this way embody it in earthly expressions, according to that celebrated observation of the *Cabalists*,

Lumen supremum nunquam descendit sine indumento: The pure and supreme light never descends to us without a garment or covering. In the Old Testament the place and state of damned Souls is set forth by Metaphors taken from the most remarkable places and exemplary acts of vengeance upon Sinners in this World; as the overthrow of the Giants by the Flood, those prodigious Sinners that fought against Heaven, and were swept by the Flood into the place of Torments. To this *Solomon* is conceived to allude in *Prov. 21. 16.* *The man that wanders out of the way of understanding, shall remain in the congregation of the dead*; in the *Heb.* it is, he shall remain with the *Rephaims*, or Giants. These Giants were the men that more especially provoked God to bring the Flood upon the World; they are also noted as the first Inhabitants of Hell, therefore from them the place of Torments takes its name, and the Damned are said to remain in the place of Giants.

Sometimes Hell is called *Tophet*, *Isa. 30. 33.*

This *Tophet* was in the Valley of *Hinnom*, and was famous for divers things. There the children of *Israel* caused their children to pass through the fire to *Moloch*, or sacrificed them to the Devil, drowning their horrible shrieks and ejulations with the noise of Drums.

In this Valley also was the memorable slaughter of eighteen hundred thousand of the *Affryan* Camp, by an Angel, in one night.

There also the *Babylonians* murdered the people of *Jerusalem* at the taking of the City, *Jer. 7. 31, 32.* So that *Tophet* was a meer shambles, the publick chopping block on which the limbs both of young and old were quartered out by thousands; it was filled with dead bodies till there was no place for burial. By all which it appears that no spot of ground in the World was so famous for the fires kindled in it to destroy men, for the doleful cries that echo'd from it, or the innumerable multitudes that perished in it; for which reason it is made the Emblem of Hell. Sometimes it is called a *Lake of fire burning with brimstone*, *Rev. 19. 20.* denoting the most exquisite torment by an intense of fire, and durable flame.

And in the Text it is called a *Prison*, where the Spirits of ungodly men are both detained and punished. This Notion of a Prison gives us a lively representation of the miserable state of damned Souls, and that especially in the following particulars.

First, Prisoners are arrested and seized by Authority of Law; 'tis the Law which sends them thither, and keeps them there; the *Mittimus* of a Justice is but the Instrument of the Law, whereby they are deprived of liberty, and taken into custody. The Law of God which Sinners have both violated and despised, at death takes hold of them and arrests them. 'Tis the Law which claps up their Spirits in Prison, and in the Name and Authority of the great and terrible God commits them to Hell. All that are out of Christ are under the curse and damning sentence of the Law, which now comes to be executed on them, *Gal. 3. 10.*

Secondly, Prisoners are carried or haled to Prison by force and constraint. Natural force backs legal Authority. The Law is executed by rough and resolute Bailiffs, who compel them to go, tho' never so much against their will. This also is the case of the Wicked at death. Satan is God's Bailiff to hurry away the Law-condemned Souls to the infernal Prison. The Devil hath the power of Death, *Heb. 2. 14.* as the Executioner hath of the Body of a condemned Man.

Thirdly, Prisoners are chained and bolted in Prison to prevent their escape; so are damned Spirits secured by the Power of God, and chained by their own guilty and trembling consciences in Hell unto the time of Judgment and the fulness of misery; not that they have no torment in the mean time; alas! were there no more but that fearful expectation of wrath and fiery indignation, spoken of by the Apostle *Heb. 10. 27.* it were an inexpressible torment; but there is a farther degree of torment to be awarded them at the Judgment of the great day, to which they are therefore kept as in Chains and Prisons.

Fourthly, Prisons are dark and noisom places, not built for pleasure, as other houses are,

Hell called the place of Giants, and why.

Hell called Tophet, and why.

Hell called Lake of fire, and why.

are, but for punishment; so is Hell, Jude v. 6. *Reserved in everlasting Chains under darkness*, as he there describes the place of torments, yea utter darkness, Mar. 8. 12. extreme or perfect darkness. *Philosophers* tell us of the darkness of this World, *non dantur pure tenebrae*, that there is no pure or perfect darkness here without some mixture of light; but there is not a glade of light, not a spark of hope or comfort shining into that Prison.

Fifthly, Mournful sighs and groans are heard in Prisons, *Psal. 97. 11. Let the sighing of the Prisoners come before thee*, saith the *Psalmist*. But deeper sighs and emphatical groans are heard in Hell, *There shall be weeping and mauling and gnashing of teeth*, Mat. 8. 12. Those that could not groan under the sense of sin on Earth, shall howl under anguish and desperation in Hell.

Sixthly, There is a time when Prisoners are brought out of the Prison to be judged, and then return in a worse condition than before to the place from whence they came. God also hath appointed a day for the solemn condemnation of those Spirits in Prison. The Scriptures call it the Judgment of the great day, Jude v. 6. from the great business that is to be done therein, and the great and solemn Assembly that shall then appear before God.

But I will insist no longer upon the display of the *Metaphor*. My business is to give you a representation of the state and condition of damned Souls in Hell, and to assit your conceptions of them and of their state.

'Tis a dreadful sight I am to give you this day; but how much better is it to see than to feel that Wrath? the treasures thereof shall shortly be broken up, and poured forth upon Spirits of Men.

You had in the former Discourse a faint umbrage of the Spirits of just men in Glory; in this you will have an imperfect representation of the Spirits of wicked men in Hell: and look as the former cannot be adequate and perfect, because that happiness passeth our knowledge; so neither can this be so, because the misery of the damned passeth our fear.

The case and state of a damned Spirit will be best opened in these following Propositions.

Prop. 1. *That the guilt of all Sin gathers to and settles in the Conscience of every Christless Sinner and makes up a vast treasure of guilt in the course of his life in this World.*

The high and awful power of Conscience belonging to the understanding Faculty in the Soul of Man, was spoken to before as to its general Nature, Pag. 19. And that Conscience certainly accompanies it, and is inseparable from it, was there shewed. I am here to consider it as the seat or center of guilt in all unregenerate and lost Souls. For look as the tides wash up, and leave the slime and filth upon the shore, even so all the corruption and sin that is in the other faculties of the Soul settles upon the Conscience. *Their mind and Conscience* (saith the Apostle) *is defiled*, Tit. 1. 15. it is as it were the sink of a sinner's Soul into which all filth runs, and guilt settles.

The Conscience of every Believer is purged from its filthiness by the Blood of Christ, Heb. 9. 14. his Blood and his Spirit purify it and pacify it, whereby it becomes the region of Light and Peace; but all the guilt which hath been long contracting through the life of an

Unbeliever, fixes it self deep and fast in his Conscience; *It is written upon the Tables of their hearts as with a Pen of Iron*, Jer. 17. 1. (i.e.) Guilt is as a mark or character fashioned or engraven in the very substance of the Soul, as Letters are cut into Glass with a Diamond.

Conscience is not only the principal *Engage* obliged unto God as a Judge, but the principal *Director* and *Guide* of the Soul in its courses and actions, and consequently the guilt of all sin falls upon it, and rests in it. The Soul is both the spring and fountain of all actions, that go outward from Man, and the term or receptacle of all actions inward; but in both sorts of actions, going outward and coming inward, Conscience is the chief *Counsellor*, *Guide* and *Director* in all, and so the guilt which is contracted either way, must be upon its head. 'Tis the bridle of the Soul to restrain it from sin, the eye of the Soul to direct its course; and therefore is principally chargeable with all the evils of Life. Bodily members are but instruments, and the Will it self, as high and noble a faculty or power as it is, moveth not, until the Judgment cometh to a conclusion, and the debate be ended in the mind.

Now in the whole course and compass of a Sinner's Life in this World, what treasures of guilt must needs be lodged in his Conscience? What a *Magazine* of sin and filth must be laid up there? 'Tis said of a wicked Man, Job 20.

11. *His Bones are full of the sins of his youth*; meaning his Spirit, Mind or Conscience is as full of Sin, as Bones are of Marrow; yea, the very sins of his youth are enough to fill them: and, Rom. 2. 5. they are said to *treasure up wrath against the day of wrath* which is only done by *treasuring up guilt*; for Wrath and Guilt are treasured up together in proportion to each other. Every day of his life vast sums have been cast into this Treasury, and the patience of God waiteth till it be full, before he call the sinner to an account and reckoning. Gen. 15. 16.

All the sin and guilt contracted upon the Souls and Conscience of impenitent Men in this World, Prop. 2. *accompanies and follows their departed Souls to Judgment, and there brings them under the dreadful condemnation of the great and terrible God which cutteth off all their hopes and comforts for ever.*

If you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sins, John. 8. 24. & Job 20. 11. *His bones are full of the sins of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust.* No Proposition lies clearer in Scripture or should lie with greater weight on the hearts of sinners: nothing but pardon can remove guilt; but without faith and Repentance there never was nor shall be a pardon, Acts 10. 43. Rom. 3. 24, 25. Luke 24. 46, 47. Look as the Graces of Believers, so the sins of Unbelievers follow the Soul whithersoever it goes. All their sins who die out of Christ, cry to them when they go hence, *We are thy Works, and we will follow thee*. The acts of sin are transient, but the guilt and effects of it are permanent; and it is evident by this, that in the great Day their Consciences, which are the Books of Record wherein all their sins are registered, will be opened, and they shall be judged by them, and out of them, Rev. 20. 12.

Now before that general Judgment, every Soul comes to its particular Judgment, and that immediately after death: of this I apprehend the

the Apostle to speak in *Heb. 9. 27.* *It is appointed for all men once to die, but after that the Judgment.* The Soul is presently stated by this Judgment in its everlasting and fixed condition. The Soul of a wicked Man appearing before God in all its sin and guilt, and by him sentenced, immediately it gives up all its hope, *Prov. 11. 7.* *When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth.* His strong hope perisheth, as some read it, (*i. e.*) his strong delusion: for, alas! he took his own shadow for a Bridge over the great Waters, and is unexpectedly plunged into the gulph of eternal misery, as *Mat. 7. 22.*

This perishing or cutting off of hope, is that which is called in Scripture the death of the Soul, for so long the Soul will live as it hath any hope. The deferring of hope makes it sick, but the final cutting off of hope strikes it quite dead, (*i. e.*) dead as to all joy, comfort, or expectation of any for ever, which is that death which an immortal Soul is capable to suffer: the Righteous hath hope in his death, but every unregenerate man in the World breathes out his last hope in a few moments after his last breath, which strikes terror into the very center of the Soul, and is a death-wound to it.

Prop. 3. *The Souls of the damned are exceeding large and capacious subjects of wrath and torment; and in their separate state their capacity is greatly enlarged, both by laying asleep all those Affections whose exercise is relieving, and thoroughly awakening all those Passions which are tormenting.*

The Soul of Man being by nature a Spirit, an intelligent Spirit, and in its substantial faculties assimilated to God, whose Image it bears; it must for that reason be exquisitely sensible of all the impressions and touches of the wrath of God upon it. The Spirit of Man is a most tender, sensible and apprehensive Creature: the Eye of the Body is not so sensible of a touch, a Nerve of the Body is not so sensible when pricked, as the Spirit of Man is of the least touch of God's indignation upon it. *A wounded Spirit who can bear?* *Prov. 18. 14.* Other external wounds upon the Body, inflicted either by Man or God, are tolerable; but that which immediately touches the Spirit of Man is insufferable, who can bear or endure it?

And as the Spirit of Man hath the most delicate and exquisite sense of misery; so it hath a vast capacity to receive and let in the fulness of anguish and misery into it; it is a large Vessel, called, *Rom. 9. 22.* *a Vessel of wrath fitted to destruction.* The large capacity of the Soul is seen in this, that it is not in the power of all the Creatures in the World to satisfy and fill it: It can drink up (as one speaks) all the Rivers of created good, and its thirst not quenched by such a draught; but after all, it cries, Give, give. Nothing but an infinite God can quiet and satisfy its appetite and raging thirst.

And as it is capable and receptive of more good than is found in all the Creatures, so it is capable of more misery and anguish than all the Creatures can inflict upon it. Let all the Elements or Men on Earth, yea, all the Devils and damned in Hell, conspire and unite in a design to torment Man; yet when they have done all, his Spirit is capable of a farther degree of torment; a torment as much beyond it, as a Rack is beyond a hard Bed, or the Sword

in his Bowels is beyond the scratch of a Pin. The Devils indeed are the Executioners and Tormentors of the damned; but if that were all they were capable to suffer, the torments of the damned would be comparatively mild and gentle to what they are. Oh the largeness of the Understanding of Man! what will it not take into its vast capacity!

But add to this, that damned Souls have all those Affections laid in a deep and everlasting sleep, the exercise whereof would be relieving, by emptying their Souls of any part of their misery; and all those Passions thoroughly and everlastingly awakened, which increase their torments.

The Affections of joy, delight and hope, are all benumbed in them, and laid fast asleep, never to be awakened into act any more. Their hope in Scripture is said to *perish*, (*i. e.*) it so perisheth, that after Death it shall never exert another Act to all Eternity. The activity of any of these Affections would be like a cooling gale or refreshing spring amidst their torments; but, as *Adrian* lamented himself, *numquam jocodabis*, thou shalt never be merry more.

And as these Affections are laid asleep, so their Passions are roused and thoroughly awakened to torment them; so awakened, as never to sleep any more. The Souls of men are sometimes jogg'd and startl'd in this World, by the words or rods of God, but presently they sleep again, and forget all: but hereafter the eyes of their Souls will be continually held waking to behold and consider their misery; their Understandings will be clear and most apprehensive; their thoughts fixed and determined; their consciences active and efficacious; and by all this their capacity to take in the fulness of their misery enlarged to the uttermost.

The wrath, indignation, and revenge of God poured out as the just reward of sin upon the so capacious Souls of the damned, is the principal part of their misery in Hell. **Prop. 4.**

In the third Proposition I shew'd you that the Souls of the damned can hold more misery than all the creatures can inflict upon them. When the Soul suffers from the hand of Man, its sufferings are but either by way of sympathy with the Body; or if immediately, yet it is but a light stroke the hand of a creature can give: But when it has to do with a sin-revenging God, and that immediately, this stroke cuts off the Spirit of Man, as 'tis express'd *Psal. 88. 16.* The Body is the cloathing of the Soul. Most of the Arrows shot at the Soul in this World do but stick in the cloaths, (*i. e.*) reach the outward man: but in Hell, the Spirit of Man is the white at which God himself shoots. All his envenomed Arrows strike the Soul, which is after death laid bare and naked to be wounded by his hand. At death, the Soul of every wicked man immediately falls into the hands of the living God, and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, as the Apostle speaks, *Heb. 10. 31.* Their punishment is from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. *2 Thess. 1. 9.* They are not put over to their fellow-creatures to be punished, but God will do it himself, and glorify his Power as well as Justice in their punishment. The wrath of God lies immediately upon their Spirits, and this is the fiery indignation which devour-
eth

eth the adversaries, Heb. 10. 27. A fire that licks up the very Spirit of Man. Who knoweth the power of his anger? *Psal.* 90. 11. How insupportable it is you may a little guess by that expression of the Prophet *Nahum*, ch. 1. 5, 6. *The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence, yea, the World and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.*

And as if anger and wrath were not words of a sufficient edg and sharpness, it's called *fiery indignation and vengeance*, words denoting the most intense degree of divine wrath. For indeed his power is to be glorified in the destruction of his enemies, and therefore now he will do it to purpose. He takes them now into his own hands. No creature can come at the Soul immediately, that is God's prerogative, and now he hath to do with it himself in fury and revenges poured out. Can thy hands be strong, or thy heart endure when I shall deal with thee? *Ezek.* 22. 14. *Alas, the spirit quails and dies under it. This is the Hell of Hells.*

What doleful cries and laments have we heard from God's dearest children, when but some few drops of his anger have been sprinkled upon their Souls here in this world! alas, there is no compare betwixt the anger, or fatherly discipline of God over the Spirits of his children, and the indignation poured out from the beginning of revenges upon his enemies

rop. 5. *The separate Spirit of a damned Man becomes a tormentor to it self by the various and efficacious workings of its own Conscience, which are a special part of its torment in the other World.*

Conscience, which should have been the sinner's curb on Earth, becomes the Whip that must lash his Soul in Hell. Neither is there any faculty or power belonging to the Soul of man so fit and able to do it as his own Conscience. That which was the seat and center of all guilt, now becomes the seat and center of all torments. The suspension of its tormenting power in this World is a mystery and wonder to all that duly consider it. For certainly should the Lord let a sinner's Conscience fly upon him with rage in the midst of his sins and pleasures, it would put him into a Hell upon Earth, as we see in the doleful instances of *Judas, Spira, &c.* but he keeps a hand of restraint upon them generally in this life, and suffers them to sleep quietly by a grumbling or feared Conscience, which couches by them as a sleepy *Lion*, and lets them alone.

But no sooner is the Christless Soul turn'd out of the Body, and cast for eternity at the bar of God, but Conscience is rouzed, and put into a rage never to be appeased any more. It now racks and tortures the miserable Soul with its utmost efficacy and activity. The mere prefaces and forebodings of wrath by the Consciences of sinners in this World, have made them lie with a ghastly paleness in their faces, a universal trembling in all their members, a cold sweating horror upon their panting bosoms, like men already in Hell: but this, all this but as the sweating or giving of the stones before the great rain falls. The activities of Conscience (especially in Hell) are various, vigorous, and dreadful to consider, such are its recognitions, accusations, condemnations,

upbraidings, shamings, and fearful expectations.

1. The Consciences of the Damned will recognize, and bring back the sins committed in this World fresh to their mind: for what is Conscience, but a Register, or Book of Records wherein every sin is rank'd in its proper place and order? This act of Conscience is fundamental to all its other acts; for it cannot accuse, condemn, upbraid, or shame us for that it hath lost out of its memory, and hath no sense of. *San remember*, said *Abraham* to *Dives* in the midst of his torments. This remembrance of sins past, mercies past, opportunities past, but especially of hope past and gone with them, never to be recovered any more, is like that fire not blown (of which *Zeph.* speaks) which consumes him, or the glittering Sword coming out of his Gail; *Job* 20. 24, &c.

2. It chargeth and accuseth the damned Soul, and its charges are home, positive, and self-evident charges: a thousand legal and unexceptionable Witnesses cannot confirm any point more than one Witness in a man's bosom can do, *Rom.* 2. 15. it convicts and stops their mouths, leaving them without any excuse or Apology. Just and righteous are the Judgments of God upon thee, saith Conscience: in all this Ocean of misery, there is not one drop of injury or wrong: the Judgment of God is according unto truth.

3. It condemns as well as chargeth and witnesseth, and that with a dreadful Sentence; backing and approving the Sentence and Judgment of God, *1 John* 3. 21. every self-destroyer will be a self-condemner: This is a prime part of their misery.

Juven.
Sat. 13.

Prima est hec ultio, quod se

Judice nemo nocens absolvitur, improba quamvis Gratia fallaciis Prætoris vicerit urnam.

4. The upbraidings of Conscience in Hell are terrible and insufferable things: to be continually hit in the teeth and twitted with our madness, wilfulness, and obstinacy, as the cause of all that eternal misery which we have pull'd down upon our own heads, what is it but the rubbing of the wound with Salt and Vinegar? Of this torment holy *Job* was afraid, and therefore resolv'd what in him lay to prevent it, when he saith *Job* 27. 6. *My heart (i. e. Conscience) shall not reproach me so long as I live* O the twits and taunts of Conscience are cruel cuts and lashes to the Soul!

5. The shamings of Conscience are unsufferable torments. Shame ariseth from the turpitude of discovered actions. If some mens secret filthiness were but published in this World, it would confound them; what then will it be, when all shall lie open, as it will after this life, and their own Consciences shall cast the shame of all upon them? They shall not only be derided by God; *Prov.* 1. 26. but by their own Consciences also.

Lastly, The fearful expectations of Conscience still looking forward into more and more wrath to come, this is the very sum and complement of their misery. What makes a Prison so dreadful to a Malefactor, but the trembling expectations he there lives under of the approaching Assizes? Much after the same rate, or rather after the rate of condemned persons preparing for Execution, do these Spirits in Prison live in the other World. I ut alas no instance or similitude can reach home to their case

That

Prop. 6. *That which makes the torments and terrors of the damned Spirits so extreme and terrible, is, that they are unrelievable miseries, and torments for ever.*

They are not capable either of,

1. A partial relief by any mitigation, or
2. A complete relief by a final cessation.

1. Not of a partial relief by any mitigation: could they but divert their thoughts from their misery, as they were wont to do in *this world*, drink and forget their sorrows; or had they but any hope of the abatement of their misery, it would be a relief to them: But both these are impossible. Their thoughts are fixed and determined: to remove them (tho' but for a moment) from their misery, is as impossible as to remove a Mountain: their sin and misery is ever before them. As the Blessed in Heaven are *bono confirmati*, so fixed and settled in blessedness, that they are not diverted one moment from beholding the blessed face of God, for they are ever with the Lord: so the Damned in Hell are *malo obfirmati*, so settled and fixed in the midst of all evil, that their thoughts and miseries are inseparable for ever.

2. Much less can their undone state admit the least hope of relief by a final cessation of their misery. All hope perisheth from them, and the perishing of their hope is the plainest proof that can be given of the eternity of their misery. For were there but the remotest possibility of deliverance at last, hope would hang upon that possibility: and whilst hope lives, the Soul is not quite dead; the death of hope is the death of a man's Spirit: the cutting off of the Soul from God, and the last act of hope to see or enjoy him for ever, is that death which an immortal Soul is capable of suffering. *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire*, is that sentence which strikes Hope and Soul dead for ever. In these six Propositions you have the true and terrible representation of the *Spirits in Prison*, or the state of damned Souls. I have not mentioned their association with Devils, or the dismal place of their confinement, which tho' they complete their misery, yet are not the principal parts of it, but rather Accessories to it, or Rivers running into the Ocean of their misery. The sum of their misery lies in what was opened before, and the improvement of it is in that which followeth.

Infer. 1. Is this the state of ungodly Souls after death?

Then it follows, that *neither Death nor Annihilation are the worst of evils incident to Man*. Aristotle calls Death *the most terrible of all terribles*, and the Schoolmen affirm *Annihilation* to be a greater evil than the most miserable Being: But it is neither so nor so; the wrath of God, the worm of Conscience, are much more bitter than Death. The pains of Death are natural and bodily pains; the wrath of God and anguish of Conscience are spiritual and inward: that is but the pain of a few hours or days, these are the unrelieved torments of Eternity.

And as for *Annihilation*, what a favour would the damned account it! Indeed if we respect the Glory of God's Justice, which is exemplified and illustrated in the ruin of these miserable Souls, it is better they should abide as the eternal Monuments thereof, than not to be at all; but with respect to themselves we may say, as Christ doth of the Son of Perdition, *Mat. 26.*

24. *Good had it been for them if they had never been born.* For a Man's Soul to be of no other use than a Vessel of Wrath, to receive the indignation, and be filled with the fury of God; surely an untimely Birth, that never was animated with a reasonable Soul, is better than they: for, alas! they seek for Death, but it flies from them. The Immortality of their Souls, which was their dignity and privilege above other Creatures, is now their misery, and that which continually feeds and perpetuates their flame. Here is a Being without the comfort of it, a Being only to howl and tremble under Divine Wrath; a Being therefore which they would gladly exchange with the contemptiblest Fly, or most loathsome Toad, but it cannot be exchanged or annihilated.

Hence it follows, *that the Pleasures of Sin are Infer. II. dear-bought and costly Pleasures.* There is a greater disproportion betwixt that Pleasure and this Wrath, than betwixt a drop of Honey and a Sea of Gall. Could a man distill all the imaginary pleasure of sin, and drink nothing else but the highest and most refined delights of it all his life, tho' his life should be protracted to the term of *Methuselah's*; yet one day or night under the Wrath of God would make it a dear bargain. But,

1. 'Tis certain Sin hath no such Pleasures to give you: they are embitter'd either by adverse strokes of Providence from without, or painful and dreadful gripes and twinges of Conscience within; *Job. 20. 14. His meat in his Bowels is turned, it is the gall of Asps within him.*

2. 'Tis as certain, the time of a sinner is near its period when he is at the height of his pleasure in sin: for look, as high delights in God speak the maturity of a Soul for Heaven, and it will not be long before such be in Heaven; so thy heights of delight in sin, answerably speak the maturity of such a Soul for Hell, and it will not be long e'er it be there. Sin is now a big *Embryo*, and speedily the Soul travels with Death.

3. According to the measure of delights Men have had in sin, will be the degrees and measures of their Torments in Hell, *Rev. 18. 7.* so much torment and sorrow as there was delight and pleasure in Sin.

4. To conclude, *The Pleasures of Sin are but for a season*, as you read, *Heb. 11. 25.* but the Wrath of God in Hell is for ever and ever. There is a time when the pleasures of sin cannot be called *Pleasures to come*, but the Wrath of God that will still be *Wrath to come*. Oh! consider for what a trifle you sell your Souls. When *Lyfsmachus* parted with his Kingdom for a draught of Water, he said when he had drank it, *For how short a pleasure have I sold a Kingdom!* And *Jonathan* lamented, *1 Sam. 14. 43. I tasted but a little Honey, and I must die.* Satan would not charm so powerfully as he doth with the pleasures of Sin, if this point were well believed and heartily applied.

What a matchless madness is it to cast the Soul Infer. III. into God's Prison, to save the Body out of Man's Prison!

Men have their Prisons, and God hath his: but because the one is an Object of Sense, and the other an Object of Faith, that only is feared, and this slighted all over this unbelieving World;

World; except by a very small number of men who tremble at the Word of God. Now this I lay is the height of madness, and will appear to be so in a just Collation of both in a few particulars. (1.) Man's Prison restrains the Body only, God's Prison Soul and Body, *Mat. 10. 28.* The Spirits of Men (as my Text speaks) are the Prisoners there. Oh what a vast odds doth this single difference make! A thousand times more than the captivating and binding of the greatest King or Emperour differs from the imprisonment of a poor Mechanic or vagrant Beggar. (2.) In Man's Prison there are many comforts & unpeakable refreshments from Heaven, but in God's Prison none, but the direct contrary. You read of the Apostles, *Acts 16. 25.* how they sang in the Prison: the Spirit of God made them a Banquet of heavenly Joys, and they could not but sing at it: tho' their Feet were in the Stocks, their Spirits were never more at liberty. *Agur*us dated his Letters from the delectable Orchard of the Leonine Prison; where, saith he, flows the sweetest Nectar. Another tells us, Christ was always kind to him; but since he became a Prisoner for him, he even overcame himself in kindness. I verily think (saith he) the Chains of my Lord are all overlaid with pure Gold, and his Cross perfumed. But the worst terrors of the Prisoners in Hell come from the presence of the Lord, *2 Thes. 1. 9. God is a terror to them.* (3.) The cause for which a man is cast into Prison by Men, may be his Duty, and so his Conscience must beat least quiet, if not joyful in such sufferings. So was it with *Paul*, *Acts 28. 10.* For the hope of Israel am I bound with this Chain: This diffuses Joy and Peace through the Conscience into the whole Man. But the cause for which men are cast into God's Prison, is their sin and guilt, which arms their own Consciences against them, and makes them, as you heard before, self-tormentors, terrors to themselves. What odds is here! (4.) In Man's Prison the most excellent Company and sweet Society may be found. *Paul* and *Silas* were fellow-prisoners. In Queen *Mary's* days the most excellent Company to be found in England was in the Prisons: Prisons were turned into Churches. But in God's Prison no better Society is to be found than that of Devils and damned Reprobates, *Mat. 25. 41.* (5.) In Man's Prison there is hope of a comfortable deliverance; but in God's Prison none: *Mat. 5. 26. Thou shalt not come out thence, till thou hast paid the last Mite.* 'Tis an everlasting Prison.

Compare these few obvious particulars, and judge then what is to be thought of that man, who stands readier to cast himself into any guilt, than into the least suffering. What is it but as if a man should offer his Neck to the Sword, to save his Hand? The Lord convince us what trifles our Estates, Liberties, and Lives are to our Souls, or to the peace and purity of our Consciences.

Inse. IV. What an invaluable mercy is the pardon of sin, which sets the Soul out of danger of going into this Prison! When the Debt is satisfied, a Man may walk as boldly before the Prison-door as he doth before his own: they that owe nothing, fear no Bailiffs. 'Tis the Law (as I said before) that commits men to Prison, a *Mitimus* is but an instrument of Law; but the righteousness of

the Law is fulfilled in them that believe, *Rom. 8. 4.* Yea, they are made the righteousness of God in him, *2 Cor. 5. 21.* There can be no process of Law against them. For who shall condemn when it is God that justifieth? *Rom. 8. 33, 34.* And that Divine Justice might be no bar to our Faith and Comfort, he adds, *It is Christ that died;* and yet farther, to assure us that his Death hath made plenary satisfaction to God for all our sins and debts, it is added, *yea, rather, that is risen again: q. d.* If the debts of Believers to God were not fully paid and satisfied for by the Blood of Christ, how comes it to pass that our Surety is discharged, as by his Resurrection he appears to be? Oh Believer! thy Bonds are cancell'd, the hand-writing that was against thee is nailed to the Cross, the Blood of Christ hath done that for thee that all the Gold and Silver in the World could not do, *1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.* It is a counter-price fully answering to thy Debts, *Mat. 20. 28.* And hence, to the eternal joy of thy heart, result three properties of thy Pardon, which are able to make thine eyes gush out with tears of Joy whilst thou art reading of it.

1. It is a free Pardon to thy Soul; tho' it cost Christ dear, it costs Thee nothing. We have Redemption, even the remission of sins, according to the riches of his grace, *Eph. 1. 7.* The Promise of it was God's, not thine; the Price for it was Christ's Blood, not thine: the glory and riches of free Grace are illustriously displayed in thy forgiveness.

2. It is as full as it is free; a complete and perfect Cause produceth a complete and perfect Effect, *Acts 13. 39. Justified from all things.* Whatever thy sins be for nature, number, or circumstances of aggravations, they cannot exceed the value of the meritorious Cause of Remission. The Blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

3. It must be as firm as it is free and full, even an irrevocable Pardon for evermore. Christ did not shed his Blood at a hazard; the way of Justification by Faith, makes the promise sure, *Rom. 4. 16.* The Justified shall never come again under Condemnation. Oh the unspeakable Joy that flows from this Spring! Oh the triumphs of Faith upon this Foundation!

Is it not ravishing, melting, overwhelming, and amazing, to think thus with thy self? Here sit I with a joyful plenary free Pardon of sin in my hand, whilst many who never sinned to that height and degree I have, lie groaning, howling, sweating, and trembling under the indignation of God, poured out like fire upon their Souls in Hell. A greater sinner saved, and lesser damned. Oh how unspeakably sweet is that Rest into which my terrified and disquieted Soul is come by Faith! *Rom. 5. 1. Heb. 4. 3. We which have believed, do enter into Rest.* Oh blessed Calm after a dreadful Tempest! This poor breast of mine was lately panting, sweating, trembling under the horrors of Wrath to come, terrified with the Visions of Hell. No other sound was in mine ears, but that of fiery Indignation to devour the Adversaries. Oh what price can be put upon my *quies est!* What value upon a Pardon, delivered as it were at the Ladders foot! Oh precious hand of Faith that receives it! But oh the most precious

H h h h

cious

precious Blood of Christ which purchased it ! If Satan now come with his *Accusations*, the Law with its *Comminations*, Death with its dreadful Summons, I have in a readiness to answer them all.

Here is the Law, the Wrath of God, and everlasting burnings, the just demerit of Sin upon one side, and a poor sinful Creature on the other : but the Covenant of Grace hath solv'd all. An *Act of Oblivion* is past in Heaven, *I will forgive their iniquities, and their sins and transgressions will I remember no more.* In this *Act of Grace* my Soul is included ; I am in Christ, and there is no Condemnation. Die I must, but damned I shall not be : My Debts are paid, my Bonds are cancelled, my Conscience is quieted ; let Death do its worst, it shall do me no harm ; that Blood which satisfies God, may well satisfy me.

Inf. 5. *How amazingly sad and deplorable is the security and stiness of the Consciences of Sinners under all their own guilts, and the immediate danger of God's everlasting Wrath !*

Philosophers observe that before an Earthquake the Wind lies, and the weather is exceeding calm and still, not a breath of wind going. So it is in the Consciences of many just before the tempest and storm of God's Wrath pours down upon them. What a golden morning open'd upon *Sodom*, and began that fatal day ! Little did they imagine showers of Fire had been ready to fall from so pleasant and serene a Sky as they saw over their heads. How secure, still, and unconcerned are those to day, who it may be shall rage, roar, and tremble in Hell to-morrow ! *Cesar* hearing of a Citizen of *Rome* who was deep in debt, and yet slept soundly, would needs have his Pillow, as supposing there was some strange charming Virtue in it.

It is wonderful to consider what shift Men make to keep their Consciences in that stiness and quiet they do, under such loads of Guilt and threatnings of Wrath ready to be executed upon them. It must be some strong *Opium* that so stupifies and benums their Consciences ; and upon inquiry into the matter we shall find it to be the effect of,

1. A strong delusion of Satan.
2. A spiritual judicial stroke of God.

1. This stiness of Conscience upon the brink of Damnation proceeds from the strong delusions of Satan ; blinding their eyes, and feeding their false hopes : he removes the evil day at many years imaginary distance from them, and interposeth many a fair day betwixt them and it, and in that interposed season, time enough to prepare for it ; without such an artifice as this, his house would be in an uproar, but this keeps all in peace, *Luke 11. 21.* By presuming he feeds their hopes, and by their hopes destroys their Souls. Some he diverts from all serious thoughts of this day, by the pleasures, and others by the cares of this Life : and so that day cometh upon them unawares, *Luke 21.*

34

2. This stiness of Conscience in so miserable and dangerous a state, is the effect of a spiritual, judicial stroke of God upon the Children of Wrath. That's a dreadful word, *Iſa. 6. 10.* *Make the heart of this People fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes :* The Eye and

Ear are the two principal doors or inlets to the Heart ; when these are shut, the Heart must needs be insensible, as the fat of the Body is. There is a Spirit of a deep sleep poured out judicially upon some Men, *Iſa. 29. 10.* such as that upon *Adam* when God took a Rib from his side, and he felt it not : but this is upon the Soul, and is the same as to give up a Man to a reprobate sense.

The case of distressed Consciences upon Earth, is exceeding sad, and calls upon all for the tenderest pity, and utmost help from Men.

You see the labourings of Conscience under the sense of Guilt and Wrath, is a special part of the Torments of Hell ; of which there is not a livelier Emblem or Picture, than the distresses of Conscience in this World.

It must be thankfully confessed there are two great differences betwixt the terrors of Conscience here, and there : One in the degrees of anguish, the other in the reliefs of that anguish. The ordinary distresses of Conscience here, compared with those of the Damned, are as the flame of a Candle to a fiery Oven, a mild and gentle fire ; or as the Sparks that fly out of the top of a Chimney, to the dreadful eruptions of *Vesuvius*, or Mount *Atna*. Besides, these are capable of relief, but those are unrelievable : their Hearts die, because their hope is perished from the Lord.

But yet of all the miseries and distresses incident to Men in this World, none like those of distressed Consciences ; the terrors of God set themselves in array, or are drawn up in *Battalia* against the Soul, *Job 6. 4.* *Whilst I suffer thy terrors (saith Heman) I am distracted,* *Psal. 88. 15.* Yea, they not only distract, but cut off the Spirit, as he adds, *ver. 16.* They lick up the very Spirit of a Man, and none can bear them, *Prov. 18. 14.* for now a Man hath to do immediately with God ; yea, with the Wrath of the great and dreadful God : and this Wrath which is the most acute and sharp of all torments, falls upon the most tender and sensible part, the Spirit and Mind, which now lies open and naked before him to be wounded by it. No Creature can administer the least relief, by the application of any temporal comfort or refreshment to it. Gold and Silver, Wife and Children, Meat and Melody, signify no more than the drawing off a silk Stocking to cure the *Paroxysms* of the Gout.

All that can be done for their relief, is by seasonable, judicious and tender Applications of spiritual Remedies ; and what can be done, ought to be done for them. What heart can hear a voice like that of *Job*, *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my Friends ; for the hand of God hath touched me ;* and not melt into Compassions over them ? Is there a word of Wisdom in thy heart ? let thy Tongue apply it to the relief of thy distressed Brother : whilst his heart meditates *tear your*, let thine meditate his *succour*. It is not impossible but thou who lendest a friendly hand to another, mayest e're long need one thy self ; and he that hath ever felt the terrors of the Almighty upon his Soul, hath motive enough to draw forth the bowels of his pity to another in the like case.

Alas for poor distressed Souls, who have either none about them that understand, and are

Præsumptio-
mendose-
rent, &
perando
pericunt.

are able and willing to speak a word in season to their weary Souls, or too many about them to exasperate their Sorrows, and persecute them whom God hath smitten. You that have both ability and opportunity for it, are under the strongest engagements in the world to endeavour their relief with all faithfulness, seriousness, compassion, and constancy. Did Christ shed his Blood for the saving of Souls, and wilt not thou spend thy Breath for them? Shall any man that hath found Mercy from God, shew none to his brother? God forbid. A Soul in Hell is out of your reach, but these that are in the Suburbs of Hell are not: the Candle of intense sorrow is put to the Thred of their miserable life; and should they be suffered to drop into Hell whilst you stand by as unconcerned? Spectators of such a Tragedy will have little peace. Your unmercifulness to their Souls will be a wound to your own.

Inse.VII. Be hence informed of the evil that is in sin, be convinced of the evil that is in it by the eternal misery that follows it.

If Hell be out of measure dreadful, then Sin must be out of measure sinful: the Torments of Hell do not exceed the demerit of Sin, tho' they exceed the Understandings of Men to conceive them. God will lay upon no man more than is right. Sin is the Founder of Hell: all the Miseries and Torments there are but the Treasures of Wrath which Sinners in all Ages have been treasuring up; and how dreadful soever it be, it is but the *Armenia*, the Recompence which is meet, *Rom. 6. ult. The Wages of sin is Death.*

We have slight thoughts of sin; *Fools make a mock of sin*: but if the Lord by the convictions of mens Consciences did but lead them through the Chambers of Death, and give them a sight of the Wrath to come; could we but see the *Piles* that are made in Hell (as the Prophet calls them, *Isa. 30. 33.*) to maintain the flames of Vengeance to Eternity; could we but understand in what *Dialect* the damned speak of sin, who see the Treasures of Wrath broken up to avenge it, surely it would alter our apprehensions of sin, and strike cold to the very heart of sinners.

Cannot the Extremity and Eternity of Hell-torments exceed the evil that is in Sin? What words then can express the evil of it? Hell-flames have the nature of a *Punishment*, but not of an *atonement*.

Oh think on this, you that look upon Sin as the veriest trifle, that will sin for the value of a Penny, that look upon all the humiliations, broken-hearted confessions, and bitter moans of the Saints under Sin, as frenzy or melancholy, slighting them as a company of half-witted hypochondriack persons! Thou that never hadst one sick night or sad day in all thy life upon the account of sin, let me tell thee, that breast of thine must be the seat of sorrow; that frothy airy Spirit of thine must be acquainted with emphatical sobs and groans. God grant it may be on this side Hell by effectual Repentance, else it must be there in the extremity and eternity of Sorrows.

Inse.VIII. What Enemies are they to the Souls of Men, who are Satan's Instruments to draw them into sin, or who suffer sin to lie upon them!

When there were but two persons in the

World, one drew the other into Sin; and among the millions of Men and Women now in the World, where are there two to be found that have in no case been snares to draw some into sin? Some tempt *designedly*, taking the Devil's work out of his hands; others *virtually* and *consequently*, by Examples, which have a compelling power to draw others with them into sin. The first sort are among the worst of Sinners, *Prov. 1. 10.* the latter are among the best of Saints; see *Gal. 2. 14.* Whose Conversation is so much in Heaven, that nothing falls out in the court thereof, which may not farther some or other in their way to Hell?

Among wicked Men there are five sorts eminently accessory to the guilt and ruin of other Mens Souls. (1.) Loose Professors, whose lives give their lips the lye; whose Conversations make their Professions blush. (2.) Scandalous Apostates, whose Fall is more prejudicial than their Profession was ever beneficial to others. (3.) Cruel Persecutors, who make the Lives, Liberties, and Estates of Men the occasion of the ruin of their Consciences. (4.) Ignorant and faithless Ministers, who strengthen the hands of the wicked, that they should not return from their wickedness. (5.) Wicked Relations, who quench and damp every hopeful beginning of conviction and affection in their friends. Of all which I shall distinctly speak in the next Discourse, to which therefore I remit it at present.

And many there are who suffer sin to lie upon others, without a wife and seasonable reproof to recover them.

Oh what cruelty to Souls is here! The day is coming in which they will curse the time that ever they knew you: 'tis possible you may repent, but then it may be those whose Souls you have help'd to ruin are gone, and quite out of your reach. The Lord make you sensible what you have done in season, lest your repentance come too late for your selves and them also.

How poor a comfort is it to him that carries all his Sins out of this World with him, to leave much earthly Treasure (especially if gotten by Sin) behind him? *Infer.IX.*

It is a poor consolation to be praised where thou art not, and tormented where thou art; *deft esse to purchase a life of pleasure to others on earth, at the price of thy own everlasting misery in Hell.* *quod esse non prodest? Ter-tul.* All the consolation sensual, voluptuous and oppressing Worldlings have, is but this, that they were *coached in Hell* in Pomp and State, and have left the same Chariot to bring their graceless Children after them in the same Equipage to the place of Torments. There be five Considerations provoking pity to them that are thus past into a miserable Eternity, and caution to all that are following after in the same path.

First, that fatal mistake in the practical understanding and judgment of Man deserves a compassionate lamentation, as the cause and reason of their eternal miscarriage and ruin. They looked upon trifles as things of greatest necessity, and the most necessary things as meer trifles; putting the greatest weight and value upon that which little concerned them, and none at all upon their greatest Concernment in the whole World, *Luke 12. 21.*

Secondly, The perpetual diversions that the trifles of this World gave them from the main use and end of their time. O what a hurry and thick succession of earthly business and encumbrances filled up their days! So that they could find no time to go alone, and think of the awful and weighty concerns of the World to come, *James 5. 5.*

Thirdly, The total waste and expence of the only season of Salvation about these vanished, impertinent trifles, which is never more to be recovered. *Ecclef. 9. 10.*

Fourthly, that these deluding shadows, the pleasures of a moment, is all that they had in exchange for their Souls, a goodly price it was valued at, *Mat. 16. 26.*

Fifthly, That by such a life they have not only ruined their own Souls, but put their posterity, by their education of them in the same course of life, into the same path of destruction, in which they went to Hell before them: *Psal. 49. 13. Their posterity approve their saying.*

Infer. X. How rational and commendable is the courage and resolution of those Christians who chuse to bear all sufferings in this World from the hands of Men, rather than to despise and wound their Consciences with sin, and thereby expose their Souls to the wrath of God for ever!

That which men now call Pride, Humor, Fancy, and Stubbornness, will one day appear to be their great Wildom, and the Excellency of their Spirits. It is the tenderness of their Consciences, not the pride and stoutness of their stomachs, which makes them inflexible to sin; they know the terrors of a wounded Conscience, and had rather endure any other trouble from the hands of Men than fall by known sin into the hands of angry God. Try them in other matters wherein the glory of God and peace or purity of their Consciences are not concerned, and see if you can charge them with stubbornness and singularity. It was the excellency of the Spirits of the Primitive Christians, that they durst tell the Emperour to his face, when he threatened them with torments; Pardon us, O Emperour, thou threatenest us with a Prison, but God with Hell. Do we call that ingenuity and good nature, which makes the mind soft and tractable to temptations, and will rather venture upon guilt than be esteemed singular?

Salvian tells us of some in his time, who were compelled to be evil, lest they should be accounted vile: and was that their excellency? May I not fitly apply the words of *Salvian* here: O in what honour and repute is Christ among Christians, when Religion shall make them base and ignoble! He that understands what the punishment of sin will be in Hell, should endure all things rather than yield to sin on Earth. Indeed, if you that threaten, and tempt others to violate their Consciences, could bear the Wrath of God for them in Hell, it were somewhat; but we know there is no suffering by a Proxy there, they tremble at the Word of God, and have felt the burden of guilt, and dare not yield to sin, tho' they yield their Estates and Bodies to prevent it.

Infer. XI. How patiently should we bear the Afflictions of this life, by which sin is prevented and purged?

The discipline of our Spirits belongs to God

the Father of Spirits; he corrects us here, that we may not be punished hereafter, *1 Cor. 11. 32. We are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the World.* It is better for us to groan under Afflictions on Earth, than to roar under revenging Wrath in Hell. Parents who are wise as well as tender, had rather hear their Children sob and cry under the Rod, than stand with Halsters about their Necks on the Ladder, bewailing the destructive indulgence of their Parents.

Your Chastisements when sanctified are preventive of all the misery opened before. It is therefore as unreasonable to murmur against God, because you smart under his Rod, as it would be to accuse your dearest Friend of cruelty, because he strain'd your Arm to snatch you from the fall of a House or Wall which he saw ready to crush and overwhelm you in its ruins:

If we had less Affliction, we should have more Guilt. We see how apt we are to break over the hedge, and go a stray from God, with all the clogs of Affliction designed for our restraint; what should we do if we had no clog at all? It is better for you to be whipt to Heaven with all the Rods of Affliction, than coached to Hell with all the Pleasures of the World.

Christian, thy God sees, if thou do not, that all these troubles are few enough to save thee from Sin and Hell. Thy corruptions require all those Rods, and all little enough. *If need be, ye are in heaviness, 1 Pet. 1. 6.* If there be need for it, thy dearest comforts on Earth shall die, that thy Soul may live; but if thy mortification to them render thy removal needless, thou and they shall live together. 'Tis better be preserved in Brine, than rot in Honey. Sanctified Afflictions working under the efficacy of the Blood of Christ, are the safest way to our Souls.

How dreadful a change doth the death of wicked Men make upon them! from palaces on Earth, to the Prison of Hell. *Infer. XII*

No sooner is the Soul of a wicked Man steeped out of his own door at death, but the *Sergeants* of Hell are immediately upon it, serving the dreadful Summons on the Law-condemned Wretch. This Arrest terrifies it more than the Hand-writing upon the plaister of the Wall did him, *Dan. 5. 5.* How are all a Man's apprehensions changed in a moment! Out of what a deep sleep are most, and out of what a pleasant dream of Heaven are some awaked and startled at death, by the dreadful Arrest and Summons of God to Condemnation:

How quickly would all a Sinner's mirth be damped and turned into howlings in this World, if Conscience were but thoroughly awaked! It is but for God to change our Apprehensions now, and it would be done in a moment: but the eyes of most mens Souls are not opened, till death hath shut their bodily eyes; and then how sudden, and how sad a change is made in one day!

O think what it is to pass from all the pleasures and delights of this World into the torments and miseries of that World; from a pleasant Habitation, into an infernal Prison; from the depth of Security, to the extremity of Desperation; from the Arms and Bosoms of dearest Friends and Relations, to the Society

Ignorance, Imperator, tu carceris minaris, Deus Gehennam.

Mali esse cogitur, ne viles habeantur.

Infer. XI

Society of damned Spirits! Lord, what a Change is here! Had a gracious Change been made upon their hearts by Grace, no such doleful change could have been made upon their state by Death: Little do their surviving Friends think what they feel, or what is their estate in the other World, whilst they are honouring their Bodies with splendid and pompous Funerals. None on Earth have so much reason to fear Death, to make much of Life, and use all means to continue it, as those who will and must be so great losers by the exchange.

Inf. XIII. See here the certainty and inevitableness of the Judgment of the great Day.

This Prison which is continually filling with the Spirits of wicked Men, is an undeniable evidence of it: for why is Hell called a Prison, and why are the Spirits of Men confined and chained there, but with respect of the Judgment of the great Day? As there is a necessary connection betwixt Sin and Punishment, so betwixt punishing and trying the Offender: there are millions of Souls in custody, a world of Spirits in Prison; these must be brought forth to their Trial, for God will lay upon no man more than is right; the legality of their *Misimus* to Hell, will be evidenced in their solemn day of Trial. God hath therefore appointed a day in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by those Men whom he hath ordained, Acts 17. 31.

Here Sinners run in Arrears, and contract vast Debts; in Hell they are seiz'd and committed, at Judgment tried and cast for the same. This will be a dreadful Day, those that have spent so prodigally upon the Patience of God, must now come to a severe Account for all; they have past their particular Judgment immediately after death, Eccles. 12. 7. Heb. 9. 27. By this they know how they shall speed in the general Judgment, and how it shall be with them for ever, but tho' this private Judgment secures their damnation sufficiently, yet it clears not the Justice of God before Angels and Men sufficiently, and therefore they must appear once more before his Bar, 2 Cor. 5. 10. In the fearful expectation of this Day, those trembling Spirits now lie in Prison, and that fearful expectation is a principal part of their present misery and torment. You that refuse to come to the Throne of Grace, see if you can refuse to make your appearance at the Bar of Justice; you that brav'd and brow-beat your Ministers that warn'd you of it, see if you can outbrave your Judge too as you did them. Nothing more sure or awful than such a Day as this.

Inf. XIV. How much are Ministers, Parents, and all to whom the Charge of Souls is committed, bound to do all that in them lies, to prevent their everlasting misery in the World to come!

The great Apostle of the Gentiles found the consideration of the Terror of the Lord as a Spur urging and enforcing him to ministerial faithfulness and diligence; 2 Cor. 5. 11. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade Men.* And the same he presseth upon Timothy, 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom; preach the Word; be instant in season*

and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and Doctrine. Oh that those to whom so great a trust as the Souls of Men is committed, would labour to acquit themselves with all faithfulness therein, as Paul did, warning every one night and day with tears, that if we cannot prevent their ruin, which is most desirable; yet at least we may be able to take God to witness, as he did, that we are pure from the Blood of all Men.

Oh! consider, my Brethren, if your faithful plainness and unwearied diligence to save mens Souls produce no other fruit but the hatred of you now; yet it is much easier for you to bear that, than that they and you too should bear the Wrath of God for ever.

We have all of us personal guilt enough upon us, let us not add other mens guilt to our account: to be guilty of the Blood of the meanest Man upon Earth, is a sin which will cry in your Consciences; but to be guilty of the Blood of Souls, Lord, who can bear it! Christ thought them worth his Heart-blood, and are they not worth the expence of our Breath? Did He sweat Blood to save them, and will not we move our Lips to save them? 'Tis certainly a sore Judgment to the Souls of Men, when such Ministers are set over them as never understood the value of their Peoples Souls, or were never heartily concerned about the Salvation of their own Souls.

MATTH. XVI. 26.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?

Difficult Duties need to be enforced with powerful Arguments. In the 24th Verse of this Chapter our Lord presseth upon his Disciples the deepest and hardest Duties of Self-denial, acquaints them upon what terms they must be admitted into his Service: *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me.*

This hard and difficult Duty he enforceth upon them by a double Argument, viz. From,

1. The vanity of all sinful shifts from it, v. 25.
2. The value of their Souls, which is imported in it, v. 26.

They may shift off their Duty to the loss of their Souls, or save their Souls by the loss of such trifles. If they esteem their Souls above the World, and can be content to put all other things to the hazard for their Salvation, making account to save nothing but them by Christianity; then they come up to Christ's Terms, and may warrantably and boldly call him their Lord and Master: and to sweeten this choice to them, he doth in my Text balance the Soul and all the World, weighing them one against the other, and shews them the infinite odds and disproportion betwixt them: *What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?*

What is a Man profited?] There is a plain Meiosis in the Phrase; and the meaning is, how inesti-

inestimably and irreparably is a man damned! what a Soul-ruining bargain would a man make!

If he should gain the whole World.] There is a plain *Hyperbole* in this Phrase; for it never was, nor will be the lot of any man to be the sole Owner and Possessor of the whole World*.

* Hypothetica hæc hyperbole amissionis salutis æternæ atrocitas summa notatur. *S. Glasius.*

But suppose all the Power, Pleasure, Wealth, and Honour of the whole World were bid and offer'd in exchange for a Man's Soul: what a dear Purchase would it be at such a rate! *What were this,* † says one, *but to win Venice, and then be hang'd at the gate of it?* As that man acts like a mad man, that goes about to purchase a Treasure of

† Non magis juvabitur quam quæcquirit Venetiam, ipse vero suspendatur ad portam. *Pareus in loc.*

Gold with the loss of his life; for Life being lost, what is all the Gold in the World to him? he can have no enjoyment of it, or comfort in it: So here, what is all the World, or as many Worlds as there are Creatures in it, when the Soul is lost, if he gain this?

And lose his own Soul.] The comparison lies here betwixt one single Soul and the whole World. The whole World is no price for the poorest, meanest, and most despised Soul that lives in it.

By *losing the Soul*, we are to understand the destruction of its Being, but of its Happiness and Comfort, the cutting it off from God, and all the hopes of his favour and enjoyment for ever. This is the *loss* here intended, a loss never to be repaired. The whole World can be no recompence for a loss to the Soul, if it be but the loss of its purity or peace for a time; much less can it recompence the loss of the Soul in the loss of all its happiness for ever. When a Man's chief happiness is finally lost, then is his Soul lost: for what benefit can it be, nay, how great a misery must it be, to have a Being perpetuated in Torments for ever? This is the *fine* or *multa* which is set upon Sin, as some render the word. What shall a Man gain by such Pleasures, for which God will mult or fine him at the rate or price of his own Soul? that is, of all the happiness, joy, and comfort of it to all eternity.

Animæ vero suæ multetur. *Beza, Maldon.*

Interrogatio exaggerans.

Or what shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?] The Question aggravates the sense, and amplifies the loss and damage of the Man that sells his Soul for the whole World. There is no recompence in all the World for the hazard or danger of the Soul one hour; nor would a Man that understands what Soul and Eternity are, put it into danger for ten thousand Worlds, much less for a penny, yea, for nothing, as many do: but to barter or exchange it for the World, to take any thing in lieu of it; this is the height of madness. The way of buying in former times was not by Money, but by the exchange of one Commodity for another; and to this Custom *Brugensis* thinks this Phrase is allusive. Now what Commodity is found in all the World; or who that is not blinded by the God of this World, can think that the whole World it self, if all the Rocks in it were Rocks of Diamonds, and the Seas and Rivers were liquid Gold, is a Commodity of equivalent worth to his own Soul? Hence two Notes rise naturally.

Ἀντὶ δαπάνης vocat id quo dato, redimitur aliquid; juxta prætorum commercia que non monet, sed rerum permutatione consistant. *Brugens.*

Doct. I. *That one Soul is of more value than the whole World.*

Doct. II. *How precious and invaluable forever the Soul of Man is, it may be lost and cast away for ever.* I begin with the first.

Doct. I. *That one Soul is of more value than the whole World.*

I need not spend much time in the proof of it, when you have consider'd, that he who bought them hath here weighed and valued them; and that the Point before us is the result and conclusion of one that hath the best reason to know the true worth of them. That which I have to do, is to gather out of Scriptures the particulars; which put together, make up the full demonstration of the Point. And,

1. The invaluable worth of Souls appears from the manner of their Creation. They were created immediately by God, as hath been proved, and that not without the deliberation of the whole Trinity; *Gen. 1. 26. Let us make Man.* For the production of other Creatures, it was enough to give out the Word of his Command, *Let there be Light, let the Earth and the Waters bring forth*; but when he comes to Man, then you have no *Eat, let there be*, but he puts his own hand immediately to it, as to the Master-piece of the whole Creation: Yea, a Council is call'd about it; *Let us*, implying the just consultation and deliberation of all the Persons in the Godhead about it, that our hearts might be raised to the expectation of some extraordinary Work to follow; great Counsels and wise Debates being both the fore-runners and foundations of great Actions and Events to ensue thereupon. Thus *Elisha* in *Jeb. 35. 10. None saith, Where is God my Maker?* And *David* in *Psal. 149. 2. Let Israel rejoice in his Makers*: In both places the word is plural. The Consultation here is only amongst the Divine Persons, no Angels are called to this Council-Table, the whole matter was to be conducted by the Wisdom, and effected by the Power of God; and therefore there was no need to consult with any but himself, the Wisdom of Angels being from him: But this great Council shews what an excellent Creature was now to be produced, and the excellency of that Creature Man was principally in his Soul; for the Bodies of other Creatures, which were made by the Word of his Command, are as beautiful, elegant, and neat as the Body of Man; yea, and in some respects more excellent. The Soul then was that rare piece which God in so condescending an expression tells us was created with the deliberation of the Godhead: those great and excellent Persons laid their heads, as it were, together to project its Being.

And by the way, this may smartly check the pride and arrogance of Souls, who dare take it upon them to teach God, as we interpretatively do in our censures of his Works, and murmurs at his disposals of us. Shall that Soul, which is the Product of his Wisdom and Counsel, dare to instruct or counsel its Maker? But that by the by. You see there is a transcendent Dignity and Worth in the Soul of Man above all other Beings in the World, by the peculiar way of its production into the number of created Beings: no wise man deliberates long, or calls a Council about ordinary matters, much less the All-wise God.

2. The

2. The Soul hath in it self an intrinsic worth and excellency worthy of that Divine Original whence it sprang: View it in its noble Faculties and admirable Powers, and it will appear to be a Creature upon which God hath laid out the riches of his Wisdom and Power.

There you shall find a *Mind* susceptible of all Light, both natural and spiritual, shining as the Candle of God in the inner Man, closing with Truth as the Iron doth with the attractive Loadstone, a Shop in which all Arts and Sciences are laboured and formed: What are all the famous Libraries and Monuments of Learning, but so many Systems of Thoughts laboured and perfected in the active inquisitive Minds of men? Truth is its natural and delectable Object, it pursues eagerly after it, and even spends it self and the Body too in the chase and prosecution of Truth: when it lies deep, as a subterranean treasure, the Mind sends out innumerable thoughts, re-inforcing each other in thick successions, to dig for, and compass that invaluable treasure; if it be disguised by misrepresentations and vulgar prejudice, and trampled in the dirt under that disguise, there is an ability in the Mind to discern it by some lines and features, which are well known to it, and both own, honour and vindicate it under all that dirt and obloquy, with more respect than a man will take up a piece of Gold, or a sparkling Diamond out of the gutter: it searches after it by many painful deductions of Reason, and triumphs more in the discovery of it, than in all earthly treasures; no gratification of sense like that of the Mind, when it grasps its prey for which it hunted.

The Mind passes through all the works of Creation, it views the several creatures on earth, considers the fabrick, use, and beauty of *Animals*, the signatures of Plants, penetrating thereby into their Nature and Virtues: it views the vast Ocean, and the large train of Causes laid together in all these things, for the good of Man, by God, whose Name it reads in the most diminutive creature it beholds on earth.

It can in a moment mount it self from Earth to Heaven, view the face thereof, describe the motions of the Sun in the *Ecliptick*, calculate Tables for the motions of the Planets and fixed Stars, invent convenient *Cycles* for the computations of Time, foretel at a great distance the dismal Eclipses of the Sun and Moon, to the very *Digit*, and the portentous Conjunctions of the Planets, to the very minute of their Ingress: these are the pleasant employments of the Understanding.

But there is a higher game at which this Eagle plays, it reckons it self all this while employ'd as much beneath its capacity, as *Domitian* in catching flies: tho' these be lawful and pleasant exercises, when it hath leisure for them, yet it is fitted for a much nobler exercise, even to penetrate the glorious Mysteries of Redemption, to trace redeeming Love through all the astonishing methods, and manifold discoveries of it; and yet higher than all this, it is capable of an immediate sight or facial vision of the blessed God, short of which it receives no pleasure that is fully agreeable to its noble powers and infinite appetite.

View its *Will*, and you shall find it like a *Queen* upon the Throne of the Soul, swaying the Scepter of Liberty in her hand, (as one expresseth it) with all the Affections waiting and attending upon her. No Tyrant can force it, no Torment can wrest the golden Scepter of Liberty out of its hand, the keys of all the Chambers of the Soul hang at its girdle, these it delivers to Christ in the day of his power; victorious Grace sweetly determines it by gaining its consent, but commits no rape upon it by unnatural coercion. God accepts its offering, tho' full of imperfections; but no service is accepted without it; how excellent forever the matter of it.

View the *Conscience* and *Thoughts* with their self-reflective abilities, wherein the Soul retires into it self, and sits concealed from all eyes but his that made it, judging its own actions, and censuring its estate; viewing its face in its own glass, and correcting the indecencies it discovers there: Things of greatest moment and importance are silently transacted in this Council-chamber betwixt the Soul and God; so remote from the knowledge of all Creatures, that neither Angels, Devils, or Men can know what it is doing there, but by uncertain guess, or revelation from God: here it impleads, condemns, and acquits it self as at a privy Session, with respect of the Judgment of the great Day: here it meets with the best of comforts, and with the worst of terrors.

Take a survey of its *Passions* and *Affections*, and you will find them admirable: see how they are placed by Divine Wisdom in the Soul, some for defence and safety, others for delight and pleasure. *Anger* actuates the Spirits, and rowetheth its courage, enabling it to break through difficulties: *Fear* keeps *Centinel*, watching upon all dangers that approach us: *Hope* forestals the good, and anticipates the joys of the next Life, and thereby supports and strengthens the Soul under all the discouragements and pressures of the present life: *Love* unites is to the chiefest Good; he that dwelleth in Love, dwells in God, and God in him: *Zeal* is the Dagger which Love draws in God's cause and quarrel, to secure it self from sin, and testify its resentments of God's dishonour.

O what a Divine spark is the Soul of Man! well might Christ prefer it in dignity to the whole World.

3. The worth of a Soul may be gathered and discerned from its subjective capacity and habitability both of Grace and Glory. It is capable of all the Graces of the Spirit, of being filled with the fulness of God, *Eph. 3. 19.* to live to God here, and with God for ever. What excellent Graces do adorn some Souls! How are all the rooms richly hang'd with Divine and costly Hangings, that God may dwell in them! This makes it like the carved works of the Temple, overlaid with pure Gold; here is Glory upon Glory, a new Creation upon the old; in the inmost parts of some Souls is a spiritual Altar erected with this Inscription; *Holiness to the Lord*: Here the Soul offers up: it self to God in the sacred flames of Love, and here it sacrifices its vile Affections, devoting them to destruction to the glory of its God: here

Veritas in
puteo.

Figures,
Figures.
Archim.

Calver-
well.

1 Cor. 2.
11.

Rom. 2.
15.

2 Cor. 1.
12.

here God walks with delight, even a delight beyond what he takes in all the stately Structures and magnificent adorned Temples in the whole World, *Ista*. 66. 1, 2.

No other Soul besides Man's is marriageable to Christ, or capable of Espousals to the King of Glory; they were not designed, and therefore not endued with a capacity for such an honour as his: but such a capacity hath every Soul, even the meanest on Earth, and such honour have all his Saints; others may, but they are betrothed to Christ in this World, and shall be presented without spot before him in the World to come.

2 Cor. 11.
2.

Eph. 5. 27.

It is now a lovely and excellent Creature in its naked natural state, much more beautiful and excellent in its sanctified and gracious state; but what shall we say, or how shall we conceive of it, when all spots of sin are perfectly washed off its beautiful face in Heaven, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon it! When its filthy garments are taken away, and the pure robes of perfect Holiness, as well as Righteousness, superinduced upon this excellent Creature! If the imperfect beauty of it, begun in Sanctification, enamoured its Saviour, and made him say, Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one of the chains of thy neck; what will its beauty and his delight in it be in the state of perfect Glorification! As we imagine the *Circles* in the Heavens to be vastly greater than those we view upon the *Globe*, so must we imagine in the case before us.

4. The preparations God makes for Souls in Heaven, speak their great worth and value. When you lift up your eyes to Heaven, and behold that bespangled Azure Canopy beset and inlaid with so many golden Studs, and sparkling Gems, you see but the floor or pavement of that place which God hath prepared for some Souls. He furnished this World for us before he puts us into it; but as delightful and beautiful as it is, it is no more to be compared with the Father's house in Heaven, than the smallest ruined *Chappel* your eyes ever beheld, is to be compared with *Solomon's* Temple when it stood in all its shining glory.

When you see a stately magnificent Structure built, richest Hangings and Furniture prepared to adorn it, you conclude some great Persons are to come thither; such preparations speak the quality of the *Guests*.

Now Heaven, yea the Heaven of Heavens, the Palace of the great King, the Presence-chamber of the Godhead, is prepared, not only by God's Decree and Christ's Death, but by his Ascension thither in our Names, and as our Forerunner, for all renewed and redeemed Souls: *Joh. 14. 2. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you.*

And where is the place prepared for them, but in his Father's house? the same place, the very same house where the Father, Son and Spirit themselves do dwell: such is the love of Christ to Souls, that he will not dwell in one house, and they in another; but as he speaks, *Joh. 12. 26. Where I am, there shall my servant also be.* There is room enough in the Father's house for Christ and all the Souls he redeemed to live and dwell together for ever-

more. His Ascension thither was in the capacity of a common or publick Person, to take Livery and Seisin of those many Mansions for them, which are to be filled with their Inhabitants, as they come thither in their respective times and orders.

5. The great Price with which they were redeemed and purchased, speaks their dignity and value. No wise Man will purchase, a trifle at a great price, much less the most wise God. Now the redemption of every Soul stood in no less than the most precious Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ: *1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. You know (saith the Apostle there) that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, — but with the precious Blood of Christ, as a Lamb without blemish or spot.* All the Gold and Silver in the world was no Ranfome for one Soul; nay, all the Blood of the Creatures, had it been shed as a Sacrifice to the glory of Justice, or even the Blood which is most dear to us, as being derived from our own, I mean the Blood of our dear Children, even of our first-born, the beginning of our strength, which usually have the strength of Affection: I say, none of this could purchase a Pardon for the smallest Sin that ever any Soul committed, much less was it able to purchase the Soul it self, *Micah. 6. 6, 7.* thousands of Rams, and ten thousand Rivers of Oil, or our First-born are no Ranfom to God for the sin of the Soul. It is only the precious Blood of Christ that is a just Ranfome or Counterprice, as it's called, *Mat. 20. 28.*

Now who can compute the value of that Blood? such was the worth of the Blood of Christ, which by the communication of Properties is truly stiled the Blood of God, that one drop of it is above the estimations of Men and Angels; and yet before the Soul of the meanest Man or Woman in the World could be redeemed, every drop of his Blood must be shed; for no less than his Death could be a price for our Souls. Hence then we evidently discern an invaluable worth in Souls. A whole Kingdom is taxed when a King is to be ransomed; the delight and darling of God's Soul must die when our Souls are to be redeemed. O the worth of Souls!

6. This evidences the transcendent dignity and worth of Souls, that *Eternity is stamped upon their actions*, and theirs only of all the Beings in this World: the acts of Souls are immortal, as their Nature is, whereas the actions of other Animals having neither moral goodness or moral evil in them, pass away as their Beings do.

The Apostle therefore in *Gal. 6. 7.* compares the actions of Men in this world to seed sown, and tells us of everlasting fruits we shall reap from them in the next life: they have the same respect to a future account that Seed hath to the Harvest; *he that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity*, (i. e.) everlasting disappointment and misery, *Prov. 22. 8.* and they that now sow in tears, shall then reap in joy, *Psalm. 126. 5.* Every gracious action is the seed of joy, and every sinful action the seed of Sorrow; and this makes the great difference betwixt the actions of a rational Soul, and those done by Beasts: and if it were not so, Man would then be wholly sway'd by sense and present things,

as the Beasts are and all Religion would vanish with this distinction of actions.

Our actions are considerable two ways, *physically* and *morally*; in the first sense they are *transient*, in the last *permanent*: a word is past as soon as spoken, but yet it must and will be recalled and brought into the Judgment of the great day, *Mat.* 12. 36. Whatever therefore a Man shall speak, think, or do, once spoken, thought, or done, it becomes eternal, and abides for ever. Now, what is it that puts so great a difference betwixt humane and brutal Actions; but the excellent Nature of the reasonable Soul? 'Tis this which stamps Immortality upon humane Actions, and is at once a clear proof both of the immortality and dignity of the Soul of Man above all other Creatures in this World.

7. The contention of both Worlds, the strife of Heaven and Hell about the Soul of Man, speaks it a most precious and invaluable Treasure.

The Soul of Man is the Prize about which Heaven and Hell contend: the great design of Heaven is to save it, and all the plots of Hell to ruin it. Man is a Borderer betwixt both Kingdoms, he lives here upon the Confines of the spiritual and material World; and therefore *Scaliger* fitly calls him, *Utriusq; mundi nexus*, one in whom both Worlds meet: his Body is of the earth, earthly; his Soul the off-spring of a Deity, heavenly. It is then no wonder to find such tugging and pulling this way and that way, upward and downward, such fallies from Heaven to rescue and save it, such excursions from Hell to captivate and ruin it.

The infinite Wisdom of God hath laid the plot and design for its Salvation by Christ in so great depth of counsel, that the Angels of Heaven are astonished at it, and desire to pry into it. Christ, in pursuance of this eternal project, came from Heaven professedly to seek and to save lost Souls, *Luke* 19. 10. He compares himself to a good Shepherd, who leaveth the ninety nine to seek one lost Sheep, and having found it, brings it home upon his shoulders, rejoicing that he hath found it, *Luke* 15. 5.

Hell employs all its skill and policy, sets a-work all whiles and stratagems to destroy and ruin it: 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. *Your adversary, the Devil goeth about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour.* The strong Man armed gets the first possession of the Soul, and with all his forces and policies labours to secure it as his property, *Luke* 11. 21. Christ raises all the spiritual Militia, the very *potte Cæli*, the Powers of Heaven to rescue it, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. And do Heaven and Earth thus contend, think you, *de lava caprina*, for a thing of nought? No, no, if there were not some singular and peculiar excellency and worth in Man's Soul, both worlds would never tug and pull at this rate which should win that Prize. It was a great argument of the worth and excellency of *Homer*, that incomparable *Poet*, that seven Cities contended for the honour of his Nativity.

Ἐπὶ τῷ πόλει δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ ὄρει

Σμύρῃ, Ῥόδῳ, Κολοφῶν, Σαλαμῖν, Χίῳ, Ἀργεῖ, Ἀθῶναι

Smyrna, Rhodes, Colophon, Salamis, Chios, Argos, and Athens were all at strife about one

Vol. I.

poor Man, who should crown, themselves with the honour of his Birth: but when Heaven and Hell shall contend about a Soul, certainly it much more speaks the dignity of it, than the contention of seven Cities for one *Homer*.

What are all the wooings, expostulations, and passionate beseechings of Christ's Ministers? what are all the convictions of Conscience, and strong impressions made upon the Affections? what are all strokes from Heaven upon Men in the way of Sin? I say, what are all these but the tuggings of Heaven to draw Souls out of the Snares of Hell?

And what are the hellish Temptations that Men feel in their Hearts, the alluring Objects presented to their Eyes, the ensnaring Examples that are set round about them, but the tuggings of Satan, if possible, to draw the Souls of Men into the same condemnation and misery with himself?

Would Heaven and Hell be up in arms, as it were, and strive at this rate for nothing? Thy Soul, O Man, how vilely soever thou depreciatest and lightest it, is of high esteem, a rich Purchase, a Creature of nobler rank than thou art aware of. The wise Merchant knows the value of Gold and Diamonds, tho' ignorant *Indians* would part with them for Glass Beads and Tinsel Toys. And this leads us to.

8. The eighth Evidence of the invaluable worth of Souls, which is the joy in Heaven, and the rage in Hell for the gain and loss of the Soul of Man.

Christ who came from Heaven, and well Quoties knew the frame and disposition of the Inhabitants of that City, tells us, *That there is joy in the presence of the Angels of God over one Sinner that repenteth*, *Luke* 16. 7, 10. No sooner is the heart of a Sinner darts with conviction, broken with sorrow for Sin, and begins to cry, *Men and Brethren, what shall I do?* but the news is quickly in Heaven, and sets all the City of God a rejoicing at it, as is in the chief City of a Kingdom when a young Prince mus, & is born. *Angelos suo gaudio de-*

We never read that Christ laughed in all his time on Earth; but we read that he once rejoiced in Spirit, *Luke* 10. 21. And what was the occasion of that his Joy, but the success of the Gospel in the Salvation of the Souls of Men? Now certainly it must be some great Good that so affects Christ and all his Angels in Heaven at the sight of it: the degree of a wife Man's Joy is according to the value of the Object thereof: no Man that is wife will rejoice, and feel his heart leap within him for gladness at a small or common thing.

And as there is joy in Heaven for the saving, so certainly there is grief and rage in Hell for the loss of a Soul. No sooner had God by Paul's Ministry converted one poor *Lydia*, at *Philippi*, whither he was call'd by an immediate Express from Heaven for that service, but the Devil put all the City into an uproar, as if an Enemy had landed on their Coast; and raised a violent Persecution, which quickly drave him thence, *Acts* 16. 9, 14, 22.

And indeed what are all the fierce and cruel Persecutions of God's faithful Ministers, but so many efforts of the rage and malice of Hell against them for plucking Souls as so many

liii

Captives

Captives and Preys out of his Paws? For this he owes them a fright, and will be sure to pay them, if ever he get them at an advantage. But all this joy and grief demonstrates the high and great value of the Prize which is won by Heaven, and lost by Hell.

9. The institution of Gospel-Ordinances, and the appointment of so many Gospel-Officers purposely for the saving of Souls, is no small evidence of their value and esteem.

No Man would light and maintain a Lamp fed with golden Oil, and keep it burning from Age to Age, if the work to be done by the light of it were not of a very precious and important nature; what else are the Dispensations of the Gospel, but Lamps burning with golden Oil to Light Souls to Heaven? *Zech. 4. 2, 3. 4. & 12.* compared: a magnificent Vision is there presented to the Prophet, *viz.* a Candlestick of Gold with a *Bowl or Cistern* upon the top of it, and seven Shafts with seven Lamps at the ends thereof, all lighted: and that these Lamps might have a constant supply of Oil, without any accessory humane help, there are presented (as growing by the Candlestick) two fresh and green Olive-trees on each side thereof, *ver. 3.* which do empty out of themselves golden Oil, *ver. 12.* naturally dropping and distilling it into that Bowl, and the two Pipes thereof to feed the Lamps continually. Under this stately Emblem you have a lively representation of the spiritual Gifts and Graces distilled by the Spirit into the Ministers of the Gospel, for the use and benefit of the Church, as you find not only by the Angel's Exposition of it here, but by the Spirit's allusion to it, and accommodation of it in *Rev. 11. 3, 4.* See herein what price God puts upon the Salvation of Souls: Gospel-Lamps are maintain'd for their sakes, not with the sweat of Ministers brows, or the expence and waste of their Spirits, but by the precious Gifts and Graces of God's Spirit continually dropping into them for the use and service of Souls. These ministerial Gifts and Graces are Christ's Ascension-gifts, *Ephes. 4. 8.* When he ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto Men; and what were the Royal Gifts of that triumphant day? why, he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ. It is an allusion to the Roman Triumphs, wherein the Conqueror did *spargere missilia*, scatter abroad his treasures among the People. It is reported of the Palm-tree, faith one, that when it was first planted in Italy, they water'd its roots with Wine, to make it take the better with the Soil; but God waters our Souls with what is infinitely more costly than Wine, he waters them with the Heart-blood of Christ, and the precious Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, which certainly he would never do, if they were not of great worth in his eyes. O how many excellent Ministers who were, as is said of John, burning and shining Lights in their places and generations, have spent themselves, and how many are there who are willing to spend and be spent, as Paul was, for the Salvation of Souls! God is at great expences for them, and therefore puts a very high value upon them.

Now all this respects the Soul of Man, that is the object of all ministerial labours. The Soul is the *terminus altissimus ad intra*, the subject on which God works, and upon which he spends all those invaluable treasures. 'Tis the Soul which he aims at, and principally designs and levels all to, and reckons it not too dear a rate to save them at.

No Man will dig for common Stones with golden Mattocks, the instruments that would be worn out being of far greater value than the thing. This may convince us of what worth our Souls are, and at what rates they are set in God's Book, that such instruments are sent abroad into the World, and such precious Gifts and Graces like golden Oil spent continually for their Salvation: whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, all are yours, *1 Cor. 3. 22. (i. e.)* all set apart for the service and salvation of your Souls.

10. The great Encouragements and Rewards God propounds, and promiseth to them that win Souls, speaks their worth, and God's great esteem of them.

There cannot be a more acceptable Service done to God, than for a Man to set himself heartily and diligently to the Conversion of Souls: so many Souls as a Man instrumentally saves, so many Diadems will God Crown him withal in the great Day. St Paul calls his converted *Philippians* his Joy and his Crown, *Phil. 4. 1.* and tells the converted *Thessalonians*, they were his Crown of rejoicing in the presence of Jesus Christ at his coming, *1 Thess. 2. 19.* There is a full reward assured by promise to those that labour in this great Service, *Dan. 12. 3.* And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever. The Wisdom here spoken of, I conceive not to be only that whereby a Man is made wise to the salvation of his own Soul, but whereby he is also furnished with skill for the saving of other Mens Souls, according to that, *Prov. 11. 30. He that winneth Souls is wise,* and so the latter Phrase is exegetical of it, meaning one and the same thing by being wise, and turning many unto Righteousness: and to put Men upon the study of this Wisdom, he puts a very honourable title upon them, calling them *מְרִיבֵי חַיִּים*, the Justifiers of many, as in *1 Tim. 4. 16.* they are said to save others. Here is singular honour put upon the very Instruments employ'd in this honourable Service, and that is not all, but their Reward is great hereafter, as well as their Honour great at present: they shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and the Stars for ever and ever. The Firmament shines like a Saphir in it self, the Stars and Planets more gloriously again; but those that faithfully labour in this work of saving Souls, shall shine in Glory for ever and ever, when the Firmament shall be parched up as a scrowl. O what Rewards and Honours are here to provoke Men to the study of saving Souls! God will richly recompense all our pains in this work: if we did but only sow the seed in our days, and another enters into our Labour and waters what we sowed, so that neither the first hath the comfort of finishing the Work, nor the last the honour of beginning it; but one did somewhat towards it in the work

work of Conviction, and the other carried it on to greater maturity and perfection, and so neither the one or other began and finished the Work singly; yet both shall rejoice in Heaven together. *John 4. 36.*

You see what honours God puts upon the very Instruments employ'd in this work, even the honour to be Saviours under God of Mens Souls *James 5. 20.* and what a full reward of Glory, Joy and Comfort they shall have in Heaven: all which speaks the great value of the Soul with God. Such Encouragements and such Rewards would never have been propounded and promised, if God had not a singular estimation of them.

And the more to quicken his Instruments to all diligence in this great work, he works upon their fears as well as hopes; threatens them with *Hell*, as well as encourages them with the hopes of Heaven; tells them he will require the blood of all those Souls that perish by their negligence; *Their blood, saith he, will I require at the Watchman's hands, Ezek. 33. 6.* which are rather Thunder-bolts than Words, *saith Chrylſostom.* By all which you see what weight God lays upon the saving or losing of Souls: such severe charges, great encouragements, and terrible threats had never been propounded in Scripture, if the Souls of men had not been invaluablely precious.

11. It is no small Evidence of the precious and invaluable worth of Souls, that God manifests so great and tender *Care* over them, and is so concern'd about the evil that befalls them.

Among many others, there are two things in which the tender care of God for the good of Souls is manifested.

(1.) In his tenderness over them in times of distress and danger: as a tender Father will not leave his sick Child in other hands, but sits up and watches by him himself, and administers the Cordials with his own hands; even so the great God expresseth his care and tenderness, *Isa. 57. 15. I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble Spirit, to revive the Spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* Behold the condescending tenderness of the highest Majesty! Is a Soul ready to faint and fail, O how soon is God with it, with a reviving Cordial in his hand, lest the Spirit should fail before him, and the Soul which he hath made? as it is *vers. 16.* yea, he put it into Christ's commission to preach good tidings to the meek, and to bind up the broken hearted, *Isa. 61. 1.* and not only inserts it in Christ's Commission, but gives the same in solemn charge to all his inferior messengers whom he employs about them, *Isa. 35. 3. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not.*

(2.) His special regard to Souls is evidenced in his severe prohibitions to all others to do nothing that may be an occasion of ruin to them. He charges it upon all, *That no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall in his brother's way, Rom. 14. 13.* that by the abuse of our own liberty, we destroy not him for whom Christ died, *Rom. 14. 15.* And what doth all this signify, but the precious and invaluable worth of Souls?

12. Lastly, It is not the least evidence of the dignity of mens Souls, that God hath ap-

pointed the whole Host of Angels to be their Guardians and Attendants.

Are they not all ministering Spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of Salvation? Heb. 1. 14.

Are they not? It is no doubtful question, but the strongest way of affirmation; nothing is surer than that they are.

All Not one of that heavenly Company excepted. The highest Angel thinks no disparagement to serve a Soul for whom Christ died. Well may they all stoop to serve them, when they see Christ their Lord hath stooped even to death to save them. They are all of them.

Ministering Spirits *Servientes universales*, public Officers to whom their Tutelage is committed: to them it belongs to attend, serve, protect, and relieve them. The greatest Peers and Barons in the Kingdom think it not below them to wait upon the Heir apparent to the Crown in his minority; and no less dignity is here stamped by God upon the Souls of Men, whom he calls.

Heirs of Salvation And in some respect nearer to Christ than themselves; for on this account it is that the Angels delight to serve them. Christ's little ones upon earth have their Angels, which always behold the face of God in Heaven, *Mat. 18. 10.* and therefore saith our Lord there, *Take heed you despise not one of these little ones;* they are greater persons than you are aware of. Nor is it enough that one Angel is appointed to wait upon all or many of them, but many Angels, even a whole Host of them are sometimes sent to attend upon one of them. As *Jacob* was going on his way, the Angels of God met him; and when he saw them, he said, *This is God's Host,* *Gen. 32. 1, 2.*

The same two offices which belong to a Nurse, to whom the Father commits his Child, belong also to the Angels of Heaven, with respect to the Children of God, *viz.* to keep them tenderly while they are abroad, and bring them home to their Father's house at last. And how clearly doth all this evince and demonstrate the great dignity and value of Souls? Was it an Argument of the Grandeur and Magnificence of King *Solomon*, that he had two hundred men with *Targers*, and three hundred men with Shields of beaten Gold for his ordinary Guard every day? And is it not a mark of far greater dignity than ever *Solomon* had in all his glory, to have Hosts of Angels attending us? In comparison with one of this Guard *Solomon* himself was but a Worm in all his Magnificence.

And now lay all these Arguments together, and see what they will amount to. You have before you no ordinary Creature? for, (1.) It was not produced as other Creatures were, by a mere word of command, but by the deliberation of the great Council of Heaven: and (2.) Such are the high and noble faculties and powers found in it, as render it agreeable to, and becoming such a Divine Original. Yea, (3.) by reason of these its admirable powers it becomes a capable subject both of Grace here, and Glory hereafter. (4.) Nor is this its capacity in vain; for God hath made glorious preparations for some of them in Heaven. (5.) And purchased them for Heaven, and Heaven for them at an invaluable price, even the precious Blood of Christ. (6.) And stamp

stamp Immortality upon their actions as well as natures. (7.) Both Worlds contend and strive for the Soul as a prize of greatest value. (8.) Their conversion to Christ is the Triumph of Heaven, and Rage of Hell. (9.) The Lamps of Gospel-Ordinances are maintained over all the reformed Christian World to light them in their passage to Heaven. (10.) Great rewards are propounded to all that shall heartily endeavour the Salvation of them. (11.) The care of Heaven is exceeding great and tender over them. And (12.) the heavenly Hosts of Angels have the charge of them, and reckon it their honour to serve them. These things duly weighed, bring home the conclusion with demonstrative clearness to every man's understanding, *That one Soul is of more value than the whole World*, which was the thing to be proved. What remains is the improvement of this excellent subject in these following Inferences.

Infer. 1.

The Soul of man appearing to be a Creature of such transcendent dignity and excellency, this truth appears of equal clearness with it, *That it was not made for the Body, but the Body for it; and therefore it is a vile abuse of the noble and high-born Soul, to subject it to the lusts, and enslave it to the drudgery of the inferior and more ignoble parts.*

The very Law of Nature assigns the most honourable places and employments to the most noble and excellent Creatures, and the baser and inferior to things of the lowest rank and quality. The Sun, Moon, and Stars are placed by this Law in the Heavens; but the *Ignis fatuus* and the Glow-worm in the Fens and Ditches, *Princes* are set upon Thrones of Glory, the *Beggars* lodg'd in Barns and Stables; and it at any time this order of nature be inverted, and the baser suppress and perk over the more noble and honourable Beings, it is looked upon as a kind of Prodigy in the Civil World: and so *Solomon* represents it, *Ecclef. 10. 7. I have seen Servants upon Horses, and Princes walking as Servants upon the earth, (i. e.)* I have seen men that are worthy of no better employments than to rub Horses heels, in the Saddle with their Trappings; and Men who deserve to bear rule, and to govern Kingdoms, Men who for their great ability and integrity deserved to sit at Helm, and moderate the Affairs of Kingdoms, these have I seen walking as Servants upon the earth; and this he calls an evil under the Sun, that is an *Ataxy*, confusion or disorder in the course of Nature.

Now there can never be that difference and vast odds betwixt one man and another, as there is betwixt the Soul and the Body of every man. A King upon the Throne is not so much above a Beggar that cries at our doors for a Crust, as the Soul is above a Body; for the Soul of a Beggar is of the same Species, Original, and Capacity of happiness with the Soul of the most illustrious Prince: and sometimes greater Excellencies of mind are found in the lowest rank and order of Men: *Better is a poor and wise Child than an old and foolish King*, *Ecclef. 4. 13.* but the Soul of the meanest person in the World is better than all the Bodies in it; and therefore to make the noble and high-born Soul a slave, a meer drudge to the vile body, as the *Apostle* calls it, *Phil. 3.*

21. *The body of this vile flesh*; what is it but to set the Beggar on Horse-back, and make the King lacquey after him on foot?

It was a generous resentment that a Hea-
Major
sum, & ad
maiora
natus,
quam ut
corporis
mei sum
manicipi-
um. Seneca.
then had of the dignity of his own Soul, and a very just abhorrence of so vile an abuse of it, when he said, *I am greater, and born to greater things, than that I should be a slave to my body.*

I know there is a debt of duty the Soul owes to its own body, and few Souls are to be found too careless or dilatory in the discharge thereof: where one Soul needs the *Spor* in this case, thousands need the *Carb*. Most Souls are over-heated with Zeal for the concerns of the flesh, worn out and spent in its constant drudgery: their whole life is but a *servicing of divers lusts and pleasures*, as the *Apostle* speaks, *Tir. 3. 3.* Imperious Lusts are cruel Task-masters, they give the Soul no rest; the more provision the Soul brings in to satisfy them, the more they rage, like fire by the addition of more fuel. What a sad sight is it to see a noble immortal Soul enslaved, as the *Apostle's* word is, *Tir. 1. 7. to Wine*? to filthy lucre, to a thousand sorts of vassalage; like a *Tappser* in a common Inn, now running up stairs, and then down, at every one's knock and call?

O what perpetual hurry and noise do thousands of Souls live in! so that they have no time to retire into themselves, and think for what end and use they were created, and sent into this World: all their thoughts, all their cares, all their studies and labours are taken up about that perishing, clogging, ensnaring body, which must shortly fall a prey to the worms. How many millions of poor Creatures are there that labour and toil all their life long for a poor, bare maintenance of their bodies, and never think they have any other business to do in this World?

And how many of a higher rank are charm'd by a thick succession of fleshly delights and pleasures into a deep oblivion of their eternal concerns? so that their whole life is but one intire diversion from the great business and proper end of it: *Jam. 5. 5. Ye have lived in pleasure on earth, living in them, as the Fish doth in the water, its proper Element, or the Fel in the mud.* Sometimes it falls out at the very close of a vain voluptuous Life, when they see all their delights shrinking away at the approaches and appearance of Death, that they begin to be a little startled at the change which is about to be made upon them, and to cry, O what shall we do now! Ah poor Souls! is that a time to think what you shall do, when you are just stepping into the awful state of Eternity? O that this had been thought on in season; but you could find no leisure for one such thought. Now you begin to wish time had been rescued out of the hands of the cares and pleasures of this life for better purposes; but it's gone, and never more to be recalled.

Is the Soul so invaluable precious? then the
Salvation of the Soul is to be the great care and
business of every man in this life. Inf. II.

Where one thought is spent about this question, *What shall I eat, drink, and put on?* a thousand should be spent about that question, *What shall I do to be saved?* If a Treasure of ten or twenty thousand pounds were committed

to

to your trust and charge, and for which (in case of loss) you must be responsible, would not your thoughts, cares, and fears be working night and day about it, till you be satisfied it is safe and out of danger? and then your mind would be at rest, but not before. Thy Soul, O man, is more worth than the Crowns and Treasures of all the Princes in the World: if all their Exchequers were drained, and all their Crown-Jewels sold to their full value, they could never make up half a Ransom for the Soul of the poorest and meanest man. This invaluable Treasure is committed to your charge; if it be lost, you are lost for ever. That which St. *Matthew* calls the losing of the Soul in my Text, St. *Luke* calls *losing himself*: if the Soul be lost, the Man is lost: the Body is but as a Boat fastned to the Stern of a stately Ship, if the Ship sink, the Boat follows it.

O therefore what thoughts, what fears, what cares should exercise the minds of men day and night, till their precious Souls be out of all danger! Methinks the sound of this Text should ring a perpetual Alarm in the ears of careless sinners, and make them hasten to the Insurance-Office, as Merchants do, who have great Adventures in danger at Sea. It was counsel given once to a King, and worthy to be prest upon all, from the King to the Beggar, to ruminate these words of Christ one quarter of an hour every day, *What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* Certainly it would make men slack their pace, and cool themselves in their hot and earnest pursuit of the trifles of this World, and convince them, that they have somewhat else to do of far greater importance.

It was not without great and weighty reason therefore, that the Apostle *Peter* exhorts to all diligence to make our calling and election sure, 2 *Per.* 1. 10. There are two words in this Text of extraordinary weight, *Give all diligence*, the word is *study*; the utmost intention of the mind, pondering and comparing things in the thoughts, valuing reasons for, and objections against the point before us, this is study; and such as calls for all diligence where the subject matter is (as to be sure, here it is) of the greatest importance: And what is the subject matter of all this study and diligence? Why, it is the most solemn of all works that ever came under the hand of man, to make our calling and election *sure*, firm, stable, or fixed, as a Building raised upon a square and strong foundation; or as a Conclusion is sure, when regularly drawn from certain and indubitable premises; there can never be too much care, too much study or pains, about that which can never be too well secured.

Many Souls never spent one solemn hour in a close and serious debate about this matter; others have taken a great deal of pains about it, they have broken many nights sleep, poured out many prayers, made many a deep search into their own hearts, walked with much conscientious watchfulness and tenderness, proposed many a serious case of Conscience to the most judicious and skilful Ministers and Christians; and after all, the security is not such as fully satisfies: and probably one reason of

it may be the great weight wherewith the matters of this Salvation lie upon their spirits. O that these Soul-concerns did bear upon all, as they do upon some: it requires more time, more thoughts, more prayers to make these things sure, than most are aware of.

If the Soul be so precious, then certainly it is the special care of Heaven, that which God looks more particularly after, than any other Creature on Earth. Inf. III.

There is an active vigilant Providence that superintends every Creature upon Earth: there is not the most despicable diminutive Creature that lives in the World, left without the line of Providence. God is therefore said to give them all their meat in due season, and for that end they all wait upon him, *Psal.* 104. 27. as a great and provident House-keeper orders daily convenient provisions for all his Family, even to the least and lowest among them: the smallest Insects and Gnats which swarm so thick in the Air, and of the usefulness of whose Being it is hard to give an account; yet, as the incomparably learned Dr. *Morè* well observes, these all find nourishment in the World, which would be lost if they did not, and are again convenient nourishment themselves to others that prey upon them.

But Man is the peculiar, special care of God, and the Soul of man much more than the Body. Hence Christ fortifies the Faith of Christians against all distrusts of Divine Providence, even from their excellency above other Creatures; *Math.* 10. 31. *Ten are of more value than many Sparrows: and Math.* 6. 26. your heavenly Father feeds the Fowls of the Air, and are ye not much better than they? and *vers.* 30. he clothes the grass of the field, and shall he not much more clothe you? And so the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 9. 9. *Doth God take care for Oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt this is written.* In all which places the dignity of Man above all Animals and Vegetables, in respect of the natural excellency of his reasonable Soul, but especially the gracious endowments of it, which endear it far more to its Maker; this is the very hinge of the Argument, and a firm ground for the Believer's Faith of God's tender care over both parts, but especially the Soul. The Body of a Believer is God's Creature as well as his Soul; but that being of less value, hath not such a degree of care and tenderness expressed towards it, as the Soul hath: the Father's care is not so much for the Child's clothes, as it is for the Child himself. Besides, the immediate wants and troubles of the Soul, which are *Idiopathetical*, are far more sharp and pinching than those it suffers upon the body's account, which are but *Sympathetical*; and therefore when-ever such an excellent Creature, as a sanctified Soul, which is in Christ, or a Soul designed to be sanctified, which is moving towards Christ, falls under those heavy pressures and distresses (as it often does) and is ready to fail; let it be assured its merciful Creator will not fail to relieve, support, revive, and deliver it as often as it shall fall into those deep distresses.

Hear how his compassionate tenderness is expressed towards distressed Souls, *Isa.* 49. 15. *Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her Womb?*

Antidote,
p. 82.

Providence
71.

Edwards

Womb? yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee.

Sooner shall a Woman, the more tender Sex, forget (not the Nurse-child that only sucks her Breast, but) the Child yea the Son of her Womb, and that not when grown and placed abroad, but whilst it hangs upon her Breast, and draws love from her Heart, as well as milk from her Breast; than God will forget a Soul that fears him. Let gracious Souls fortify their Faith therefore in the Divine Care, by considering with what peculiar eye of estimation and care God looks upon them above all other Creatures in the World: only beware you to eye not the natural or spiritual Excellencies of your Souls, as to expect Mercy for the sake thereof, as if your Souls were worthy for whose sake God should do this: no, no, Sin hath nonsuited that Plea, all is of free Grace, not of Debt; but he minds us what reputation the new Creation brings the Soul with its God.

Inf. IV. If the Soul of Man be so precious, how precious and dear to all Believers should the Redeemer and Saviour of their precious Souls be?

Unto you therefore that believe, he is precious, faith the Apostle, 1 Pet. 2. 7. tho' he be yet out of our sight, he should never be one whole hour together out of our hearts and thoughts: 1 Pet. 1. 8. Whom having not seen ye love; whom tho' now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unfeignable and full of glory. The very Name of Christ, faith Bernard, is Honey in the Mouth, Melody in the Ear, and a very Jubilee in the Heart. The blessed Martyr Mr. Lambert made this his Motto, None but Christ, none but Christ. Molinus was seldom observ'd to mention his Name without dropping Eyes. Julius Palmer in the midst of the flames moved his scorched lips, and was heard to say, Sweet Jesus, and fell asleep. Paul fastens upon his Name as a Bee upon a sweet flower, and mentions it no less than ten times in the compass of ten verses, 1 Cor. 1. as if he knew not how to leave it.

There is a twofold preciousness of Christ, one in respect of his essential Excellency and Glory; in this respect he is glorious as the only begotten Son of God, the brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image or Character of his Person, Heb. 1. the other is in respect of his relative usefulness and suitability to all the needs and wants of poor Sinners; as he is the Lord our Righteousness, made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption: none discern this preciousness of Christ, but those that have been convinced of Sin, and have apprehended the Wrath to come, the just demerit of Sin, and fled for refuge to the hope set before them: and to them he is precious indeed. Consider him as a Saviour from Wrath to come, and he will appear the most lovely and desirable in all the World to your Souls: he that understands the value of his own Soul, the dreadful nature of the Wrath of God, the near approaches of the Wrath to his own Soul, and the astonishing Love of Christ in delivering him from it, by bearing that Wrath in his place and room in his own Person, cannot chuse but estimate Christ above ten thousand Worlds.

Inf. V. How great a trust and charge lieth upon them to whom the care of Souls is committed, and from

whom an account for other Men, as well as their own Souls shall certainly be required?

Ministers are appointed of God to watch for the Souls of their People, and that as Men that must give an account, Heb. 13. 17. The word here translated watch, signifies such a watchfulness as that of Shepherds who keep their Flocks by night in places infested by Wolves, and watch whole nights together for their safety. If a Man were a keeper only of Sheep or Swine, it were no great matter if the Wolf now and then carried away one whilst he slept; but Ministers have charge of Souls, one of which, as Christ assures us in the Text, is more worth than the whole World. Hear what one speaks upon this point.

'God purchased the Church with his own Blood: Oh what an Argument is here to quicken the negligent and what an Argument to condemn those that will not be quickened up to their Duty by it? O, faith one of the ancient Doctors, if Christ had but committed to my keeping one spoonful of his Blood in a fragile glass, how curiously should I preserve it, and how tender should I be of that glass! If then he have committed to me the purchase of that Blood, should I not carefully look to my charge?

'What, Sirs, shall we despise the Blood of Christ? shall we think it was shed for them that are not worthy of our care? O then let us hear those Arguments of Christ whenever we feel our selves grow dull and careless. Did I die for them, and wilt thou not look after them! Were they worth my Blood, and are they not worth thy Labour? Did I come down from Heaven to Earth, to seek and to save that which is lost: and wilt thou go to the next Door, or Street, or Village, to seek them? How small is thy labour or condescension to mine? I debated my self to this, but it is thy honour to be employed.

Let not that Man think to be saved by the Blood of Christ himself, that makes light of precious Souls, who are the purchase of that Blood.

And no less charge lieth upon Parents, to whom God hath committed the care of their Childrens Souls; and Masters that have the Guardianship of the Souls as well as Bodies of their Families: the command is laid immediately upon you, that they sanctify God's Sabbaths, Exod. 20. 10. to command your household in the way of the Lord Gen. 18. 19.

O Parents, consider with your selves what strong engagements lie upon you to do all you are capable of doing for the salvation of the precious Souls of your dear Children. Remember, their Souls are infinitely of more value than their Bodies; that they came into the World under Sin and Condemnation; that you were the instruments of propagating that sin to them, and bringing them into that Misery; that you know their Dispositions, and how to suite them better than others can; that the Bonds of Nature give you singular advantages to prevail, and be successful in your exhortations beyond what any others have; that you are always with them, and can chuse opportunities, which others cannot; that you and they must shortly part, and never meet again, till you meet at the Judgment-seat of Christ; that it will be unconceivably dreadful

Mel in ore, melos in aure, jubulum in corde. Bern.

Arg. 1. 2. eff. the bodies in such a manner as to be good for the multitude.

Gildas Salvian, p. 26.

to see them stand at Christ's Left-hand among the cursed and condemned, there cursing the day that ever they were born of such ignorant and negligent, such careless and cruel Parents as took no care, to instruct, reprove, or exhort them. O who can think without horror of the cries and curses of his own Child in Hell, cast away by the very instrument of its Being?

Is this the love you bear them, to betray them to eternal misery? Was there no other provision to be made, but for their Bodies? Did you think you had fully acquitted your duty, when you had got an Estate for them? O that God would effectually touch your Hearts with a becoming sense of the value and danger of their Souls, and your own too, in the neglect of that great and solemn trust committed to you with respect to them. And you Masters, consider, tho' God hath set you above, and your Servants below, yet are their Souls equally precious with yours: they have another Master that expects service from them, as well as you: do not only allow them time, but give them your exhortations and commands, not to neglect their own Souls, whilst they attend your business: think not your business will prosper the less, because it is in the hand of a praying Servant; their Souls are of greater concernment than any business of yours can be.

Inf. VI. *Are Souls so precious? then certainly the means and instruments of their Salvation must be exceeding precious too, and the removal of them a fore Judgement.*

The dignity of the Subject gives value to the instruments employ'd about it. It is no ordinary mercy for Souls to come into such a part of the World, and in such a time as furnisheth them with the best helps for Salvation. Ordinances and Ministers receive their value not only from their *Author*, but their *Object*: they have a dignity stamp upon them by their usefulness to the Souls of Men, *Acts* 20. 32. it is the seed of Life, *1 Pet.* 1. 23. the regenerating instrument. It is the bread of Life and *Job* 23. 12. more than our necessary food. The Word is a Light shining in the dark World to direct our Souls through all the snares laid for them, unto Glory. It is the Soul's *Cordial* in all the fainting fits, *Psal.* 119. 50. What shall I say of the Word and Ordinances of God, the Sun that shines in Heaven to give us light? the Fountains, Springs and Rivers that stream for our refreshment, the Corn and Cattle on the Earth, yea the very Air we breathe in, is not so useful, so necessary, so precious to our Bodies, as the World is to our Souls.

It cannot therefore but be a fore Judgement, and a dreadful token of God's indignation and Wrath to hell, a restraint or scarcity of the means of Salvation among us; but should there be (which God in mercy prevent) a removal and total loss of these things, Wrath would then come upon us to the uttermost. What will the condition of precious Souls be, when the means of Salvation are cut off from them? When that famine, worse than of Bread and Water, is come upon them? *Amos* 8. 11. When the Ark of God (the Symbol of his Presence) was taken, it is said, *1 Sam.* 4. 13. *Thus all the City cried out.* When Paul took his

leave of *Antioch*, and told them they should see his face no more, how did the poor Christians lament and mourn, as cut at the heart by that killing word? *Acts* 20. 37. 38. It made Christ's Bowels to yern and roll within him, when he saw the multitude scatter'd as sheep having no shepherd, *Mat.* 9. 36.

Matthew Paris tells us in the year 1072 when Preaching was suppress'd at *Rome*. Letters were framed as coming from Hell wherein the Devil gave them thanks for the multitude of Souls sent to him that year: but we need no Letters from Hell, we have a sad account from Heaven in what a sad state those Souls are left from whom the means of Salvation are cut off: *Where no Vision is, the People perish, Prov.* 29. 18. and *Hosea.* 4. 6. *My People are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*

'Tis sad when those Stars that guide Souls to Christ (as that which the wise Men saw did) are set, and wandering Stars shall shine in their places. O if God remove the Golden Candlestick out of its place, what but the desolation and ruin of millions of Souls must follow?

We account it insufferable cruelty for a Man to undertake the piloting of a Shipfull of Passengers, who never learnt his *Compass*; or an ignorant *Empirick* to get his living by killing Mens Bodies; but much more lamentable will the state of Souls be, if ever they fall (which God in mercy prevent) into the hands of Popish Guides, or blind Leaders of the blind.

If the Soul be of so precious a nature it can never live upon such base and vile food as earthly things are.

Inf. VII.

The Apostle, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. calls the things of this World *Dogs meat*, and judg if that be *Σκύλα* proper food for such noble and high-born *ἄνθρωποι*, Creatures as our Souls are. An immaterial Being, can never live upon material things; *ἄνευ* they are no bread for Souls, as the Prophet *ἰσα.* id speaks, *Isa.* 55. 2. *Why do ye spend Money* (i. quod à nobis rejectum projicitur canibus. time and pains, thought and cares) *for that which is not bread?* Your Souls can no more live upon carnal, than your Bodies on spiritual things. Earthly things have a double defect in them, by reason whereof they are called things of nought: *Amos* 6. 13. of no worth or value: they are neither *sustainable* nor *durable*, and therefore in the Soul's eye not *valuable*.

1. They are not *sustainable*. What are Corn and Wine, Gold and Silver, Pleasures and Honours to the Soul? The body and bodily senses can find somewhat of refreshment in them; but not the Spirit: that which is bread to the Body, affords no more nourishment to the Soul than Wind or Ashes, *Isa.* 44. 20. *He feedeth of Ashes.* Ashes are that light and dry matter into which fuel is reduced by the fire: the fuel before it was burnt, had nothing in it fit for nourishment; or if the sap or juice that was in it might in any respect be useful that way, yet all that is devoured and lick't up by the fire, and not the least nutriment left in the Ashes; and such are all earthly things to the Soul of Man: *I am the Bread of Life*, saith Christ. A Soul can feed and feast it self upon Christ and the Promises, these are things full of marrow and fatness, substantial and proper Soul-nutrimment.

2. As earthly things are no way *sustainable* to the Soul, so neither are they *durable*. The Apostle reduceth all earthly things to three heads,

Cinis est
crassior il-
la materia
in quam
combustum redi-
gitur.

heads, the lust of the Eye, the lust of the Flesh, and the pride of Life, 1 *Joh.* 2. 16. he calls them all by the name of that which gives the lustre and beauty to them, and pronounceth them all fading, transitory Vanities, they all *pass away*; as time, so these things that are measured by time, are *in fluxu continuo*, always going, and at last will be all gone. Now the Soul being of an immortal nature, and these things of a perishing nature; it must necessarily and unavoidably follow, that the Soul must overlive them all: and if it will do so, what a dismal case are those Souls in, for whom no other provision is made, but that on which it cannot subsist whilst it hath them, no more than the Body can upon Air or Wind? and if it could, yet they will shortly fail it, and pass away for ever. So then it is beyond debate, that there lies a plain necessity upon every Man to make provision in time of things more sutable and durable than earthly Treasures are, or the Soul must perish as to its comfort to all eternity.

Hence is that weighty counsel of him that came to save them, *Luke* 12. 23. *Provide yourselves that wax not old, a treasure in Heaven that faileth not, (c. c.)* a happiness which will at last as long as your Souls last. Certainly the moth-eaten things of this World are no provision for immortal Spirits, and yet multitudes think of no other provision for them, but live as if they had nothing to do in this World but to get an Estate.

Alas! what are all these things to the Soul? They signify somewhat indeed to the Body, and that but for a little time; for after the Resurrection the Bodies of the Saints become spiritual in their qualities, and no more need these material things than the Angels do: 'Tis madness therefore to be so intent upon cares for the Body, as to neglect the Soul; but to ruin the Soul and drown it in perdition for the sake of these provisions for the flesh, is the height of madness.

Inf. VIII. *If the Soul be so invaluablely precious, then it is a rational and well advised resolution and practice to expose all other things to hazard, yea to certain loss, for the preservation of the more precious Soul.*

'Tis better our Bodies and all their comforts should perish, than our Souls should perish for their sakes. Nature teaches us to offer a hand or arm to the stroke of a Sword, to save a blow from the head, or put by a thrust at the heart. It is recorded to the praise of those three Worthies, *Dan.* 3. 28. *That they yielded their Bodies that they might not serve nor worship any God, except their own God.* By this rule all the Martyrs of Christ governed themselves, still slighting and exposing to ruin their Bodies and Estates to preserve their Souls, reckoning to save nothing by Religion but their Souls, and that they had lost nothing, if they could save them; *They loved not their lives unto the death, Rev.* 12. 11

Then do we live like Christians, when the care of our Bodies is swallowed up and subdued by that of our Souls, and all Creature-loves by the love of Christ. Those blessed Souls hated their own Bodies, and counted them their enemies, when they would draw them from Christ and his Truths, and plunge their Souls into guilt and danger. This was the result of all their debates with the flesh in the hour of temptation; Cannot we live but to the dishonour

of Christ and, ruin of our own Souls by sinful compliance against our Consciences; then welcome the worst of Deaths rather; than such a Life.

Look into the stories of the Martyrs, and you shall find this was the rule they still governed themselves by; a Dungeon, a Stake, a Gibbet, any thing rather than guilt upon the inner Man: Death was welcome even in its most dreadful form, to escape ruin to their precious and immortal Souls. One kissed the Apparitor that brought him the tidings of death. Another being advised, when he came to the critical point on which his life depended, to have a care of himself: So I will, said he, I will be as careful as I can of my best self, my Soul. These Men understood the value and precious worth of their own Souls; certainly we shall never prove courageous and constant in Sufferings, till we understand the worth of our Souls, as they did. Consider and compare these Sufferings in a few obvious particulars, and then determine the matter in thine own breast.

(1.) How much easier it is to endure the torments of Men in our Bodies, than to feel the terrors of God in our Consciences. Can the Creature strike with an Arm like God? O think what it is for the Wrath of God to come into a Man's bowels like water, and like oil into his bones, as the expression is, *Psal.* 109. 18. Sure there is no compare betwixt the Strokes of God and Men.

(2.) The Sufferings of the Body are but for a moment. When the *Proconsul* told *Polycarp* that he would tame him with Fire: he replied, Your Fire shall burn but for the space of an hour, and then it shall be extinguished; but the fire that shall devour the Wicked will never be quenched: The sufferings of a moment are nothing to eternal sufferings.

(3.) Sufferings for Christ are usually sweetened and made easy by the consolations of the Spirit; but Hell-torments have no relief, they admit of no ease.

(4.) The life you shall live in that body, for whose sake you have damned your Souls, will not be worth the having; it will be a life without comfort, light or joy; and what is there in Life separate from the joy and comfort of life?

(5.) In a word, if you sacrifice your Bodies for God and your Souls, freely offer them up in love to Christ and his Truth, your Souls will joyfully receive and meet them again at the Resurrection of the Just; but if your poor Souls be now ensnared and destroyed by their fond indulgence to their Bodies, you will leave them at Death despairing, and meet them at the Resurrection howling.

To conclude, *If the Soul be so invaluablely precious, how great and irreparable a loss must the loss of a Soul to all Eternity be!*

There is a double loss of the Soul of Man, the one in *Adam*, which loss is recoverable by Christ; the other by final impenitence and unbelief, cutting it off from Christ, in this is irreparable and irrecoverable. Souls lost by *Adam's* sin are within the reach of the arms of Christ; but in the shipwreck of personal infidelity there is no plank to save the Soul so cast away: Of all losses this is the most lamentable, yet what more common? O what a shriek doth the unregenerate Soul make, when it sees whereto

whereto it must, and that there is no remedy ! Three Cries are dreadful to hear on Earth, yet all three are drown'd by a more terrible Cry in the other World. The cry of a condemned Prisoner at the Bar, the cry of drowning Seamen and Passengers in a shipwreck, the cries of Soldiers conquer'd in the field ; all these are fearful Cries, yet nothing to that of a Soul cast away to all Eternity, and lost in the depth of Hell.

If a Man, as *Chrysoſtom* well observes, lose an Eye, an Arm, a Hand, or Leg, it is a great loss ; but yet if one be lost, there is another to help him : for *omnia Deus dedit duplicia*, God hath given us all those members double ; *Animam verò unam*, but we have but one Soul, and if that be damned, there is not another to be saved.

And it is no small aggravation to this loss, that it was a wilful loss. We had the offers and means of Salvation plentifully afforded us : we were warn'd of this danger over and over : we were intreated and beseech'd upon the knee of importunity, not to throw away our Souls by an obstinate rejection of Christ and Grace : we saw the diligence and care of others for the salvation of their Souls ; some rejoicing in the comfortable assurance of it, and others giving all diligence to make their Calling and Election sure ; we knew that our Souls were as capable of blessedness as any of those that are in enjoying God in Heaven, or panting after that enjoyment on Earth : yea, some Souls that are now irrecoverably gone, and many others who are going after them, once were, and now are not far from the Kingdom of God : they had convictions of sin, a sense of their lost and miserable state ; they began to treat with Christ in Prayer, to converse with his Ministers and People about their condition : and after all this, even when they seemed to have clean escaped the snares of Satan, to be again intangled and overcome ; when even come to Harbours mouth, to be driven back again, and cast away upon the Rocks : O what a loss will this be !

O thou that createdst Souls with a capacity to know, love, and enjoy thee for ever ; who out of thine unsearchable Grace sentest thine own Son out of thy bosom to seek and save that which was lost, pity those poor Souls that cannot pity themselves : let Mercy yet interpose it self betwixt them and eternal ruin ; awaken them out of their pleasant slumber, tho' it be at the brink of damnation, lest they perish, and there be none to deliver them.

Deut. II. How precious and invaluable forever the Soul of Man is, it may be lost and cast away for ever.

This Proposition is supposed and implied in our Saviour's words in the Text, and plainly expressed in *Mat. 7. 13. Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.* The way to Hell is throng'd with Passengers, 'tis a beaten road, one draws another along with him, and scoffs at them that are afraid to follow, i

Infernus ab inferendo dicitur, quia ita inferuntur & precipitantur, ut nunquam ascensuri sint.

Vol. I.

as Satan and their own lusts can hurry them onward. You read not only of single persons, but whole Nations drown'd in this Gulph, *Psal. 9. 17. The Wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God.* How rare is the conversion of a Soul in the dark places of the Earth, where the sound of the Gospel is not heard ? the Devil drives them along in huge droves to destruction, scarce a man reluctant or hanging back.

And tho' some Nations enjoy the inestimable privilege of the Gospel of Salvation ; yet multitudes of precious Souls perish notwithstanding, sinking into Hell daily as it were betwixt the merciful arms of a Saviour stretched out to save them. The light of Salvation is risen upon us, but Satan draws the thick curtains of ignorance and prejudice about the multitude, that not a beam of saving light can shine into their hearts : *2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost : In whom the God of this World hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

If our Gospel] Ours, not by way of institution, as the Authors, but by way of dispensation, as the Ministers and Preachers of it : and certainly it was never preached with that clearness, authority, and efficacy by any meer man, as it was by *Paul* and the rest of the *Apostles* ; and yet the Gospel so powerfully preached, is by him here supposed to

Be hid] If not as two the general light and superficial knowledge of it, yet as to its saving influence and converting efficacy upon their hearts ; this never reacheth home to the Souls and Spirits of multitudes that hear it : but it is never finally so hidden, except

To them that are lost.] So that all those to whom the converting and saving power of the Gospel never comes, whatever other knowledge they have, whatever duties they perform, whatever names and reputations they may have among men, yet this Text looks upon them all as a lost generation : they may have as many amiable hominical Vertues, as sweet and lovely Natures, as clear and piercing Eyes in all other things as any others ; but they are such however

Whose eyes the God of this World hath blinded.] Satan is here called the God of this World, not properly, but by a *Mimesis*, because he challenges to himself the honour of a God, and hath a world of Subjects that obey him ; and to secure their obedience, he blinds them, that they may never see a better way or state than that he hath drawn them into. Therefore he is called the Ruler of the darkness of this World, who rules in the Hearts of the Children of disobedience. The eye of the Soul is the Mind, that thinking, considering and reasoning power of the Soul ; this is, as the *Philosophers* truly call it, the *ὁρμητικόν*, the leading faculty to all the rest, the Guide to all the other faculties, which in the order of nature follow this their Leader : if this be blinded, the Will which is *caca potestas* a blind power in it self, and all the Affections blindly following the Blind, all must needs fall into the ditch. And this is the case of the far greater part of even the professing World : Let us suppose a number of blind men upon

Kkkk

upon

upon an Island, where there are many smooth paths all leading to the top of a perpendicular Cliff; and these blind men going on continually, some in one path, and some in another, but all in some one of those many paths which lead to the brink of their ruin, which they see not, it must needs follow, if they all move forward, the whole number will in a short time be cast away, the Island clear'd, and its Inhabitants dead and lost in the bottom of the Sea. This is the case of the unregenerate World: they are now upon this habitable spot of Earth, environed with the vast Ocean of Eternity; there are multitudes of paths leading to eternal misery; one man takes this way, and another that: as it is *Isa. 53. 6. We have turned every one to his own way*; one to the way of Pride, another to the way of Covetousness, a third to the way of Perfection, a fourth to the way of Civility and Morality; and so on they go, not once making a stand, or questioning to what end it will bring them, till at last over they go to death, and we hear no more of them in this World; and thus one generation of sinners follows another, and they that come after applaud and approve those miserable wretches that went before them, *Psal. 49. 13.* and so Hell fills, and the World empties its Inhabitants daily into it. Now I will make it my work, out of a dear regard to the precious Souls of Men, and in hope to prevent (which the Lord in mercy grant) the loss and ruin of some under whose eyes this Discourse shall fall, to note some of the principal ways in which precious Souls are lost, and to put such bars into them as I am capable to put; and, among many more, I will set a mark upon these following twelve paths, wherein millions of Souls have been lost, and millions more are confidently and securely following after, among which 'tis likely some are within one step, one day or hour to their eternal downfall and destruction. There is but one way in all the world to save and preserve the precious Souls of Men, but there are many ways to lose and destroy them: it is here, as it is in our natural Birth and Death, but one way into the World, but a multitude out of it. And first,

The first way to Hell discovered.

I. And to begin where indeed the ruin of very many doth begin, it will be found that an ill Education is the high way to destruction; Vice need not be planted; if the Gardener neglect to dress, sow, and manure his Garden, he need not give the Weeds a greater advantage; but if he also scatter the seed of Hemlock, Docks, and Nettles into it, he spoils it, and makes it fit for nothing. Many Parents, and those godly too, are guilty of too many neglects through carelessness, worldly encumbrances, or fond indulgence; and whilst they neglect the season of sowing better seed, the Devil takes hold of it; if they will not improvise it, he will; if they teach them not to pray, he will teach them to curse, swear, and lie; if they put not the Bible or Catechism into their hands, he will put obscene Ballads into them: and thus the off-spring of many godly Parents turn into degenerate Plants, and prove a generation that know not the God of their Fathers. This debauch'd Age can furnish us with too many sad instances hereof. Thus they are spoiled in the bud; simple ignorance in youth becomes affected and wilful ignorance in age; blushing sins

in children become impudent sins in age; and all this for want of a timely and prudent preventing care. Others there are of the rude and ignorant multitude, who are bred themselves much like the Beasts they daily converse withal; and so they are fitly described, *Job 30. 6, 7.* Go into their houses, and you may sooner find in the window, or upon the shelf, a pack of Cards than a Bible or a Catechism; their Beds and Tables differ little or not at all from the Stalls and Cribs where Beasts lie down and feed, in respect of any Worship of God among them: or if for fashion-sake a few words be huddl'd over in the evening when their Bodies are tir'd, the Man saith something, he scarce knows what, the Wife is asleep in one corner, the Children in another, and the Servants in a third. This is the Education multitudes of Parents give their Children all the week; and when the Sabbath comes, the most they learn to know at Church is where their own seat stands, and that it is necessary to speak with such a neighbour after Prayers, about such or such a bargain or business for the next week.

And others there are who breed their Children as profanely as these do foolishly, teaching them by their examples the newest Oaths that were last minted in Hell, and to revile and scoff all serious Godliness and the sincere Professors of it, smiling to hear with what an Emphasis they can talk in the Dialect of Devils, and how wittily they can droll upon godly Ministers and Christians.

Such Families are Nurseries for Hell; and tho' God by an extraordinary hand of Providence now and then snatch a Soul by conversion from among them, as a brand out of the fire, yet generally they die as they live, going to the generation of their Fathers, where they shall never see light, *Psal. 49. 19.* I know Education and Regeneration are two things; but I also know one is frequently made the instrument of the other, and that the savour of what first seasons our youth (generally) abides to old age, *Prov. 22. 6.* We may observe all the World over, how tenacious Men are of that which is *imprimis*, delivered to them by their Parents. Oh! what a cut must it be to the heart of that Father, whose Son's life shall tell his conscience what a profane Son's lips once told his Father to his Face: *If I have done evil, I have Si mali learn it of you!* Had they felt more of your prudent correction, it might have prevented their destruction: *Prov. 23. 14. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.* That this is a common beaten path to Hell, is beyond all question; but how to bar it up, and stop the multitudes that are engaged in it to their own ruin, this is the labour, this is the work. I cannot be large, but I will offer a few weighty Considerations.

The first way to Hell barr'd.

1. Let all Parents consider what a fearful thing it is to be the instruments of ruining for ever those that received their Beings instrumentally from them; and to seek whose good they stand obliged by all the Laws of God and Nature.

In vain are all your cares and studies for their Bodies, whilst their Souls perish for want of knowledge. You rejoiced at their Birth, but they will have cause to curse the day they were born

Quoted
est imho
recent.

Si mali
fecit, a te
didici.

born of you, and say, *Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which I was conceived.* You were solicitous for their Bodies, but careless of their Souls; earnest to see them rich, but indifferent whether they were gracious; you neglected to teach them the way of salvation; but the Devil did not neglect to teach them the way of sin. You will one day wish you had never been Parents, when the doleful cries of your damned children shall ring such notes as these in your ears: *Oh cursed Father! Oh cruel merciless Mother! whose Examples have drawn me after you into all this misery. You had time enough, and motives enough to have warned me of this place and misery whilst my heart was tender, and my affections pliable: Had it not been as easy to have put a Bible as a Play-book before me? To have chastised me when I provoked God by sin, as when I provoked you about a trifle? One word spoken in season might have saved my Soul; one reproof wisely given, and set on by your example, might have preserved me. Had it not been the same pains to have asked me, Child, what wilt thou do to be saved? as, what wilt thou do to live in the World? Or had I but observed any serious Religion in you, had I but found or heard my Father or Mother upon their knees in Prayer, it might have awakened me to a consideration of my condition. In my youth I was shame-faced, fearful, credulous, and apt to imitate; had you had but Wisdom, as other Parents have, to have taken hold of any of these handles in time, you had rescued my Soul from Hell. Nay, so cruel have you been to your own Child, that you allowed me no time (if I had had a disposition) for any exercise of Religion; yea, you have quenched and stifled the sparks of convictions and better inclinations that sometimes were in my heart. Oh! happy had it been, if I had never been born of you, or seen your faces. This must be the result and issue of your negligence, except God by some other hand (which is no thanks to you) rescue them from their impending ruin.*

2. Let all Children, whose unhappy lot it is to be born of, and educated by carnal and irreligious Parents, consider God hath endued them with Reason, and a Conscience of their own, to enable them to make a better choice than their Parents did, and that there is no taking Sanctuary from the Wrath of God in their Parents examples. We read in *1 Kings 14. 13.* of a good *Abijah*, in whom was found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam. Here was a Child that would not follow his wicked Father to Hell, tho' he had both the Authority of a Father and of a King over him. You must honour your Parents, but still you must prefer your God before them. God will never lay it to your account as your sin, but place it to the account of your duty and comfort, that you refused to follow them in the paths of sin and destruction. No law of God, no tie of Nature, binds you to obey their commands, or tread in their steps, farther than they command in God's Authority and Name, and walk in his Ways. Your temptations indeed are strong, and disadvantages great, but the greater will the mercy of your deliverance be. It will be no Plea for you at the Judgment-seat to say, Lord, my Father or Mother did so and so before me, and I thought I might safely follow them; or thus and thus they commanded me, and I thought

I was bound by thy command to obey them: therefore look to your own Souls, if they be so desperate to cast away their own. If some Children had not minded their own Salvation more than their Parents minded it, they had never been saved.

3. Let this consideration work upon the hearts and bowels of all serious Christians to pity and help those that are like to perish under this temptation; and if their Parents be so ignorant that they cannot, or so negligent that they do not instruct and warn their own Children, you that at anytime have an opportunity to help them, have compassion on them, and do it. 'Tis true, they are none of your Children by Nature: but would it not be a singular honour and comfort to you, if God should make them so by Grace? Thousands of Children (and it may be some of you) are more indebted to meer strangers upon this account, than to their nearest Relations; you know not how much good an occasional word may do them: all have not ability to be so publicly useful this way, as a late worthy Minister of our own Nation hath been, who in compassion to the dark and barbarous corners in *Wales*, where Ignorance and Poverty shut up the way of Salvation to them, at a vast expence procured the Translation and Printing of the Bible in their own Tongue, and freely sent it among them. Oh you that have the bowels of Christians in you, pity and help them! What is it, for the saving of a precious Soul, to drop a serious Exhortation, as you have opportunity, upon them, to bestow a Bible or futable Book upon them? Believe it, these little number of shillings and pence so bestow'd, will stand for more in the Audit-day, than all the hundreds and thousands other ways expended.

The second way to Hell discovered.

II. A second way to Hell, in which multitudes are found hastning to their own Damnation, is the way of *affected Ignorance*. The generality of people, even in a Land enlightened with the Gospel, are found grossly ignorant of Christ, the true and only way to Heaven, and of Repentance and Faith, the only way to Christ; and thus the people perish for want of knowledge, *Hos. 4. 6.* If the Tree of knowledge had been hedg'd in from the common people, as it is in Popish Countries, and it had been criminal to find a Bible in our houses, there might have been some cloke and pretence for our ignorance; but to be stupidly ignorant of the most obvious, plain and necessary Truths, and yet bred up among Bibles and Ministers, Oh! how ominous a darkness is this, foreboding the blackness of darkness for ever! For if the hiding of the Gospel from the hearts of Men be a token to them that they are lost Souls, how much notional light soever they may have; much more must they be lost to all intents, from whose hearts and heads too it is judiciously hidden. They that know not God, are in the catalogue of the Damned, *2 Thess. 1. 8.* And if this be life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent; then this must be death eternal, to be grossly and affectedly ignorant both of God the End, and Christ the Way, by the Rule of true Opposition, *Joh.*

17. 3. Look over the several Countries in the professing

felling World, go into the Families of Country-farmers, Day-labourers, and poor people, and except here and there a family or person into whose heart God hath graciously shined, what barbarous brutish ignorance overspreads them! They converse from morning to night with Beasts, tho' they have Souls which are fit Companions for Angels, and capable of sweet converse with God, The Earth hath open'd her mouth, and swallowed up all their time, strength, thoughts, and Souls, as it did the bodies of *Corah* and his Company. They know the value of a Horse or Cow, but know not the worth of Christ, Pardon, or their own Souls. They mind daily what work they have to do with their hands, but forget all they have to do upon their knees. Their whole care is to pay their Fine or Rent to their Landlord, but not a thought who shall pay their debts to God. They are so far from putting unnecessary business aside to make way for the service of God, that God's service is put aside as an unnecessary business, to make way for the World: the World holds them fast till they are asleep, and will be sure to visit them as soon as their eyes are open, that there may be no vacancy or door of opportunity left open for a thought of their Souls, or another life to slip in. Or if at any time they think or speak of these matters, then the World, like *Pharaoh* when *Moses* spake of sacrificing, is sure to speak of more work.

And thus they live and die without knowledge: there is no key of knowledge (as it is fitly called, *Luke 11. 52.*) to open the door of the Soul to Christ, he and his Ministers therefore must stand without; pity they may, but help they cannot till knowledge open the door, Satan is Ruler of the darkness of this World, *Eph. 6. 12.* that is, of all blind and ignorant Souls. Ignorance is the chain with which he binds them fast to himself; and till that Chain be knockt off by Divine Illumination, they cannot be emancipated and made free of Christ's Kingdom; *Acts 26. 18.* *To turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.* Ignorance indeed incapacitates a man to commit the unpardonable sin; but what the near, whilst it disposes him to all other sins which damn as well as that? By Ignorance it is that all the Essays of the Gospel for Mens Salvation are frustrated; that naked Assent is put in the place of saving Faith, Morality mistaken for Regeneration, a few dead Duties laid in the room of Christ and his Righteousness. Indeed it would fill a greater Book than this to shew the mischievous effects of Ignorance, and how many ways it destroys the precious Souls of men; but seeing I can speak but little in this place to it, let me bar up this way to Hell, if it be possible, by a few serious Considerations.

The second way to Hell shut up.

1. Let the Ignorant consider, God hath created their Souls with a capacity of knowing him and enjoying him, as well as others that are sam'd in the world for Knowledge and Wisdom. *There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.* The faculty is in Man, but the wisdom and knowledge that enlightens it, from God; as the *Dial* shews the hour of the day, when the

Sun beams fall upon it. If therefore God be sought unto in the use of such helps and means as you have, even the weakest and dullest Soul hath a capacity of being made wife unto Salvation. *Psal. 19. 7. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.*

Augustine tells us of a Man so weak and simple, that he was commonly reputed a Fool in all the Neighbourhood; and yet saith, I believe the grace and tear of God was in him: for when he heard any swear, or take the Name of God in vain, he would throw stones at them, and shew his indignation against sin, by all the signs he could make.

2. You that are so grossly ignorant in the matters of your Salvation, are many of you very knowing, prudent, and subtle persons in the affairs of the world. *Luke 16. 8. The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.* Had those parts, which you have been improved and heightened by study and observation about spirituals, as they have been about earthly things, you had neither been so ignorant or dead-hearted as you are; you might have been as well vers'd in your Bibles, as you are in the *Almanack*; you yearly buy and study; you might have understood the proper seasons of Salvation, as well as of Husbandry. The great and necessary points on which your Salvation depends are not so many, or so abstruse and intricate, but your plain and inartificial heads might have understood them, and that with less pains than you have been at for your Bodies. What tho' you cannot comprehend the subtilties of School-men, you may apprehend the Essentials of Christianity. If you cannot strictly and scholastically define Faith; what hinders, if your hearts were set upon Christ and Salvation, but you may feel it? which is more than many learned men do that can define and dispute about it. You cannot put an Argument in Mood and Figure: no matter, if you can by comparing your Bibles and Hearts together draw savingly and experimentally this Conclusion. I am in Christ, and my sins are pardoned. You cannot determine whether Faith goes before Repentance, or Repentance before Faith; but for all that you might feel both the one and the other upon your own Souls, which is infinitely better. 'Tis not therefore your incapacity, but negligence and worldiness that is your ruin.

3. How many are there of your own rank, order, and education, all whose external advantages and helps you have, and all your incumbrances and discouragements they had, who yet have attain'd to an excellent degree of saving knowledge and heavenly wisdom? How often have I heard such spiritual, savoury, experimental Truths in Conference and Prayer from plain Rusticks, such spiritual Reasonings about the great Concerns of Salvation, such judicious and satisfying resolutions of Cases depending upon the sensible and experimental part of Religion, as have humbled, convinced, and shamed me, and made me say, *Surgens indoliti, &c.* these are the men that will take Heaven from the proud and scornful *Ingemio*s of the World; not many wife, not many learned and acute? Many knowing and learned Heads are in Hell, and many

many illiterate and weak ones gone to Heaven; and others in the way thither, who never had better Education, stronger Parts, or more Leisure than your selves: so that you are without excuse.

4. To conclude, Would you heartily seek it of God, and would the Spirit (which he hath promised to give them that ask him) become your Teacher, how soon would the light of the saving knowledge of God in the face of Christ shine into your hearts! No matter how ignorant, dull, and weak the Scholar be, if God once become the Teacher. You are not able to purchase, or want time to read many Books; but if once you were sanctified Persons, the anointing you would receive from the Father would teach you all things, *1 Joh. 2. 27.* your own hearts would serve you for a Commentary upon a great part of the Bible; it would make you of a quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: one drop of your knowledge would be more worth than all learned Arts and Sciences in the World to you. And is God so far from you, and his illuminating Spirit at such a distance, that there is no hope for you to find him? Is there never a private corner about your Houses or Barns, or in the Fields, where you can turn aside, if it be but a quarter of an hour at a time, to pour out your Souls to God, and beg the Spirit of him? Miserable wretch! is thy whole life such a cumber and clutter of cares and puzzles about the World, that thou hast no leisure to mind God, Soul, or Eternity? Oh doleful state! the Lord in mercy pity and awaken thee. Wilt thou not once strive and struggle to save thy Soul? What, perish as it were by consent! how great then is thy blindness!

The third way to Hell discovered.

III. A vast multitude of precious Souls are lost for ever, by following the Examples, and being carried away with the course of this World. 'Tis indeed a poor excuse, a silly argument, that the Multitude do as we do; yet, as *Junius* rightly observes, Mens Conscience takes Sanctuary here, and they think themselves safe in it: for thus they reason, *If I do as the generality do, I shall speed no worse than they speed; and certainly God is more merciful than to suffer the greatest part of Mankind to perish.* They resolve to follow the beaten Road, let it lead whither it will.

Thus the *Ephesians* in their unregenerate state walked according to the course of this world, *Eph. 2. 2.* and the *Corinthians* were carried away unto dumb Idols, even as they were led, *1 Cor. 12. 2.* just as a drop of Water is carried and moved according to the course and current of the Tide; for look as every drop of Water in the Sea is of one and the same common nature, so are all carnal and un sanctified persons; and as these Waters being collected into one vast body in the Ocean, unite their strength, and make a strong current this way or that: so doth the whole collective body of the unregenerate World, all the particular drops move as the Tide moveth. Hence they are said to have received the Spirit of the World, *1 Cor. 2. 12.* one common Spirit or Principle acts and rules them all, and therefore they must needs be carried away in the same course. And there are two special Considerations that seem to determine them, by a kind of

necessity to do as the multitude do; the one is, that they find it the easiest and most commodious way to the flesh, here they meet with quietness and safety; hereby they are exempt from reproaches, losses, persecutions, and distresses for Conscience-sake: Rest is sweet, and here only they think to find it. The other is the prejudice of singularity, and manifold tribulations they see that little handful that walk counter to the course of the World involved in; this startles them from their company, and fixes them where they are: Against such sensible Arguments it is to no more purpose to oppose spiritual Considerations, Motives drawn from the safety of the Soul, or importance of Eternity, than it is for a Man to turn the Tide or Course of a River with his weak breath.

Add to this, That as one finner confirms and fixeth another, wedging in each other, as Men in a crowd, who must move as it moves; so they make it their business to render all that differ from them odious and ridiculous. So the Apostle notes their practice, and Satan's policy in it, *1 Pet. 4. 4.* wherein they think it strange, that ye run not with them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you; *Ezek. 8. 3.* they gaze strangely at them, as the Hen that hath hatched Partridge-eggs, looks strangely after them when the fowls them take the wing, and soar aloft, not knowing that they are of a higher kind than her own Chickens. And that is not all; they not only gaze at them as a strange generation, making them signs and wonders in *Israel*, as the Prophet speaks; but they defame, revile, and speak evil of them, representing them as a pack of Hypocrites, as turbulent, factious, seditious persons, the very pests of the times and places they live in; and all this, not for doing any evil against them, but only for not doing evil with them, because they run not with them into the same excess of riot. Thus the World smiles upon its own, and derides those that are afraid to follow them to Hell, by which it sweeps away the multitude with it in the same course.

The third way to Hell shut up.

But oh! if the Spirit of God would please to set on and follow home the following Considerations to your hearts, you would certainly resolve to take a persecuted path to Heaven, tho' few accompany you therein, rather than swim like dead Fishes with the stream into the dead Sea of eternal misery.

1. Tho' you go with the consent and current of the World, yet you go against the express Law and prohibition of God. He hath laid his command upon you, *not to be conformed to the world*, *Rom. 12. 2.* *That you live not the rest of your time to the lusts of men, but to the will of God*, *1 Pet. 4. 2.* *That you follow not a multitude to do evil*, *Exod. 23. 2.* *That you go not in the way of evil men*, *Prov. 4. 14.* *That you have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.* All these, and many more, are commands flowing from the highest Sovereign Authority, obliging your Consciences to obedience under the greatest penalties; by them your state must be cast to all eternity in the day of Judgment: you may make a pill of the Precept, but see if you can do so of the Penalty.

2. Other men in all ages of the world, that were as much concerned in the world as you, and

Nemo er-
rat sibi ip-
si, sed de-
mentiam
pargit in
proximos.
Sen.

Quam fri-
gida & je-
juna sit co-
rum de-
fensio, qui
exemplo,
Et poten-
tiorum le-
turos pu-
tant? Jun.
Paral. 1. 2.
Argumen-
tum tur-
pissimum
est turba-
Sen.

and valued their lives, liberties, and estates as well as you, have yet got out of the crowd, disengaged themselves from the way of the multitude, and taken a more solitary and suffering path, out of a due regard to the safety of their Souls: And why should not you love them as well, and care for them as much as ever any that went before you did? *Noah* walked with God all alone, when all flesh had corrupted their ways. *Elijah* was zealous for the Lord, when he knew of none to stand by him, but thought he had been left alone. *Job* was upright with God in the Land of *Uz*. Lost food by himself a godly Nonconformist in a vile debauched *Sodom*. *David* was as a wonder to many: so was *Jeremiah* and those few with him for signs and wonders in *Israel*. I demand of your consciences, what discouragements have you that these men had not? or what encouragements had they that you have not? Why should not the Salvation of your Souls be as precious in your eyes, as theirs was in theirs? Shall you be impoverished and persecuted, if you embrace the way of Holiness? so were they. Shall you be reproached, scorned, and reviled? so were they. All your discouragements were theirs, and all their motives and encouragements are yours.

3. Is not the way which you have chosen marked out by Christ as the way to Destruction? and that which you dare not chuse and embrace, as the way to Life? See the marks he hath given you of both in that one Text, *Mat. 7. 13, 14.* Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. And where now is your encouragement and hope, that God will be more merciful than to damn so great a part of the World? If you will do as the *Mary* do, dream not of speeding as well as that little flock, separated by Sanctification from the Multitude, shall speed. You have your choice, to be damned with many, or saved with few; to take the broad smooth-beaten road to Hell, or the difficult, suffering, self-denying path to Heaven. Oh then make a seasonable necessary stand, and pause a while; consider your ways, and turn your feet to God's Testimonies: 'tis a great and special part of your Salvation to save your selves from this untoward generation.

The fourth way of losing the Soul opened.

IV. Multitudes of Souls are daily lost by rooted habits, and long-continued Custom in sin. When Men have been long settled in an evil way, they are difficultly reclaimed. Physicians find it hard to cure a *Cachexy*, or ill habit of body; but it's far more difficult to cure an ill custom and habit in sin. *Jer. 13. 23.* Can the *Leopard* change his spots, or the *Ethiopian* his skin? then may ye also do good, that have been accustomed to do evil. The spots of a *Leopard*, and the hue of an *Ethiopian*, are not by way of external accidental adhesion; if so, washing would fetch them off: but they are innate and contemper'd, belonging to the Constitution, and not to be alter'd; so are sinful habits and customs in the minds of sinners: by this means it becomes a second Nature as it were, and strongly determines the mind to sin. *A teneris*

assuescere multum est, It's a great matter to be accustomed to this way or that, saith *Seneca*; yea, *Caput rei est, hoc vel illo modo hominem assuescere*, 'Tis the very head or root of the matter to be so or so accustomed, saith *Aristotle*. Very much of the strength of sin rises from customary sinning. A brand that hath been once in the fire easily catches the second time. Every repeated act of sin lesseneth fear, and strengtheneth inclination. A Horse that took an ill stroke at first breaking, and hath continued many years in it, is very difficultly, if ever, to be brought to a better way. What men have been accustomed to from their childhood, they are tenacious of in their old age. Hence it is, so few are converted to Christ in their old age. It was recorded for a wonder in the primitive times, that *Marcus Cains Victorius* became a Christian in his old age. Time and usage fix the roots of sin deep in the Soul. Old Trees will not bow as tender Plants do. Hence all essays and attempts to draw men from the course they have walked in from their youth, are frustrate and successless. The Drunkard, the Adulterer, yea, the self-righteous Moralist, are by long-continued usage so fixed in their course, and all this while Conscience so stupified by often-repeated acts of sin, that it is naturally as impossible to remove a Mountain as a Sinner's Will thus confirmed in his Wickedness. However, let trial be made, and the success left to Him to whom no length of time, or difficulty, must be objected or opposed.

The fourth way to Hell shut up, by two considerations.

1. Let it be considered, the longer any man hath been engaged in, and accustomed to the way of sin, the more reason and need he hath speedily and without delay to repent, and reform his course; there is yet a possibility of Mercy, a season of Salvation left; how far soever a Soul be gone on towards Hell, none can say it is yet too late. When *Mr. Bilney* the Martyr heard a Minister preaching thus: *Oh thou old sinner, that hast gone on in a course of sin these fifty or sixty years, dost thou think that Christ will accept thee now, or take the Devil's leavings?* Good God! said he, what preaching of Christ is here! had such Doctrine been preached to me in the day of my troubles, it had been enough utterly to have discouraged me from Repentance and Faith. No, no, Sinner, it is not yet too late, if at last thy heart be touched with a real sense of thy sin and danger. The Word is plain, *Isa. 55. 7.* Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

An abundant pardon thou needest; thy sins by long-continued custom and frequent repetitions have been abundantly aggravated; and an abundant pardon is with God for poor sinners: he will abundantly pardon, but then thou must come up to his terms; thou must not expect pardon or mercy when thy sins have forsaken Thee, but upon thy forsaking Them, yea, such a forsaking as includes a resolution or decree in thy Will to return to them no more, *Hos. 14. 8.* there must be a change of thy way, and that not from Profaneness to Civility only, which is but to change one false way to Heaven for another, or the dirty road to Hell for a cleaner

liet

Breve est
quod de-
lectat, et
tenuum
quod cru-
ciat.

23. 32. If Sin did sting and bite at first, none would touch it ; but it tickles first, and wounds afterward. O what Man, that is in his wits, would purchase eternal Torments for the sensual, brutish pleasures of a moment ! But the Pleasures of Sin bewitch the Affections, blind the Judgment, stupify the Heart, so that sober and impartial thoughts find no place. The Heart is enticed, the Lusts are enraged ; cost what it will, sinners will gratify their Lusts.

3. If you are for pleasure, certainly you are out of the way to it, who seek it in the fulfilling of your Lusts. If your hearts were once sanctified, and brought under the government of the Spirit, you would quickly find a far more excellent pleasure in the *crucifying* of your Lusts, than now you seek in the gratification and fulfilling of them : *Rom. 8. 13. If ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live; i.e. ye shall live the most joyful, peaceful, and comfortable life of all persons in the world, a life of highest delight and true pleasure: for so far as your lusts are mortified, the vigorous healthful frame and due temper of your Souls is restored, and your evidences for Heaven cleared, both which are the springs of all spiritual delight and pleasure. Can any Creature-enjoyment, or any beastly Lust, afford a pleasure like this? Don't you find the life you live in sinful Pleasures quite beneath the dignity of a Man? and are they not followed with bitter after- reckonings, gripes, and flashes of Conscience? Even in the midst of laughter the heart is sad, and the end of that mirth is heaviness. Oh! ponder seriously what a trifle you sell your precious Souls for. Is it not a goodly price you value them at? the fugitive, empty, beastly pleasures of a moment for the torments of eternity!*

The sixth way of losing the Soul opened.

VI. There are also innumerable Souls lost for ever by the distracting cares of this World, which eat up all their time, thoughts, and studies, so that there is no room for Christ, or one serious hour about Salvation. It is too true an Observation that Sir *Walter Raleigh* made on the common Mechanicks and poor Labourers, their Bodies are the *Anvils* of pain, and their Souls the *Hives* of unnumbered cares and sorrows, whilst the voluptuous and rich spend their time and studies in purveying for new pleasures, and filling their heads with projects of that nature. The poorer sort have their heads and hearts filled day and night with anxious thoughts and cares how to get Bread, pay their Rent or Debts, and struggle thro' the miserable necessities that pinch them on every side; many Children it may be to provide for, and little or nothing out of which to make it: here is Brick to be made, and no straw to make it of; he borrows here to pay there; Debts increase, and Abilities decrease; he toils his Body all the day, and when his tired Carcase calls for rest to enable him for new work to-morrow, the cares of the World invade him upon his bed, and keep him sighing or musing there, when (poor man!) he had long enough before for one.

And now what room is there left for Salvation-work? or how can any spiritual seed that is cast into such a brake of thorns prosper? *The cares of this life* (saith Christ) *spring up and choke it, Mark 4. 19.* Tell not them of Heaven and

Christ, they must have Bread; talk not to them of the necessity or comfort of a pardon, they must pay their debts to Men. Oh the confused buzz and clutter that these thoughts and cares make in their heads! so that no other voice can be heard. And thus multitudes spend their whole life in a miserable servitude in this World, and by that are cast upon a more miserable and restless state for ever in the World to come; one Hell here, and another hereafter. And what shall be done for them? is there no way for their deliverance? Oh that God would direct and bless the following Considerations to them, if it may be expected they may at any time get through the Brake in which they are involved, and find them at leisure to bethink themselves!

The sixth way to Hell shut up by five Considerations.

1. Bethink thy self, poor Soul! as much as thou art involved and plunged in the necessities and distracting cares of this life; yet, many others, as poor, as necessitous, and every way as much embroil'd in the cares of the world as you are, have minded their Souls, and taken all care and pains for their Salvation notwithstanding: yea, tho' millions of your rank and order are destroyed by these snares of the Devil, yet God hath a very great number, indeed the greatest of any rank of Men, among those that are low, poor, and necessitous in the World. The Church is called *the Congregation of the poor*, *Psal. 74. 20.* because it consisteth mostly of men and women of the lowest and most despicable condition in this World. They are all poor in Spirit, and most of them poor in Purse. *Hearken, my beloved Brethren, (saith James) hath not God chosen the poor of this World, rich in Faith, and heirs of the Kingdom? Jam. 2. 5.*

Now if others, many others, as much entangled in the necessities, cares, and troubles of the World as you, have yet struggl'd through all those difficulties and discouragements to Heaven, why should not you strive for Christ and Salvation as well as they? Your Souls are as valuable as theirs, and their discouragements and hindrances as great and as many as yours.

2. Consider, your poor and necessitous condition in the World hath something in it of motive and advantage to excite and quicken you to a greater diligence for Salvation, than is found in a more full, easy, and prosperous state; for God hath hereby imbitter'd this World to you, and made you drink deeper of the troubles of it than other men: they have the *honey*, and you the *gall*; they have the *flow*, and you the *bran*. But then, as you have not the Pleasures, so you have not the Snares of a prosperous condition; and your daily troubles, cares, and labours in it, do even prompt you to seek rest in Heaven, which you cannot find on Earth. Can you think you were made for a worse condition than the Beasts? What, to have two Hells, one here, and another hereafter? Surely as low, miserable, and despicable as you are, you are capable of as much happiness as any of the Nobles of the World, and in your low and afflicted condition stand nearer to the door of hope than they do. Ah! methinks these thoughts do even put themselves upon you, when your Spirits are over-loaded with the cares, and your Bodies tir'd with the labours

labours of this Life. Is this the life of troubles I must expect on earth? hath God denied me the pleasures of this World? Oh then let it be my care, my study, my business to make sure of Christ, to win Heaven, that I may not be miserable in both Worlds. How can you avoid such thoughts, or put by such meditations, which your very station and condition even forceth upon you?

3. Consider how all your troubles in this World would be sweetened, and all your burdens lightened, if once your Souls were in Christ, and in Covenant with God. Oh what hearts-ease would Faith give you! what sweet relief would you find in Prayer! These things, like the opening of a Vein, or Tumor when ripe, would suddenly cool, relieve, and ease your Spirits. Could you but go to God as a Father, and pour out your hearts before him, and roll all your cares and burdens, wants and sorrows upon him, you would find a speedy out-let to your troubles, and an in-let to all peace, all comforts, and all refreshments, such as all the riches, honours, and fulness of this World cannot give: you would then find Providence engage it self for your supply, and issue all your troubles to your advantage; you would suck the breasts of those Promises in the Margin, and say, all the dainties in the World cannot make you such another feast; you would then see your bread, your cloaths, and all provisions for you and yours in God's Promises, when you are brought to an exigence, and would certainly find performances as well as promises all along the course of your life.

4. Say not you have no time to mind another World; God hath not put any of you under such an unhappy necessity; you have one whole day every week allow'd you by God and Man for your Souls; you have some spare time every day, which you know you spend worse than in heavenly thoughts and exercises; yea, most Callings are such as will admit of spiritual exercises of thoughts, even when your hands are exercised in the affairs of this Life. Besides, there are none of you but have, and must have daily some relaxations and rest from business; and if your hearts were spiritual, and set upon Heaven, you would find more time than you think on, without prejudice to your Callings, yea, to the great furtherance of them, to spend with God. I can tell you when and where I have found poor Servants hard at work for Salvation, labouring for Christ, some in the Fields, others in Barns and Stables, where they could find any privacy, to pour out their Souls to God in Prayer. As Lovers will make hard shifts to converse together, so will the Soul that is devoted to God, and in earnest for Heaven. And tho' your opportunities be not so large, they may be as sweet, as successful, and to be sure sincere, as those whose condition affords them more time, and greater external conveniences than you enjoy. More business is sometimes dispatch'd in a quarter of an hour in Prayer, yea, let me say in a few hearty Ejaculations of Soul to God in a few minutes, than in many long and elaborate Duties. If thou cast in thy two Mites of Time into the Treasury of Prayer, having no more, thou maist, as Christ said of the poor Widow, *give more than those that cast in of their great abundance of Time and Talents.*

5. Lastly, consider, *Jesus Christ* is no respecter of persons; the poorest and vilest on earth are as welcome to him as the greatest. He chose a poor and mean condition in this world himself, conversed mostly among the poor, never refused any because of his poverty: *God accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they are all the work of his hands,* Job 34. 19. and that both in respect of their natural Constitution, as Men, and their civil Conditions, as rich or poor Men. Riches and Poverty make a great difference in the respects of Men, but none at all with God. If thou be one of God's poor, he will accept, love, and honour thee above the greatest (if graceless) person in the world. Poverty is no bar to Christ or Heaven, tho' it be to the respects of Men and pleasures of this life. Away then with all vain pretences against a life of godliness from the meanness of your outward condition. Heaven was not made for the rich, and Hell only for the poor. No, no; how hard soever you find the way thither, I am sure Christ saith, *it's hard for a rich man to enter into that Kingdom.*

The seventh way of losing the Soul discovered.

VII. The seventh beaten path to Destruction is by groundless presumption; *presumendo sperant, & sperando pereunt*; by presumption they have hope, and by that hope they perish.

There are divers objects of Presumption, amongst which these three are most usual, and most fatal, *viz.* that they have;

1. That Grace which they have not.
2. That Mercy in God they will not find.
3. That time before them which will fail 'em.

1. Many presume they have that Grace in them, which God knoweth they have not: So did *Laodicea*, Rev. 3. 17. *Thou sayest, I am rich, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, poor, blind, and naked.* Here is a dangerous Conspiracy betwixt a cunning Devil, and an ignorant proud Heart, to ruin the Soul for ever: they stamp their common Grace for special: they put the old creature, by a general profession, into the new creature's habit, and lay a confident claim to all the privileges of the Children of God.

2. They presume upon such Mercy in God, as they will never find: they expect pardoning and saving Mercy out of Christ, in an unregenerate state, when there is not one drop of Mercy dispensed in any other way. The whole economy of Grace is managed by the Mediator, *Jude* ver. 21. *all saving Mercies come thro' him*, upon all that are in him, and upon no others. God is indeed a merciful God, and yet presumptuous sinners will find Judgment without Mercy, because they are not found in the proper way and method of Mercy. Thousands and ten thousands carve out and dispose the Mercy of God at their own pleasure, write their own Pardons in what terms they think fit; and if they had God's Seal to confirm and ratifie them, it were all well: but, alas! it is but a night-vision, a dream of their own brain.

3. But especially, Men presume upon time enough for repentance hereafter: they question not but there be as fit and as fair opportunities of Salvation to come, as are already past; and in this share of the Devil thousands are taken in the very prime and vigour of their youth: That Age is voluptuous, and loves not

to be interrupted with severe and serious thoughts and courses; and here is a Salvo fitted exactly to suite their inclination, and quiet them in their way, that they may pursue their Lusts without interruption.

I cannot follow the sin of Presumption at present in all these its courses and ways, and will therefore apply my self to the case last mentioned, which is so common to the World.

The 7th way to destruction shut up by five weighty Considerations.

1. I would beg all those young voluptuous sinners, whose feet are fast held in the snare of this Temptation, seriously to bethink themselves, whether they are not old enough to be damned, whilst they judge themselves too young to be seriously godly. There are multitudes in Hell of your age and size: you may find graves in the Church-yard of your own length, and skulls of your own size. Men will not spare a Nest of young Snakes because they are little. If you die Christless and unregenerate, 'tis the same thing whether you be old or young: there is abundance of young Spray as well as old Logs burning in the flames of hell.

2. If you knew the weight and difficulty of Salvation-work, you would never think you could begin too soon. Religion is a business will take up all your time: many have repented they began so late, none that they began too soon. Say not, *the penitent Thief found mercy at the last hour*; for his Conversion was extraordinary, and we must not hope for Miracles. Besides, he could never encourage himself in sin with the hope and expectation of such a miraculous Conversion. He was the only Example of a sinner that was ever so recovered in Scripture, and this was recorded not to nourish Presumption, but to prevent Despair. If ten thousand persons died of the Plague, and one only of the whole number infected with it escaped, it's no great encouragement that you shall make the second. Oh! think, and think again, how many thousands now on Earth have been tugging and striving 40 or 50 years together to make their calling and election sure, and yet to this day it is not so sure as they would have it: they are afraid, after all, time will fail them for finishing, and you think 'tis too early for beginning so great a work.

3. Others have begun sooner than you, and finished the great and main work before you have done one stroke. *Abijah* was very young, scarce got out of his childhood, when the grace of God was found in him, 1 Kings 14. 13. The fear of God was in *Okadiab* when but a Youth, 1 Kings 18. 12. *Timothy* was not only a Christian, but a Preacher of the Gospel, in the morning of his life, 2 Tim. 3. 15. What have you to plead for your selves, which they had not? or what Arguments and Motives to godliness had they that you have not? You shall be judged *per pares*, by those of your own age and size; their *seriousness* shall condemn your *vanity*.

4. The morning of your life is the flower of your time, the freshest and fittest of all your life for your great Work: now your hearts are tender and impressible, your affections flowing and tractable, your heads clear of distracting cares and hurries of business, which come on afterwards in thick successions: Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, whilst the evil

days come not, Eccles. 12. 1, 2. If a Man have an important business to do, he will take the morning for it, knowing if that be lapt, a crowd and hurry of business will come on afterwards to distract and hinder him. I presume if all the Converts in the World were examined in this point, it would be found that at least ten to one were wrought upon in their Youth: that is the moulding age.

5. And if this proper hopeful season be elapsed, it is very unlikely that ever you be wrought upon afterwards. How thin and rare in the world are the instances and examples of Conversion in old age! Long-contin'd customs in sin harden the heart, fix the will, and root the habits of Vice so deep in the Soul, that there is no altering of them; your ears then are so accustomed to the sounds of the Word, that Christ and Sin, Heaven and Hell, Soul and Eternity, have lost their awful sound and efficacy with you. But it is a Question only to be decided by the event, Whether ever you shall attain to the years of your Fathers? It is not the sprightly vigor of your Youth that can secure you from Death. What a madness then is it to put your Souls and eternal happiness upon such a blind adventure? What if your presumption of so many fair and proper opportunities hereafter fail you, as it hath failed many Millions, who had as rational and hopeful a prospect of them as you can have; where are you then? And if you should have more time and means than you do presume upon, are you sure your hearts will be as flexible and impressible, as now they are? Oh! beware of this sin of vain presumption, to which the generality of the Damned owe their everlasting ruin.

The eighth way of losing the Soul opened.

VIII. The eighth way of ruining the precious Soul, is by drinking in the Principles of *Atheism*, and living without God in the world.

Atheism stabs the Soul to death at one stroke, and puts it quite out of the way of Salvation. Other sinners are worse than Beasts, but Atheists are worse than Devils, for they believe and tremble: they banish God out of their thoughts, and what they can out of the world, living as *without God in the world*, Eph. 2. 12. It is a sin that quencheth all Religion in the Soul. He that knows not his Landlord, cannot pay his Rent: he that assents not to the Being of a God, destroys the foundation of all religious Worship; he cannot fear, love, or obey him, whose Being he believes not. This sin strikes at the life of God, and destroys the life of the Soul.

Some are Atheists in Opinion, but multitudes are so in Practice: The fool hath said in his heart there is no God, Psal. 14. 1. Tho' he hath engraven his Name upon every Creature, and written it upon the Table of their own hearts, yet they will not read it: or if they have a slight fluctuating Notion, or a secret suspicion of a Deity, yet they neither acknowledge his Presence nor his Providence: *Fingunt Deum talem qui nec videt, nec punit*: They say, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark clouds? thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not, Job 22. 14.

Others profess to believe his Being, but their lives daily give their lips the lie; for they give no evidence in practice of his fear, love, or dependance on him. If they believe his Being,

Penitet
me, Domi-
ne, quod
fecero te a-
mavi, Aug.

ing they plahly shew they value not his Favour, delight not in his Presence, love not his Ways or People; but lie down and rise, eat and drink, live and die without the worship or acknowledgment of him, except so much as the Law of the Country, or Custom of the place extorts from them. These dregs of time produce abundance of Atheists of both sorts: many ridicule and hiss Religion out of all Companies into which they come; and others live down all sense of Religion: they customarily attend indeed on the external Duties of it, hear the Word; but when the greatest and most important Duties are urged upon them, their inward thought is, this is the Preacher's Calling, and the man must say something to fill up his hour, and get his living. If they dare not put their thoughts into words, and call the Gospel *Fabula Christi*, the Fable of Christ, as wicked Pope once did; or say of Hell and the dreadful Sufferings of the Damned, as *Galderinus* the Jesuit did, *tunc credam cum illic venero*, I will believe it when I see it: yet their hearts and lives are of the same complexion with these mean words. They do not heartily assent to the Truth of the Gospel which they hear; and tho' bare assent would not save them, yet their assent or non-assent will certainly damn them, except the Lord heal their understandings and hearts by the light and life of Religion. To this last sort I shall offer a few things.

The 8th way to Hell shut up by six weighty Considerations.

1. You that attend upon the Ordinances, but believe them no more than so many devised Fables, not heartily assent to the truth of what you hear; know assuredly, that the Word shall never do your Souls good, it can never come to your hearts and affections in its regenerating and sanctifying efficacy, whilst it is stopt and obstructed in your understandings in the act of assent. And thus you may sit under the best Ordinances all your lives, and be no more the better for them, than the Rocks are for all the showers of rain that fall upon them: *Heb. 4. 2. The Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* This is Satan's chief strength and fastness, wherein he trusteth: he fears no Argument, whilst he can maintain this Post: the Devil hath no surer Prisoner than the Atheist: there's no escaping out of his possession and power, whilst this blot of Unbelief is shut home in the Mind or Understanding. An unbelieving Truth never converted or saved one Soul from the beginning of the World, nor never shall to the end of it. Those Bodies that have the *Boulema*, or Dog-appetite, whatever they eat, it affords them no nourishment or satisfaction, they thrive not with the best fare: just so it is with your Souls, no Duties, no Ordinances can possibly do them good: as in Argumentation, no Conclusion, be it never so regularly drawn, and strongly inferred, is of any force to him that denies Principles.

2. If you assent not to the Truth of the Gospel, you not only make God speak to your Souls in vain, which is fatal to them; but you also make God a liar, which is the greatest affront a Creature can put upon his Maker: *1 Joh. 5. 10. He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar.* Vile dust, darest thou rise up against the God that made thee, and give him the lie! An affront which thy fellow-Creature cannot put up, or bear at

Vol. I.

thy hands. Darest thou at once stab his Honour, and thy own Soul? Are not the things that thou lookest on as *Romances* and golden Dreams, meer Artifice neatly contrived to cheat and awe the World; are they not all built upon the Veracity of God? which is the firmest foundation and greatest security in the World. Hath he not intermingled for our satisfaction; not only frequent assertions, but his asseverations and Oath to put all beyond doubt? And yet dare any of you lift up your ignorant blind Understandings against all this, and give him the lie? Surely the wrath of God shall smoke against every Soul of man that doth so, and his own bitter, lamentable, doleful experience shall be his conviction shortly, except he repent.

3. Dare any of you give the thoughts of your hearts as certain conclusions under your hand, and stand by them to the last, and venture all upon them?

Wretched *Atheist*! bethink thy self, pause a while, examine thine own breast; whatever thy vile Atheistical thoughts sometimes are, is there not at other times a fear of the contrary? A jealousy that all these things which thou deridest and sportest thy wicked fancy with, may and will prove true at last; When thou readest, or hearest that Text, *Joh. 3. 18. He that believeth not, is condemned already*; His *Mittimus* is already made for Hell: Doth not thy Conscience give thee a secret gird, like a stitch in thy side? Dare you venture all upon this issue, that if those things you find in the World be true, you will stand to the hazard of them? If that be a truth, *Mark 16. 16. He that believeth not, shall be damned*, you will be content to be damned? Or if, *Rom. 8. 13. be a truth, That they which live after the flesh shall die*, you will run the hazard, and bear the penalty of eternal death? If *Heb. 12. 14. prove true, That without holiness no man shall see God*, you will be content to be banished from his presence for evermore? Speak your hearts in this matter, and tell us, Don't you live betwixt Atheistical surmises, that all these are but cunning Artifices, and fears that at last they will prove the greatest Verities?

4. Hath not God given you all the satisfaction you can reasonably desire of the undoubted truth and certainty of his Word? What would you have, which you have not already? Would you have a Voice from Heaven? the Scriptures you read or hear are a more sure Word than such a Voice would be, *2 Pet. 1. 19* Or would you have a Messenger from Hell? He that believeth not the written Word, neither would believe if one should rise from the dead, *Luke 16. 31*. View the innate Characters of the Scripture, is it not altogether pure and holy, full of Divine Wisdom and awful Majesty, and in every respect such as evidenceth its Author to be the wise, holy, and just God, who searcheth the hearts and reins? Look upon the Seals and Confirmations of it; hath not God confirmed it by divers Miracles from Heaven, a Seal which neither Men or Devils could counterfeit? And don't you see the blessing and power of God accompanying it in the conversion and wonderful change of Mens Hearts and Lives, which can be done by no other hand than God's? Say not, the Miracles which confirm the Gospel are but uncertain Traditions, and except you your selves see them wrought you cannot believe them. There are a thousand things which you do believe, tho' you never

L1112

never

never saw them; and what you require for your satisfaction, every man may require the same for his; and so Christ must live in all parts of this World, and repeat his Miracles over and over in all Ages to satisfy the unreasonable Incredulity of those that question their truth, after the fullest Confirmation and Seal hath been given that is capable to be given, or the heart of Man can desire should be given; and if all this should be done, you might be as far from believing, as now you are; for many of those that saw and heard the things wrought by Christ, contradicted and blasphemed, and so might you.

5. Satan, who undermines your assent to these things, is forced to give his own: he that tempts you to look on them as *Fables*, himself knows, and is convinced that they are *Realities*; *The Devils also believe and tremble*, Jam. 2. 19. they know and feel the truth of these things, tho' it be their great design and interest to shake your assent to them: they know Christ is the Son of God, and that there will be a day in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, and that there are Torments prepared for themselves, and all whom they seduce from God, *Math. 8. 29*. If you ungod God, you must unman your selves; yea, not only make your selves less than Men, but worse than Devils.

6. In a word, let thy own Heart, O Atheist, be Judge, whether these be real Doubts still sticking in your Minds, after you have done all that becomes Men to do for satisfaction in such important cases? Or whether they be not such Principles as you willingly foment and nourish in your Hearts, as a protection to your sensual Lusts, whose pleasures you would fain have without interruptions and over awings by the fears of a Judgment to come, and a righteous retribution from a just and terrible God! Examine your hearts in that point, and you will soon find the cheat to be in that I here point you to: you have not studied the Word impartially, nor brought your Doubts and Scruples with a humble, unbiassed, teachable Spirit to those that are wise and able to resolve them, much less prayed for the Spirit of illumination; but willingly entertained whatever Atheistical Wits invent, or the Devil suggests, as a Defensive against the checks of Conscience, and fears of Hell in the way of Sin. You are loth those things should be true, which the Scriptures speak, and are glad of any colourable argument or pretence to still your own Consciences. Is not this the case? The Lord stop your desperate Course; your paths lead to Hell.

The ninth way of losing the precious Soul opened.

IX. Precious Souls are daily plunged into the gulph of Perdition by *Profaneness and Debauchery*. How many every where lie wallowing in this puddle? glorying in their shame, and running into all excess of riot? The Hypocrite steals to Hell in a private close way of concealed sin; but the Profane gallop along the publick road at noon-day: *They declare their sin as Sodom, and hide it not*; *Isa. 3. 9*. *The shew of their countenance testifieth against them*. The Hypocrite hath Devotion in his countenance, and Heaven in his mouth; you know not by his words or countenance whether he is going; but the Profane hide it not, they are past shame, and above blushing at the horridst Impieties. Look as God hath some Servants more eminent, forward, and courageous in the ways of Godliness than others, Men that

will not hide their Principles, or be ashamed of the ways of Godliness in the face of danger; so the Devil hath some Servants as eminent for wickedness, who scorn to sneak to Hell by concealment of their Wickedness, but avow and own it without fear or shame in the open sight of Heaven and Earth. Wherever they come, they defile the Air they breathe in with horrid blasphemies and obscene discourses not to be named, and leave a strong scent of Hell behind them.

This Age hath brought forth multitudes of these Monsters, the reproach and shame of the Nation that bred them. I have little hope to stop one of them in the career and full speed to Hell. They have lost the *sense of Sin*, the restraints of *Shame and Fear*; and then what sleight to clobber them in their course? I cannot hope that such a Discourse as this shall ever come into their hands, except it be to sacrifice it to the flames; yet not knowing the ways of Providence which are unsearchable, and what use God may make upon one occasion or another of these following Considerations, I will adventure to drop a few words upon these forlorn Sinners, as far as they seem to be gone beyond recovery; beseeching the Lord to make way for these things to their hands and hearts, and make them the instruments of pulling some of them as brands out of the burning.

The ninth way to Hell by Profaneness kept.

1. And first, let it be laid to heart, that tho' the case and state of many thousand Souls be doubtful and uncertain, so that neither themselves, nor any other know what they are, or to whom they belong; yet their condition is without controversy miserable and forlorn; all men know whose they are, and whither they are going. The Apostle appeals in this case to the Bar of every man's Reason and Conscience, as a thing allowed and yielded by all, *Eph. 5. 5*. *For this ye know* (saith he) *that no Whoremonger, nor unclean Person, nor covetous Man, who is an Idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God*. This is a clear case, there is no controversy about it. Many there be in a doubtful case, but no doubt of these, they are fast and sure in the power of Satan; and as sure as God is a God of Truth, they that die in this condition shall never see his face. And to the same purpose again, *1 Cor. 6. 9*. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God*. Know ye not? saith he, *q. d.* Sure you cannot be so ignorant and blind to think that there is any room in Heaven for such wretches as these. If the Righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the Sinner and the Ungodly appear? If all Strictness, Holiness, Self-denial, Diligence, be all little enough to win Heaven, what hope can there be of those that not only cast off all duties of Religion, but also cast themselves into all the opposite ways and courses which directly lead to Damnation? He that refuseth his food endangers his Life; but he that drinks Poison, certainly and speedily destroys it.

2. As far as you are gone in a course of Profaneness, you are not yet gone beyond the reach of Mercy and all hopes of Salvation, if now at last, after all your Debaucheries and Profaneness, the Lord touch your hearts with the sense of your sinful

sinful and miserable estate, and turn your feet to his Testimonies. When the Apostle in 1 Cor. 6.9, 10. had told us the Doom of such Men, upon the supposition of their perseverance in that course; yet presently he adds, as a motive to their repentance, an example of mercy upon such wretches as these: *And such were some of you, but ye are washed, v. 11.* The golden Scepter of free Grace hath been held forth to many as profane and notorious Sinners as you, to a blaspheming Saul, to a Mary Magdalen, to a Manasseh. 'Tis not the greatness of the Sin, but the impenitence and infidelity of the Sinner, that ruins him. Well then, there is a certainty of Damnation if you go, and yet a possibility of Forgiveness and Mercy before you, a Mercy invaluable.

3. Nay, this is not all; but in some respect there is more probability and hope of your return and repentance, than there is of many others who have led a more sober, smooth, and civil life than you have done. Your Profaneness hath more dishonoured God, but the Morality and Civility of some Men secures them faster in the snare of the Devil: they have many things in themselves to build up their presumptuous hopes upon, but you have *nothing*. It is hard for Conviction to reach that man's Conscience that hath a Righteousness of his own to trust in: but methinks it should have an easier access to yours, whose notorious courses lay your Consciences naked and bare before the Word to be wounded by it. Christ's Ministry had little success among the Pharisees who were righteous in their own eyes, but it wrought effectually upon Publicans and Sinners. Hence Christ told them, *Mat. 21. 31.* That Publicans and Harlots go into the Kingdom of God before them. Publicans were esteemed the worst of Men, and Harlots the worst of Women; yet the one and other, as vile as they were, stood fairer for conviction, and consequently for Salvation, than those that thought they needed no Repentance. All this is matter of hope, and runs into a powerful motive and loud call to Repentance. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.*

The tenth way leading to Destruction marked.

X. Deep and fixed prejudices against Godliness and the sincere Professors thereof, precipitate thousands of Souls into their own ruin and damnation.

It was not without a weighty reason that Christ denounced that Wo upon the World, *Mat. 18. 7.* *Wo unto the world because of offences.* The poor World will be ruin'd by scandals and prejudices; they will take such offences at the ways of godliness that they will never have good thoughts of them any more. *This Scilicet is every where spoken against, Acts 28. 22.* and so Christians are condemned, *Act 2. 24.* because of the common reproach, as *Justin Martyr* complain'd. All the scandals which fall out in the Church, are so many Swords and Daggers put into the hands of the wicked World to murder their own Souls withal. Some have sucked in such Opinions of the ways of Godliness, as make them irreconcilable Enemies to them, and fierce Opposers of them. And from hence are most of the Persecutions that befall the People of God. When you see hours of slanders and reproaches going before, expect storms of Persecutions coming after. Slanders beget Prejudices, and these prepare for Persecutions. Oh! how keen and fierce are the minds of many against the upright and innocent Servants of God, whom

they have first represented to themselves in such an odious Cress and character as the Devil hath drawn them in, upon their fancies and imaginations! So the *primitive Christians* were represented to the Heathens as *Monsters*, and their Conventions in the night, occasioned by the fury of Persecutors, were reported to be for *lascivious and barbarous ends, to deflower Virgins, and murder innocent Children*: and by this artifice the Heathens were secured against Conversion to Christ. This hath been the policy of Hell from the beginning, and it hath prospered so much in the World, that Satan hath no reason to change his hand. But how may this Plot of Hell be defeated, and the ruin of Souls prevented?

The tenth way of destroying Souls shut up by two Counsels.

1. It will be impossible to prevent the ruin of a great part of the World by prejudices against the ways of Godliness, except those that profess them, walk more holily and conformably to the rule and pattern of Christ, whose Name is called upon them. I shall therefore first address my Discourse to the Professors of Religion, beseeching them in the bowels of Christ to take pity upon the multitudes of Souls which are daily ruined and destroyed by their scandals and miscarriages. Did you live according to the rules you profess, *your well-doing would put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, 1 Pet. 2. 15.* and consequently the ruin of many might be prevented. I remember *Bernard*, speaking of the lewd and loose life of the Priests of his time, sighs out this just and bitter complaint to God about it; *Miseræ eorum conversatio plebis tuæ miserabilis subversio est*: Oh Lord, saith he, their miserable conversation is the miserable subversion of thy people. Oh! of how many who glory in the title of *Sons of the Church*, may Christ say, as *Jacob* did of his two lewd Sons *Simeon* and *Levi*, *Ye have troubled me, to make me to sink among the Inhabitants of the Land!* *Gen. 34. 30.*

And how many Professors, who pretend to more than ordinary reformation and holiness, do shed Soul-blood by their scandalous conversations? *redemptor* *Salvian* brings in the wicked of his Age upbraiding the looseness of Christians in this manner: *Behold, those men who boast themselves redeemed from the tyranny of Satan, and profess themselves dead to the world, yet are conquer'd by the Lusts of it.* And *Cyprian* long before his day, brings in the Heathens thus insulting over looser Christians: *Where is that Catholick Law which they believe? Where are the Examples of Piety and Chastity which they should imitatur, learn? They read the Gospel, yet are immodest: they hear the Apostles, yet are drunk.* Oh Professors! Ubi est catholica lex where are your bowels to the poor Souls of sinners? If your Neighbour's Ox or Ass fall into the ditch? ubi Piti, you are bound to deliver him if you can: pietatis & and will you not do as much for a precious Soul as you would do for a Beast? nay, you dig Pits que dist by your scandalous lives to destroy them. If you can? E- sin, there are Instruments enough to spread it, vangelia and multitudes of souls ready prepar'd to take the Infection. Say not, If they do, the fault is theirs; for tho' they are Principals in the murder of their own Souls by taking the scandal, yet you are Accessories in giving it: He is a mad man that will & inebri- kill himself with a Sword, and he no better that will put it into his hand. *antur.*

Oh therefore, if you have any regard to the precious Souls of Men, live up to the Rules of your profession. Oh! be blameless and harmless, the

the Sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a perverse and froward generation : let the heavenliness of your Conversation stop those mouths that accuse you as men of a worldly spirit : let them see by your moderation in seeking it, your patience in losing it, your readiness in distributing it, that it is a groundless calumny under which your Names suffer. Let them see by your apparel, company, and discourses, you are not such proud lofty Spirits as you are represented to be. Convince them by your flexibility to all things that are lawful and expedient, by manifesting as much as in you lieth, that it is the pure bond and tie of Conscience which keeps you from compliance in all other things, and by your meekness in suffering for such noncompliance, that you are not such turbulent, factious Incendiaries, as the wicked World slanderously reports you to be. Convince the world by your exact Righteousness in all your civil dealings, and by the lip of truth in all your promises and engagements, that you have the Fear of God in your hearts, as well as the Livery of Christianity upon your backs. In a word, so live that none may have just ground to believe the impudent slanders the Devil raises in the world against you. Let your light so shine before men, that they may glorify your Father which is in Heaven. Without your care and circumspection, the shedding of a world of precious Soul-blood can never be prevented.

2. Let me advise and beseech all men to be so just to others, and merciful to their own Souls, as not to cast them away for ever, by receiving prejudices against Godliness from the miscarriages of some that make more than a common profession of it. If others stumble before you, and break their shins, don't you stumble at them, and break your necks. To prevent this fatal effect of scandal and prejudice at Religion, I desire a few Particulars may be impartially weighed.

First, Very many of those Scandals bandied up and down the World against the Professors of Godliness, are devised and forged in Hell, as so many traps and snares to catch and destroy mens Souls, to beget an irreconcilable averfation and enmity in men to the ways of God. *They devise deceitful matters* (saith the Psalmist) *against them that are quiet in the land*, Psal. 35. 20. So Jer. 18. 18. *Come, say they, let us devise devices against Jeremiah, and smite him with the tongue*. And there is as little equity in the credulous receiver, as there is honesty in the wicked forger of these slanders. With one arrow of censure you wound no less than three, viz, the honour of God, your innocent Brother, and your own Souls. As to the two former wounds, they will in due time be healed. God will vindicate his own Name fully, and the reputation of his innocent Servants shall be cleared and repaired abundantly ; but mean time your Souls may perish by the wounds prejudices have given, so that you may never be reconciled to Godliness and its Professors whilst you live, but turn Scoffers and Persecutors of them.

Secondly, Examine whether the matters that are charged upon them as their Crimes, be not their Duties. Sometimes it falls out to be so, and if so, you fight more immediately and directly against God than men. This was David's case Psal. 69. 10. *When I wept, and chastened my soul, that was to my reproach* : my piety was turned to reproach. They called his tears Crocodile's tears, and his fastings hypocritical shadows of devotion

and humility. Thus the very matter of his duty was turned into reproach. And so it was with the primitive Christians, their very owning of themselves to be Christians, was crime enough to condemn them.

Thirdly, If Professors of Religion do in some things act unbecoming their holy Profession, yet every slip and failing in their lives is no sufficient Warrant for you to censure their persons as hypocrits, much less to fall upon Religion it self, and condemn it for the faults of them that profess it. There's many an upright heart overtaken by temptation. You see their Miscarriages, but you see not their Humiliations and Self-condemnation before God for them. Foul and fearful (saith Jer. Dicitur a grave Divine) was the scandal of David : and " what was the issue ? presently the Enemies of " God and Godliness began to lift their heads, " and fall foul upon David's Religion, 2 Sam. 12. " they blasphemed the Name of God. O this is " he that was so grand a Zealot, that the Zeal of " God's House did eat him up. This is the Man " that, out of his transcendent Zeal, danced be- " fore the Ark. This is he that prayed thrice a " Day, at morning, noon, and night. This is " he that was so precise and strict in his Family, " that a wicked person should not dwell in his " House. This your great precise Zealot hath " defiled the Wife, and murdered the Husband. " Now you see what his Religion is, now you see " what comes of this profession of so much Holi- " ness and Godliness.

O that Men would seriously consider their Evil in such Censures as these ! What is all this to Religion ? Doth Religion any way countenance or patronize such Practices ? Nay, doth it not impartially and severely condemn them ? It is the glory of the Christian Religion, that it is pure and undefiled, Jam. 1. 27. These Practices flow from no Principle of Religion, nor are chargeable upon it, for it teacheth Men the very contrary, Tit. 2. 11, 12. If I see a Papist sin boldly, or an Arminian slight Grace, I justly condemn their Principles in and with their Practices, because Popery sets Pardons to sale, and Arminianism exalts Nature into the place of Grace : but doth the Doctrine of the Gospel lead to any Immoralities ? Charge it, if you can.

Fourthly, and as senseless a thing it is to condemn all for the miscarriages and faults of some, which yet is the common practice of the World. Are all that profess Godliness loose and careless ? No, no ; many are an ornament to their holy Profession, and the glory of Christianity. And why must the innocent be condemned for the guilty ? What is your reason and ground for that ? Why might not the Enemies of Christianity have condemned the eleven Apostles upon the fall of Judas ? had they not as good warrant for it, as you have for this ?

Lastly, You little know what a snare of the Devil is laid for your Souls in all those prejudices and offences you take at the Ways and Professors of Godliness ; and what a Wo you bring upon your own Souls by them. You speak evil of persons and things you know not, and prejudice is like still to keep you in ignorance of them. *Wo to the World* (saith Christ) *because of Offences ; and blessed is he that is not offended at me*.

The eleventh way of ruining the precious Soul opened. XI. The eleventh way wherein abundance of precious Souls perish in the Christianized and professing

professing World, is the way of formal Hypocrisy in Religion, and Zeal about the *Externals* of Worship. Such a generation of men have in all Ages mingl'd themselves with the sincere Worshipers of God; and the inducement to it is obvious, the form of Godliness is an honour, but the power of it a burden. By the former, earthly Interests are accommodated, by the latter they are frequently exposed and hazarded.

We find in the Jewish Church abundance of such Chaff intermixed with the Wheat, which the Doctrine of Christ discovered and purged out of the floor, *Mat. 3. 9, 12.* Such were the *Pharisees*, who were exceeding zealous for Traditions, and the external Rites and Ceremonies of the Law, but inwardly full of all filchiness, *Mat. 15. 7, 8, 9.* Men that honoured the dead, and persecuted the living Saints; that revered the material Temple, and destroyed the living Temples; that strain'd at Gnats of Ceremonies, and swallowed down the grossest Immoralities.

And well had it been if this generation had ended with that state and time of the Church: but we find a Prophecy of the increase of these Men in the latter days, *2 Tim. 3. 5.* which is every where sadly verified. Religion runs into stalk and blade, into leaves and suckers, which should be concocted into pith and fruit. Yea, it is of sad consideration, that amongst many high pretenders to Reformation, their Zeal, which should nourish the vitals of Religion, and maintain their daily work of Mortification and Communion with God, spends it self in some by-opinion, whilst practical godliness visibly languisheth in their Conversations. How many are there that hate doctrinal Errors, who yet perish by practical ones! who hate a false Doctrine, but mean time perish by a false Heart! 'Tis very difficult to reclaim this sort of Men from the error of their way, and thereby save their Souls from Hell; however, let the means be used, and the success left with God.

The eleventh way to Hell by Formality barred up.

1. No sin entangles the Souls of men faster, or damns them with more certainty and aggravation, than the sin of formal Hypocrisy. It holds the Soul fastest on Earth, and sinks it deepest into Hell. There was no sort of Men upon whom the Doctrine of Christ and the Apostles had so little success and effect, as the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; they derided him, when *Publicans* and *Sinners* trembled and believed, *Luke 16. 14, 15.* The form of Godliness wards off all Convictions: their zeal for the *Externals* of Religion secures them against the fears of Damnation, whilst in the mean while their Hypocrisy plunges them deeper into Hell, than others that never made such shews of *Sanctimony* and *Devotion*: *He shall appoint him his portion with Hypocrites*, *Mat. 24. 51.* that is, he shall be punished in Hell as Hypocrites are punished, viz. with the greatest and forest punishment. Hypocrisy is a double iniquity, and will be punished with double destruction: their ungrounded hopes of Heaven serve but to pull up their wretched Souls to a greater height of vain confidence, which gives them the more dreadful jerk in their lamentable and eternal disappointment.

2. Blind superstitious Zeal, which spends it self only about the *Externals* of Religion, usually prepares and engageth Men in a more violent Persecution of those that are really godly and conscientious. The Lord opened a great door of op-

portunity at *Antioch* to *Paul*; the whole City came together to attend the discoveries of Christ in the first publication of the Gospel, and the poor *Gentiles* began to taste the sweetness of the Gospel: but the Devil perceiving his Kingdom begin to totter, immediately stirred up his Instruments to persecute the Apostles, and drive them out of the Country; and who more fit for that work than the devout and honourable Women? *Acts 13. 50.* these stirred up their Husbands, and all they had influence upon, under a fair pretence of zeal for the Law, to obstruct the progress of the Gospel. No Bird (saith one) like the living Bird to draw others into the Net. Men of greatest names and pretensions to Religion, if graceless, are the most dangerous Instruments the Devil can employ to the ruin and extirpation of true Godliness. Such a Zealot was *Paul* in his unregenerate state.

3. Nothing is more common than to find men hot and zealous against false Worship, whilst their hearts are as cold as a stone in the *Vitals* and *Essentials* of true Religion. Many can dispute warmly against Adoration of Images, Praying to Angels and Saints departed, who all the while are like those dead Images which others worship. *Jehoi* was a Zealot against Idolatry, and yet the vital power of true Godliness was a stranger to his Soul, *2 Kings 10. 15, 16.* The *Pharisees* spared no pains to make a *Freschlyre*, and yet all the while were the Children of the Devil themselves, *Mat. 23. 15.*

This is a sad case, yet what more common? The Lord open the eyes of these men, and convince them in season that their Zeal runs in the wrong Channel, and spends it self upon things which shall never profit them. Oh! if they were but as much concerned to promote the love of God, and life of Godliness in themselves and others, as they are about some external Accidents and Appendages of Religion, what Blessings would they be to the World, and what evidence would they have of their own sincerity?

The twelfth way to Hell opened.

XII. The twelfth way to Hell, in which many Souls are carried on smoothly and securely to their own Destruction, is the way of meer Civility and moral Honesty, wherein Men rest as in a safe state, never doubting but a civil life will produce an issue in a happy death. Moral Honesty is a lovely thing, and greatly tends to the peace and order of the World; but it is not saving Grace, nor gives any Man a good title to Christ and Salvation. Indeed there can be no Grace in that Soul in which civility and moral honesty is not found; but this may be found in thousands that have no Grace.

That which ruins Mens Souls, is not the exercise of moral Vertues, but their reliance upon 'em: they use their Morality as a shield to secure their Consciences from the convictions of the Word, which would shew them their sinful and miserable state by Nature. Thus the *Pharisees*, *Luke 18. 11, 12.* God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican; he blesteth himself in the conceits of his own safety and happiness. Let debauch'd and profane persons look to it, I am well enough; tho' alas, poor man! his being less evil at best could but procure him a cooler Hell, or a milder Flame. This was the case of the young Man, *Mat. 19. 20.* and like a young Man indeed he reasons. He sums up all the stock of his civil Life,

Satan per
coffam,
tanquam
per sca-
lam ad cor
ascendit.
Gregor.

Life, and thinks it strange if that be not enough to make a purchase of eternal Life. *What lack I yet?* Alas, poor Soul! every thing necessary to Salvation: the very first stone was not laid when he thought the building was finished. And this is the case of multitudes, both young and old: and that which greatly confirms and settles them in this their dangerous security, is the general, indistinct Doctrine of some, who pretend to be guides to the Souls of others; the scope of whose Ministry aims at no higher mark than to civilize the people, and press Moral Duties upon them, as if this were all that were necessary to Salvation: nay, 'tis well if some do not industriously pull down the pale of distinction betwixt *Morality* and *Regeneration*, and tell the world in plain English, *That there is no reason to put a difference betwixt such as are baptized and live morally honest, and those that have saving Grace; and they that do so, are only a few who are highly conceited of themselves, and censorious of all others, whom they please to vote formal and moral.*

This indeed is the way to fix them where they are: if *Christ* had not taken another method with *Nicodemus*, and his Ministers had not pressed the necessity of *Regeneration*, and the insufficiency of *moral honesty* to *Salvation*, how thin had the number of true Converts been, tho' at most they are but an handful in comparison of the *Unregenerate*!

Oh that God would bless what follows, to undeceive and save some poor Soul out of this dangerous snare of the Devil!

The twelfth way to Damnation barred by three Considerations.

1. Blind not your selves with the lustre of your own moral Vertues, a life smoothly drawn with Civility thro' the world: for tho' it must be acknowledged there is a loveliness and attracting sweetness in *Morality* and *Civility*, yet these things rather respect *Earth* than *Heaven*, and are designed for the conservation of the Order and Peace of this World, not for your *Salvation* and Title to the World to come. Without Justice and Truth, *Kingdoms* and *Commonwealths* would become *Mountains of prey* and *Dens of robbery*. Where there is no Truth, there can be no Traffick; and where there is no Truth, there can be no Trust. *Civility* is the very Basis of humane Society, a world of good accrues to men by it, and abundance of mischief is prevented by it; but it never gave any man an Interest in *Christ*, or a Title to *Salvation*. The *Romans* and *Lacedemonians*, who perished in the darkness of *Heathenism*, excelled in *Morality*: there is nothing of *Christ* or *Regeneration* in these things, how much of excellency soever be ascribed to them. *Paul* the *Pharisee* was a blameless person touching the Law, and yet at the same time not only utterly ignorant of *Christ*, but a bitter Enemy to him and all that were his. Till you can find another way to Heaven than by *Regeneration*, *Repentance*, and *Faith*, never lean upon such a deceitful and rotten prop as mere *Civility* is.

2. *Civilized Nature* is *unsanctified Nature* still; and without *Sanctification* there is no *Salvation*, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Civility* adorneth Nature, but doth not change it. Moral Vertues are so many sweet flowers strewed over a dead Corps, which hide the loathsomeness of it, but inspire not life into it. *Morality* hides and covers, but never mortifies nor cures the Corruptions of Nature; and mortified they must be, or you cannot be saved. Take the best Nature in the World, and let it be adorned

with all the Ornaments of *Morality* (which they call *Homiletical Vertues*) and add to these all the common gifts of the Spirit, which are for assistance and ministry; yet all this cannot secure that Soul from Hell, or be the ground-work for a just claim to any promise of *Salvation*: all this is but Nature improved, not *regenerated*. *Morality* is neither produc'd as saving Grace is, nor works such effects as Grace does. There are no pangs of *Repentance* introducing it, it may cost many an aking head, but no aking heart for Sin; no such distressed outcries as that *Act.* 2. 37. *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* Nor doth it produce such humility, self-abasement, heavenly tempers and tendencies of Soul, as Grace doth. Cheat not your selves then in so important a concern as *Salvation* is, with an empty shadow.

3. *Civility* is not only found in multitudes that are out of *Christ*, but may be the cause and reason why they are *Christless*. Mistake not, I am not pleading the cause of *Profaneness*, nor disputing *Civility* out of the World; I heartily wish there were more of it to be found in every place, it would exceedingly promote the Peace, Order, and Tranquility of the World: but yet it is certain, that the eyes of thousands are so dazzled with the lustre of their own *Morality*, that they see no need of *Christ*, nor feel any want of his *Righteousness*, and this is the ruine of their Souls. Thus *Christ* brings in the *Pharisee* with his proud boast, that he is no *Extortioner*, *Adulterer*, nor *unjust*, or such an one as that *Publican*, *Luke* 18. 11. Oh what a Saint doth he vote himself, when he compar'd his life with the other's! Well then, beware you be not deceiv'd by thinking you are safe because you are got out of the dirty road to Hell, when all the while you are only stept over the hedge into a cleaner path to *Damnation*. You have had a short account of some few of those many ways in which the precious Souls of Men are eternally lost: let us briefly apply it in the following Inferences.

If there be so many ways of losing the Soul, and Infer. 1. such multitudes of Souls lost in every one of them, then the number of saved Souls must needs be exceeding small.

The number of the Saved may be considered either absolutely or comparatively. In the first consideration they appear great and many, even a great multitude which no man can number, *Rev.* 7. 9. but if compared with those that are lost, they make but a small remnant, *Isa.* 1. 9. a little flock, *Mat.* 12. 32. For when we consider how vastly the Kingdom of Satan is extended, who is called the God of this World, from the world of people who are in subjection to him; how small a part of this earthly Globe is enlightened with the Beams of Gospel-light, and that Satan is the acknowledged Ruler of all theret, *Eph.* 6. 12. But when 'tis farther considered, that out of this spot on which the light of the Gospel is risen, the far greatest part are lost also: Oh what a poor handful remains to Jesus Christ, as the purchase of his Blood!

'Tis of trembling consideration, how many thousands of Families amongst us are mere Nurseries for Hell, Parents bringing forth and breeding up Children for the Devil; not one word of God (except it be in the way of Blasphemy or Profaneness) to be heard among them. How naturally their ignorant and wicked Education puts them in the course and tide of the World, which carries them away irresistibly to Hell; how one sinner

sinner confirms and animates another in the same sinful course, till they be all past hope or remedy; how the *Rich* are taken with the baits of sensual pleasures, and the *Poor* lost in the brake of distracting worldly cares, except here and there a Soul pluck'd out of the snare of the Devil by the wonderful power and arm of God. On the one side, you may see multitudes drown'd in open *Profaneness and Debauchery*; and on the other side, many thousands securely sleeping in the state of *Civility and Morality*. Some *Key-cold*, and without the least sense of Religion; others *Hell-hot* with blind zeal and superstitious madness against *true Godliness*; and the *sincere Practitioners* of it. Some living all their days under the *Ordinances of God*, and never touch'd with any conviction of their sin or misery; others convinc'd, and making some faint offers at Religion, but their convictions (like blossoms nipt with a frosty morning) fall off, and no fruit follows. And as *Rubies, Sapphires, and Diamonds* are very few in comparison of the *Pebbles and common stones* of the Earth; so are *true Christians* in comparison of multitudes that perish in the snares of Satan.

Infer. II. How little reason have the *unregenerate* to glory and boast themselves in their earthly acquisitions and successes, whilst mean times their Souls are lost! they have gotten other things, but lost their Souls. 'Tis strange to see how some men by rolling a small Fortune up and down the World (as Boys do a Snow-ball) have increased the heap, and raised a great Estate; they have attained their design and aim in the World, and hug themselves in the pleased thoughts of their happiness: but, alas! among all the thoughts of their gains there is not one thought of what they have lost. Oh! if such a thought as this could find room in their hearts: *I have gotten an Estate, but I have lost my Soul; I have much of the World, but nothing of Christ; Gold and Silver I have, but Grace, Peace and Pardon I have not; my Body is well provided for, but my Soul is naked, empty, and destitute.* Such a thought, like the Sentence written on the Wall, would make their hearts quail within them. What a rapture and transport of joy did the sight of a full Barn cast that worldling into! *Luke 12. 19, 20. Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry;* little dreaming that Death was just then at the door to take away the Cloth, Guest, and all together; that the next hour his *Friends* would be scrambling for his Estate, the *Worms* for his Body, and the *Devils* for his Soul.

Oh! how many have not only lost their Souls whilst they have been drudging for the World, but have sold their Souls to purchase a little of the World; parted by consent with their best treasure for a very trifle, and yet think they have a great bargain of it! Surely, if poor sinners did but apprehend what they have lost, as well as what they have gained, their gains would yield them as little comfort as *Judas's Money* did for which he sold both his Soul and Saviour. Instead of those pleasing frolics of wanton worldlings, what a cold shiver would run thro' all their bones and bowels, did they but understand what it is to lose a gracious God and a precious Soul, and both eternally and irrecoverably!

The just God remains still to avenge and punish the sinner: but the Favour of God, that friendly look, is gone; the Peace of God, that Heaven upon Earth, is gone; the Essence of the Soul remains still, but its purity, peace, joy, hope, and

Vol. I.

happiness, these are gone: and these being gone, what can remain, but a tormenting piercing sight of those things for which you have sold them?

Hence let us estimate the evil of sin, and see what *Infe. III.* a dreadful thing that is which men commonly sport themselves with, and make so light of: it is not only a wrong and injury to the Soul, but the loss and utter ruin of the Soul for ever.

It is said, *Prov. 8. 36. He that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own Soul.* And if this were all the mischief sin did us, it were bad enough; a wrong to the Soul is a greater evil than the ruin of the Body or Estate, and all the outward enjoyments of this life can be: but to lose the precious Soul, and destroy it to all eternity, Oh who can estimate such a loss! Now the result and last effect of sin is death, the death of the precious Soul, *Rom. 6. 21. The end of those things is death.* So *Ezek. 18. 4. The soul that sinneth shall die.*

Sin doth not destroy the being of the Soul by annihilation, but it doth that which the Damned shall find and acknowledge to be much worse; it cuts off the Soul from God, and deprives it of all its felicity, joy, and pleasure, which consists in the enjoyment of him. Such is the dolefulness and fearfulness of this result and issue of sin, that when God himself speaks of it, he puts on a passion, and speaks of it with the most feeling concernment; *Ezek. 33. 11. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked: Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O house of Israel? q. d. Why will ye wilfully cast away your own Souls? Why will ye chuse the pleasures of sin for a season at the price of my wrath and fury poured out for ever? Oh think of this, you that make so light a matter of committing sin! We pity those who in the depth of Melancholy or Desperation lay violent hands upon themselves, and in a desperate mood cut their own Throats: but certainly for a man to murder his own Soul, is an act of wickedness as much beyond it as the value of the Soul is above the Body.*

What an invaluable Mercy is *Jesús Christ* to the *Infe. IV.* World, who came on purpose to seek and to save such as were lost?

In Adam all were shipwreck'd and cast away, *Christ* is the Plank of Mercy let down from Heaven to save some. The loss of Souls by the Fall had been as irrecoverable as the loss of the fallen Angels, had not God in a way above all humane Thoughts and Counsels contrived the method of their Redemption. 'Tis astonishing to consider the admirable harmony and glorious triumph of all the Divine Attributes in this great Project of Heaven for the recovery of lost Souls. 'Tis the wonder of Angels, *1 Pet. 1. 12.* The great Mystery of Godliness, *1 Tim. 3. 16.* the matter and burden of the triumphant Song of redeemed Saints, *Rev. 1. 5.* And well it may, when we consider a more noble Species of Creatures finally lost, and no Mediator of Reconciliation appointed betwixt God and them: this is to save an earthen Pitcher, whilst the Vessel of Gold is let fall, and no hand stretched out to save it.

But what is most astonishing is, that so great a Person as the Son of God should come himself from the Father's Bosom, to save us by putting himself into our room and stead, being made a Curse for us, *Gal. 3. 13.* he leaves the bosom of his Father, and all the ineffable delights of Heaven, disrobes himself of his Glory, and is found in fashion as a Man, yea, becomes as a Worm and

M m m

no

no Man, submits to the lowest step and degree of Abasement, to save lost Sinners. What a low stoop doth Christ make in his Humiliation to catch the Souls of poor Sinners out of Hell! Here-In was Love, that God sent his own Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins, 1 Joh. 4. 10. and so God loved the World, Joh. 3. 16. at this rate he was content to save lost Sinners.

How seasonable was this work of Mercy, both in its general Exhibition to the World in the Incarnation of Christ, and in its particular Application to the Soul of every lost Sinner by the Spirit! When he was first exhibited to the World, he found them all as lost Sheep gone astray, every one turning to his own way, Isa. 53. 6. he speaks of our lost Estate by Nature, both collectively or in general. *We all went astray, and distributively or in particular, Every one turned to his own way.* and then in the fulness of time a Saviour appeared.

And how seasonable was it in its particular application? How securely were we wandering onwards in the paths of Destruction, fearing no danger, when he graciously opened our eyes by conviction, and pulled us back by heart-turning Grace! No Mercy like this: it's an astonishing act of Grace that stands alone.

Inf. V. If there be so many ways to Hell, and so few that escape it, how are all concerned to strive to the utmost for their own Salvation!

In Luke 13. 23. a certain Person proposed a curious question to Christ, *Lord, are there few that be saved?* He saw a multitude flocking to Christ, and thronging with great zeal to hear him, and he could not conceive but Heaven must fill proportionably to the numbers he saw in the way thither: but Christ's answer, ver. 24. at once rebukes the curiosity of the Questionist, fully solves the question propounded, and sets home his own duty and greatest concerns upon him. It rebukes his curiosity, and is as if he should say, *Be the number of the Saved more or less, what is that to thee? strive thou to be one of them.* It fully solves the question propounded, by distinguishing those that attend upon the means of Salvation into *Seekers and Strivers*. In the first respect there are many who by a cheap and easy profession seek Heaven; but take them under the notion of *Strivers*, i. e. persons heartily engaged in Religion, and who make it their business, and so they will shrink up into a small number; and it presseth home his great business and concern upon him, *Strive to enter in at the strait Gate.*

By *Gate* understand whatsoever is introductive to Blessedness and Salvation. By the Epithet *strait*, understand the difficulties and severities attending Religion, all that suffering and self-denial which those that are bound for Heaven must count and cast upon. And by *striving*, understand the diligent and constant use of all those means and duties, how hard, irksome, and costly soever they be. The word *striving* hath a deep Sense and Emphasis, and imports striving even to an agony: and this duty is enforced two ways upon him, and every Man else; first by the indisputable Sovereignty of Christ, from whom the command comes; and also from the deep interest and concern every Soul hath in the commanded duty. It is not only a simple compliance with the Will of God, but what also involves our own Salvation and eternal Happiness in it: our great duty and our great interest are twisted together in this command; your eternal Happiness

depends upon the success of it. A man is not crowned, except he strive *lawfully*, i. e. successfully and prevalently. O therefore so run, so strive, that ye may obtain. If you have any value for your Souls, if you would not be miserable to Eternity, strive, strive. Believe it, you will find that the assurance of Salvation drops not down from Heaven in a night-dream, as the *Turks* fable their *Alcoran* to have done in that *lailato banzili*, Night of demission, as they call it; no, no, the Righteous themselves are scarcely saved: many seek, but few find; strive therefore as Men and Women that are heartily concerned for their own Salvation. Sit not with folded arms like so many heaps of stupidity and sloth; whilst the door of hope is yet open, and such a sweet voice from Heaven calls to you, saying, *Strive, Souls, strive*; if ever you expect to be partakers of the Blessedness that is here to be enjoyed, strive to the uttermost of your abilities and opportunities. Such a Heaven is worth striving to obtain; such a Hell is worth striving to escape; such an invaluable Soul is worth striving to save.

I confess Heaven is not the purchase or reward of your striving! No Soul shall boastfully say there, Is not this the Glory which my duties and diligence purchased for me? And yet on the other side it is as true, that without striving you shall never set foot there. Say not, it depends upon the pleasure of God, and not upon your diligence; for it is his declared will and pleasure to bring men to Glory in the way, tho' not for the sake of their own striving. As in the works of your civil Calling, you know all the care, toil, and sweat of the Husbandman avails nothing of it self, except the Sun and Rain quicken and ripen the Fruits of the Earth; and yet no wife man will neglect plowing and harrowing, sowing and weeding, because these labours avail not without the influences of Heaven, but waits for them in the way of his duty and diligence: rational hope sets all the world awork. Do they plow in hope, and sow in hope, and will not you pray in hope, and hear in hope? You that know your Souls to be hitherto strangers to Christ, and the regenerating work of the Spirit; how is it, that you take them not aside sometimes out of the distracting noise and hurries of the World, and thus bewail them?

O my poor, graceless, Christless, miserable Soul, how sad a case art thou in! others have, but thou never feltest the burden of sin; thousands in the World are striving and labouring, searching and praying to make their Calling and Election sure, whilst thou sittest still with folded hands in a supine regardlessness of the misery that is hastening upon thee. Canst thou endure the devouring Wrath of God! Canst thou dwell with everlasting burnings? Hast thou fancied a tolerable Hell? Or is it easy to perish? Why dost thou not cast thy self at the feet of Christ, and cry as long as breath will last, Lord, pity a sinful, miserable, undone, and self-condemning Soul? Lord, smite this rocky Heart, subdue this stubborn Will, heal and save an undone Soul ready to perish. The characters of Death are upon it, it must be changed or condemned, and that in a little time. Bowels of pity, hear the cry of a Soul distressed and ready to perish.

And you that do not understand the case and state your Souls are in, have you never a Bible near you? O turn to those places, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. where you will presently find the more obvious marks and characters God hath set upon the Children

Children of Perdition; and if you find not your self in that Catalogue among the Unrighteous, Fornicators, Idolaters, Adulterers, Effeminate, Thieves, Covetous, Drunkards, Revilers, Extortioners, &c. then turn to *John* 3. 3. and solemnly ask thy own Soul this question, Am I born again? Am I a new Creature? or still in the same condition I was born in? What solid evidence of the new birth have I to rely upon, if I were now within a few gasps of Death? Am not I the Man or Woman who live in the very same sins which the Word of God makes the Symptoms and Characters of Damnation? And doth not my *Conscience* witness against me, that I am utterly void and destitute of all that saving Grace, and a meer stranger to the regenerating work of the Spirit, without which there can be no well-bottom'd hope of Salvation? And if so, are not the tokens of Death upon me? Am not I a person markt out for misery? And shall I sit still in a state of so much danger, and not once strive to make an escape from the Wrath to come? Is this vile Body worth so much toil and labour to support and preserve it? And is not my Soul worth as much care and diligence to secure it from the everlasting wrath of the great, just, and terrible God? O that the consideration of the Wrath to come, the multitudes all the World over preparing as fuel for it, and the door of opportunity yet held open to Souls by the hand of Grace to escape that Wrath, might prevail with thy heart, Reader, to strive, and that to the uttermost, to secure thy precious Soul from the impending ruin.

EPHES. 5. 16.

—Redeeming the time (or opportunity) because the days are evil.

TIME is deservedly reckoned among the most precious Mercies of this life; and that which makes it so valuable are the commodious seasons and opportunities for Salvation which are vouchsafed to us therein, Opportunity is the golden spot of Time, the sweet and beautiful flower growing upon the stalk of Time. If Time be a *Ring of Gold*, Opportunity is the rich *Diamond* that gives it both its value and glory. The Apostle well knew the value of Time; and seeing how prodigally it was wasted by the most, doth therefore in this place earnestly press all men to redeem, save and improve it with the utmost diligence. In this and the former V. we have,

1st. The Duty enjoined, *Walk circumspectly.*

2ly. The *Injunction* explained;

1. More generally, *Not as fools, but as wise.*

2. More particularly, *Redeeming the time.*

3. The Exhortation strongly enforced with a powerful

Motive, *Because the days are evil.*

Among these particulars, my Discourse is principally concerned about the Redemption of Time or Opportunities, which in this life are graciously vouchsafed us in order to that which is to come: and here it will be needful to inquire,

1. What the Apostle means by Time.

2. What by the Redemption of Time.

1. Time is taken more largely or strictly according to the double acceptance of the Hebrew word *עֵת* which signifies sometimes Time, and sometimes *Occasion, Season, or Opportunity*, and accordingly is express'd by *זמן* and *מָהַר*, *Tempus* and *Tempestivitas*: the latter is the word here

used, and denotes the commodiousness and fitness of some parts of Time above others for the successful and prosperous management and accomplishment of our main and great Business here, which is to secure our interest in Christ, and glorify God in a course of fruitful Obedience. For these great and weighty Purposes our time is graciously *lengthened out*, and many fit opportunities presented us in the Revolutions thereof.

2. By the *Redemption of Time* we must understand the study, care, and diligence of Christians at the rate of all possible pains, at the expence of all earthly pleasures, ease, and gratifications of the Flesh, to rescue their precious seasons both of Salvation and Service out of the hands of Temptations, which so commonly rob unwary Souls of them. Satan trucks with us for our time, as we did at first with the silly *Indians* for their *Gold and Diamonds*, who were content to exchange them for *Glass-Beads and Tinsel-Toys*. Many fair seasons are forced or cheated out of our hands by the importunity of earthly cares, or deceitfulness of sensual pleasures; at the expence and loss of these we must redeem and rescue our time for higher and better uses and purposes. We must spend those hours in prayer, meditation, searching our hearts, mortifying our lusts: which others do, and our flesh vain would spend in sensual pleasures, and gratifications of the fleshly appetite. If ever we expect to win the Port of Glory, we must be as diligent and careful as *Sea-men* are to take every gale that blows directly or obliquely, to set them forward in their Voyage. The note from hence is this:

That the wisdom of a Christian is eminently discovered in saving and improving all opportunities in this World, for that World which is to come.

God hangs the great things of Eternity upon the small wiers of times and seasons in this world: that may be done or neglected in a day, which may be the ground-work of joy or sorrow to all Eternity. There is a nick of opportunity which gives both success and facility to the great and weighty affairs of the Soul, as well as Body: to come before it, is to seek the Bird before it be hatch'd; and to come after it, is to seek it when it is fled. There is a twofold season or opportunity of Salvation.

1. One was Christ's season for the Purchase of it.

2. The other is ours for the Application of it.

1. Christ had a season assigned him for the impenetration and purchase of our Salvation; so you hear his Father bespeaking him, *Isa. 49. 8. Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of Salvation have I helped thee; וְעַתָּה, in tempore opportuno voluntatis, et placite.* It was Christ's wisdom to set in with the Father's time, to comply with his season; and it became a day of Salvation, because it was the acceptable time which Christ took for it.

2. Men have their seasons and opportunities for the application of Christ, and his benefits to their own Souls: *2 Cor. 6. 1, 2. We then as workers together with God, beseech you also, that you receive not the grace of God in vain; for he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of Salvation have I succoured thee. Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of Salvation.* He exhorts the *Corinthians* not to dally or trifle any longer in the great concerns of their Salvation; for now, saith he, is your day. Christ had his day to purchase it, and he procured a day also for you to apply it,

M m m m 2

and

and this is that day; you enjoy it, you live under it: that golden day is now running: Oh! see that you frustrate not the design thereof, by receiving the Gospel-grace in vain.

Now two things concur to make a fit season of Salvation:

1. The external Means and Instruments.
2. The agency of the Spirit internally by or with those external Means.

1. Men have a season of Salvation, when God sends the means and instruments of Salvation among them. When the Gospel is powerfully preached among a people, there is a door opened to them; 2 Cor. 2. 12. *When I came to Troas to preach the Gospel, a door was opened to me of the Lord.* God as it were unlocks the door of Heaven by the preaching of the Gospel: Souls have then an opportunity to step in and be saved.

2. But yet 'tis not a wide and effectual door, (as the Apostle phrases it, 1 Cor. 16. 9.) till the Spirit of God joins with, and works on the heart by those external means and instruments; as the waters of the Pool of Bethesda had no inherent sanative virtue in themselves, till the Angel descended and troubled them: but both together make a blessed season for the souls of men. Then he stands at the door, and knocks by convictions and persuasions, Rev. 3. 20. *Strives with men,* as he did with the old World by the Ministry of Noah, Gen. 6. 3. Now the door of opportunity is indeed opened; but this will not always last; there is a time when the Spirit ceases to strive, and when the door is shut, Luke 13. 25.

There is a season when by the fresh impression of some Ordinance or Providence, Mens hearts are awakened, and their affections stirred. It is now with Souls as with Fruit-trees in the Spring when they put forth blossoms: if they knit and set, fruit follows; if they be nipt and blasted, no fruit can be expected. For all convictions and motions of the affections are to Grace, much the same as blossoms are to Fruit, which are but the rudiment thereof, *fructus imperfectus & ordinabilis*, somewhat in order to it; and look as that is a critical and hazardous season to Trees, so is this to Souls. I do not say it is in the power of any Soul to make the work of the Spirit effectual and abiding, by adding his endeavours to the Spirit's motions; for then Conversion would not be the free and arbitrary act of the Spirit, as in Job. 3. 8. neither would Souls be born of God, but of the will of Man, contrary to Job. 1. 13. And yet it is not to be thought or said, that mens endeavours and strivings are altogether vain, needless, and insignificant; because, tho' they cannot make God's grace effectual, his grace can make them effectual; they are our duty, and God can bless them to our great advantage. Now there are, among others, five remarkable essays, efforts, or strivings of a Soul under the impression and hand of the Spirit, that greatly tend to the fixing, settling, and securing of that great work on the Soul: and it is seldom known any Soul miscarries in whom these things are found.

1. Deep, serious, and fixed Consideration, which lets conviction deep into the Soul, and settles it, and roots it fast in the heart: *Psal. 119. 59. I thought on my ways, and turned my feet into thy Testimonies.* There are close and anxious debates in those Souls in whom *Constitutions* prosper to full Conversion: they sit alone, and think close to their great and eternal concerns: they carry

their thoughts back to the evils of their life past, then sit on the thigh, and cry, *What have I done?* They run their thoughts forward into Eternity, and that to a great depth and then cry, *What shall I do to be saved?* They deliberate and weigh in their most advised thoughts what is to be done, and that speedily, for escaping Wrath to come: thus they fix those tender, weak, and hazardous motions, that die away in many Souls; and in the loss of them their seasons of Salvation are lost.

2. The first stirrings and motions of the Spirit upon mens hearts do become a season of Salvation to them, when they are accompanied with spiritual, fervent, and frequent Prayer: so it was with Paul, Acts 9. 11. *Behold, he prayeth.* It's a good sign when Souls get alone, and affect privacy and retirement, to pour out their fears, sorrows, and requests unto God. It is in the Espousals of a Soul to Christ, as it is in other Marriages; a third person may make the motion, and bring the parties together, but they only betwixt themselves must conclude and agree the matter. Prayer is the first breath which the new Creature draws in, and the last (ordinarily) it breathes out in this World. This nourishes and matures those weak and tender first motions after God, and brings them to some consistence and fixedness in the Soul.

3. Then do those motions of the Spirit on mens hearts make a season of salvation to them, when they remain and settle in the heart, and are in them *per modum quietis*, by way of rest and abode, following the Man from place to place, from day to day; so that whatever unpleasing diversions the necessities and incumbrances of this World at any time give, yet still they return again upon the heart, and will not vanish, or suffer any long suspension: but in others, who lose their blessed advantage and season, it's quite contrary; James 1. 23, 24. *They are as one that seeth his natural face in a glass, and goeth away and forgetteth what manner of man he was:* He sees some spot on his Face, or disorder in his Band, which he purposeth to correct; but one occurrence or another chops in, and he forgets what he saw in the glass, and so goes all the day with his spot upon him. This was an evanid light purpose, which came to nothing for want of a present execution; just so it is with many in reference to their great concerns: but if the impression abide in its strength, if it return, and follow the Soul, and will not let it be quiet, it's like then to prosper, and prove the time of Mercy indeed to such Souls.

4. An anxious solicitude and inquisitiveness about the means and ways of Salvation, speaks an effectual door of Salvation to be set open to the Souls of Men, Acts 2. 37. & 16. 30. *Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Men and Brethren, what shall we do? &c.* we are in a miserable condition; oh you the Ministers of Christ, instruct, counsel, and shew us what course to take: is there no Balm in Gilead? no door of hope in this Valley of Acher? Alas! we are not able to dwell with our own fears, terrors, and prefiges of Wrath to come. Oh for a Messenger, one among a thousand, to teach us the way of Salvation. Thus the Lord rivets and fixes those motions in some Souls, that vanish like a Morning-mist or Dew in others.

5. Lastly, That which secures and completes this work, is the execution of those purposes and

con-

convictions, by falling strait to the work of *Faith* and *Repentance* in good earnest, dallying no more with so great a Concern, standing no longer at *shall I? shall I?* when mean while time flies away, and opportunities may be lost; but bring their thoughts and debates to a peremptory resolution as the *Lepers* at *Samarita* did; and seeing themselves shut up to one only door of hope, there they resolve to take their station, lying at the feet of *Jesus Christ*, and cast their poor burdened Souls upon him, whatever be the illue. When the Spirit of God ripens his first motions to this, and carries them thro' that critical season thus far, there is an effectual door of opportunity opened indeed; this is an acceptable time, a day of Salvation: but oh! how many thousands miscarry in this season, and, like Trees removed from one soil to another, die in the removal!

But certainly, it is the most *solemn* and *important* concern of every Soul to watch upon all these seasons of Salvation, when God comes nigh to them by *convictions* and *motions* of his Spirit; and to put the same value on these things that they do upon their Souls, and the Salvation of them. This is the door of hope set open, a fresh gale to carry you home to your Port of Glory. Salvation is now come nigh to your Souls; there is but a little betwixt you and blessedness. Wise and happy is that Soul which knows and improves its season. To persuade and press Men to discern and improve such seasons as these, is the principal work of the Preachers of the Gospel, and that special work to which I now address my self in the following Motives and Arguments.

Arg. I.

And first, who that hath the free exercise of Reason, and the sense of a future eternal Estate, would carelessly neglect any season of Salvation, whilst he seeth all the rational World so carefully attending and watching all opportunities to promote and secure their lower concerns and designs for the present life?

Is not the saving of a Man's Soul as weighty a concern as the getting of an Estate? You cannot but observe how careful Merchants are to nick the opportunity which promiseth them a good turn; how yare poor Seamen look out for a Wind to waft them to their Port, and industriously shift their Sails to improve every flaw that may set them on in their Voyage; how many miles Tradersmen will travel to be in season at a Fair, to put off or purchase Goods to their advantage: no entertainments, recreations, or importunities of Friends can prevail with any of these to lose a day or a which their business depends; all things must give way to their business; they all understand their seasons, and will not be diverted. But, alas! what childish toys are all these, compared with Salvation! What is the loss of a little Money, to the loss of a Man's Soul? If a Man's Life depended upon his being at such a place by such a precise hour, sure he would not over-sleep his time that morning; and had he but the least fear of coming too late, every stroke of the Clock would strike to his heart: and yet remissness and carelessness in such a case as this, is infinitely more excusable than in the matter of Salvation. Certainly the solicitude and care of all the World for the interests thereof, yea, your own diligence and circumspection in temporal things, will be an uncontrollable and confounding self-conviction to you in the day of your account, and leave you without Flea or Apology for your supine neglects of the seasons of Salvation.

The consideration of the uncertainty and slip-Arg. II.
pery nature of these spiritual seasons must awaken in us all care and diligence to secure and improve them. This nick of opportunity is *tempus labile*, a slippery season; it is but short in it self, and very uncertain: *To day, whilst it is said to day* (saith the Apostle) *if ye will hear his voice*, Heb. 3. 15. *q. d.* you have now a short, uncertain, but most precious and valuable season for your Souls, lay hold on it whilst it is called *to day*; for if this season be let slip, the time to come is called by another name, that is, *not to day, but to morrow*. Your time is the *present time*; take heed of *procrastinating* and putting it off till that which is called *to day* (which is your *only season*) be past and gone. This precious inch of time, tho' it be more worth than all the other greater parts and portions of your time, yet it is as much in *fluxu*, in hasty motion and expence as other parts of time are: and being once lost, is never more to be recalled or recovered. Few men know or understand it whilst it is current: other seasons for natural or civil actions are *known and stated*, but the time of Grace is not so easily discerned, and therefore commonly mistaken and lost: and this comes to pass partly through,

1. Presumptuous Hopes.

2. Discouraging Fears.

1. Presumptuous Hopes, which put it too far forth, and persuade us this season is yet to come; that we have before us, and that *to morrow* shall be as *to day*. Thus through *Presumption* Men hope, and *Presumendo* by their *presumptuous hopes* they perish. This is the ruin of most Souls that perish. *sperant, & sperando pereunt.*

2. Discouraging Fears put it too far back, and represent it as long since past and gone, whilst yet in being, and in our hands. By such pangs of desperation Satan cuts the Nerves of *Industry* and *Diligence*, and causes Souls to yield themselves as *by consent* for lost and hopeless, even whilst the Gospel is opening their eyes to see their Sin and Misery, which is a part of the work for their recovery. Thus thousands are blinded, that they cannot discern the season of Mercy, and so it slides from them, as if it had never been.

God came near them in the means of their *Conversion*, yea, and nearer in the motions of his Spirit upon their *Consciences* and *Affections*; but they knew not the time of their visitation, and now the things of their peace are *hid from their eyes*. Had those Convictions been obeyed, and those purposes that were begotten in their hearts been followed by answerable executions of them, happy had they been to all Eternity: but their carelessness neglects have quenched them, and the door is shut, and who knows whether it may be opened any more? Oh! dally not with the Spirit of God, resist not his calls; his motions on the Soul are tender things; they may soon be quenched, and never recovered.

Neglect not the seasons of Mercy, the day of Arg. III.
Grace, because opportunity facilitates the great work of your Salvation: it is much easier to be done in such a season than it can be afterwards: an impression is easily made on Wax when melted; but stay till it be hardened, and if you lay the greatest weight on the Seal, it leaves not its impress upon it. Much so it is with the heart; there is a season when God makes it soft and yielding, when the Affections are thawed and melted under the Word. Conscience is full of sense and activity, the Will pliable: now is the time

time to set in with the motions of the Spirit: there is now a gale from Heaven, if you will take it; and if not, it carries not for man, nor waits for the sons of men. Neglect of the season is the loss of the Soul. The heart, like melted Wax, will naturally harden again; and then to how little purpose are your own feeble essays? *Heb. 3. 15.* 'Tis both easie and successful striving, when the Spirit of God strives in you, and with you; you are now Workers together with God, and such Work goes on smoothly and sweetly: that which is in motion is easily mov'd; but if once the heart be set, you may tug to little purpose.

Avg. 4.

The infinite importance and weight of Salvation is alone instead of all *Motives and Arguments* to make men prize and improve every proper season for it. It is no ordinary concern, it is your *Life*, yea, it is your *eternal Life*; the solemnity and awfulness of such a business as this, is enough to swallow up the Spirit of a Man. Oh what an awful found have such words as these, *Ever with the Lord!* Suppose you saw the Glory of Heaven, the full reward of all the labours and sufferings of the Saints, the blessed harvest of all their prayers, tears, diligence, and self-denial in this world; or suppose you had a true representation of the Torments of Hell, and could but hear the wailings of the Damned for the neglect of the season of Mercy, and their *passionate*, but *vain* wishes for one of those days which they have lost: would you think any care, any pains, any self-denial too much to save and redeem one of these opportunities? Surely you would have a far higher estimation of them than ever you had in your lives.

A Trial for a Man's whole Estate is accounted a solemn business among men; the Cast of a Dye for a Man's Life is a weighty action, and seldom done without anxiety of the mind, and trembling of the hand: yet both these are but *Childrens play* compared with Salvation-work.

Three things put an unspeakable solemnity upon this matter: it is the precious Soul, which is above all valuation, that lies at stake, and is to be saved or lost. The *saving or losing* of it is not for a time, but for ever; and this is the *only season* in which it will be eternally saved, or cast away: all hangs upon a little inch of time, which being over-slippt and lost, is never more to be recalled or recovered. Lord! with what serious Spirits, deep and weighty consideration, fears and tremblings of heart, should men and women attend the seasons of their Salvation!

Believe it, Reader, since thy Soul projected its first thought, there never was a more weighty and concerning subject than this presented to thy thoughts. Oh therefore let not thy thoughts trifle about it, and slide from it as they use to do in other things of common concernment.

Avg. 5.

If we value the true pleasure of life, or solid comfort of our Souls at Death, let us by no means neglect the special seasons and opportunities of Salvation we now enjoy.

These two things, the pleasure of Life, and comfort in Death, should be priz'd by every man more than his two eyes: certainly no Being at all is more desirable than a Being without these: take away the true Spiritual pleasure of Life, and you level the Life of Man with the Beast that perishes; and take away the hope and comfort of the Soul in Death, and you sink him infinitely below the Beast, and make him a Being only capable of misery for ever.

Now there can be no true Spiritual pleasure found in that Soul that has neglected and lost his *only season of Salvation*: all the solid delight and comfort of life results from the settlement and security of a Man's great concern in the proper season thereof. The true Mirth of the converted Prodigal bears date from the time of his return and reconciliation to his Father, *Luke 15. 24.* Two things are absolutely pre-requisite to the comfort of life, viz. a change of the state by Justification, and a change of the frame and temper of the heart by Sanctification. To be in a pardoned state is matter of all joy, *Mat. 9. 2.* and to be spiritually-minded is Life and Peace, *Rom. 8. 6.* No good News comes to any man before this, and no bad News can sink a man's heart after this.

And for hope and comfort in Death, let none be so fond to expect it, till he have first complied with, and obeyed God's call in the time thereof: a careless life never did, nor never will produce a comfortable Death. What is more common among all that die not stupid and senseless, as well as unregenerate and Christless, than the bitter dolorous complaints of their mis-spent time, and losing their season of Mercy? Reader, if thou wouldst not feel that anguish thou hast seen and heard others to be in on this account, know the time of thy Visitation, and finish thy great work whilst it is day.

Avg. 6.

Neglect no season of Salvation which is graciously afforded you, because your time is short; Death and Eternity are at the door. You know that you must shortly put off these Tabernacles, *2 Pet. 1. 13, 14.* that when a few years are come, you shall go the way whence you shall not return, *Job 16. 22.* All the living are lifted Soldiers, and must conflict hand to hand with that dreadful Enemy Death, and there is no discharge in that War, *Eccles. 8. 8.* It will be vain to say, you are not willing to die; for willing or unwilling, away you must go when Death calls you. It will be as vain to say, you are not ready; for ready or unready, you must be gone when Death comes: your readiness to die would indeed be a Cordial to your hearts in death; but then you must improve and ply the time of life, and husband your opportunities diligently; carelessness of Life, and readiness for Death, are inconsistent, and exclusive of each other. The Bed is sweeter to none than the hard Labourer, and the Grave comfortable to none but the laborious Christian. You know nothing can be done by you after Death; the Compositum is then dissolved; you cease to be what you were, to enjoy the means you had, and to work as you did. Oh therefore slip not the *only season* you have both of attaining the end of Life, and escaping the danger and hour of Death.

The USE.

I shall close all with a word of Exhortation, perswading (if possible) the careless and unthinking Neglecters of their precious Time and Souls, to awake out of that deep and dangerous security in which they lie fast asleep on the very brink of Eternity; and to day, whilst it is yet called to day, to hear God's voice calling them to Repentance and Faith, and thereby to Christ and everlasting Blessedness. Behold, he yet stands at the door, and knocks, *Rev. 3. 20.* The door of Hope is not yet finally shut, there are yet some stirrings at certain times in mens Consciences; God comes near them in his Word, and in some rousing acts of Providence,

dence, the death of a near Relation, the seizure of a dangerous Disease, the blasting and disappointment of a man's great design and project for this World, a fall into some notorious Sin; these and such-like methods of Providence, as well as the convincing voice of the Word, have the efficacy of an awakening voice to mens drowsy Consciences; and if careless Sinners would but attend to them, and follow home those motions they make upon their hearts, who knows to what these weak beginnings might arise and prosper? The Souls of Men are as it were embarked in the Calls of God, your Life is bound up in them; if these be lost, your Souls are lost; if these abide upon you, and grow up to *sound Conversion*, you are saved by them. More particularly consider,

1. What a mercy it is to have your lot providentially cast under the Gospel; to be born under and bred up with the Means and Instruments of *Conversion and Salvation*. We have lived from our youth up under the Calls of God, and within the joyful sound of the Gospel: *God hath not dealt so with other Nations*, Psal. 147. 20. Tho' others should seek the means of Life, they cannot find them; and tho' you seek them not, you can hardly miss them.

2. How great a mercy it is to have your lives lengthened out hitherto by God's patience under the Gospel! that neither *that golden lamp* nor the lamp of your life (both which are liable to be extinguished every moment) are yet put out. Thousands and ten thousands, your contemporaries, are gone out of the hearing of the voice of the Gospel, they shall never hear another Call, the Treaty of God is ended with them, the Master of the house is risen up, and the doors are shut. Your neglects and provocations have not been inferior to theirs, but God's patience and goodness has exceeded and abounded to you beyond whatever it did to them.

3. Bethink your selves what an aggravation of your misery it will be, to sink into Hell with the Calls of God sounding in your ears! to sink into eternal misery betwixt the tender outstretched arms of Mercy! this is the Hell of Hell, the Emphasis of Damnation, the racking Engine on which the Consciences of the Damned are tortured. *And thou Capernaum, which art exalted to Heaven, shalt be brought down to Hell*, Mat. 11. 23. Such a fall, after so high an exaltation, is the very *Strappado* which will torment your Consciences. Hell will prove a cooler and milder place to the Heathens that never enjoyed your Light, Means, and Mercies in this world, than it will to You. None sink so deep into Misery in the World to come, as they that fall from the fairest Opportunities of Salvation in this World.

4. Let no man expect that God will hear his cries and intreaties in time of Misery, who neglects and flights the Calls of God in time of Mercy. God calls, but Men will not hear; the day is coming *when they shall cry, but God will not hear*, Prov. 1. 24. 25. *Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh upon him?* Job 27. 9. No, no, he will not: and this is but a just retribution from the righteous God, whose Calls and Counsels Men have set at nought. But, whatever men now think of it, it is certainly the greatest misery incident to man in all the World: for as no words can make another fully sensible what a privilege it is to have the ear, favour, pity, and help of God in

a day of straits; so it is impossible for any words to express the doleful state and case of that Soul whom God calls off in trouble, and whose cries he shuts out.

5. Beware of neglecting any Call of God, because that Call you are now tempted to neglect; may be the last Call ever God intends to give thy Soul. Sure I am, there is a Call which will be the last Call of God to rebellious Sinners, and after that no more Calls, but an eternal deep silence; *his Spirit shall not always strive with Man*; and the more Motions and Calls you have already slighted, the more probable it is that this may be the last Voice of God in a way of Mercy to thy Soul: and what if, after this, God should seal up thy heart, and judicially harden it; make thy Will utterly inflexible, and thine Ears deaf, as he threatens, *Isa. 6. 10.* what an undone miserable Man or Woman art thou then! Oh! beware of provoking the forest of all Judgments, by persisting any longer in a course of rebellion against Light and Mercy.

6. Whilst your hearts put off and neglect God's Calls, you can by no means arrive to the evidence and assurance of your election; for your Election is only secured by your effectual calling, *2 Pet. 1. 10.* there is no way for Men to discern their Names written in the Book of Life, but by reading the Work of Sanctification in their hearts, *Rom. 10. 8.* I desire no miraculous Voice from Heaven, no extraordinary signs, or supernatural notices and informations in this matter: Lord, let me but find my heart complying with thy Calls, my will obediently submitting to thy Commands; Sin my burden, and Christ my desire: I never crave a fairer or surer evidence of thy electing Love to my Soul; and if I had an Oracle from Heaven, an extraordinary Messenger from the other World, to tell me thou lovest me, I have no reason to credit such a voice, whilst I find my heart wholly sensual, averse to God, and indisposed to all that is spiritual.

7. What reason have you why you should not presently embrace the Call of God, and thankfully lay hold on the first opportunity and season of Salvation? Have you any greater matters in hand than the Salvation of your precious Souls? Is there any thing in the World that more concerns you? If the Affairs of this Life be so indispensibly necessary, and those of the World to come so indifferent; if you think Meat and Drink, Trade and Business, Wife and Children, be so great things, and Christ, Soul and Eternity so little things; or tho' you think Salvation of the greatest necessity, yet it may safely enough be put off to an uncertain time, I may assure you, you will not long be of this mind. How soon are all the mistakes of men in these matters rectified in a few moments after Death! *Relieved* I say, but not remedied; your Opinion will be changed, but not your Condition.

8. Do you not every day easily and readily obey the Calls of Satan and your Lusts, whilst God and Conscience are suffered to call and strive in vain? If Satan or your Lusts call you to the Tavern, to the World, and sinful Pleasures, you speedily comply with their call, and yield a ready obedience: if Pride, Covetousness, or Passion and Revenge call, they need not call twice; and shall God and Conscience call only in vain? Lord, what a Creature is Man become! If a vain Companion call, you have no power to deny

deny him; if God call, you have no ear to hear him.

9. You cannot but observe the obedience and diligence of many others, how seriously, painfully, and assiduously they ply and follow the work of their own Salvation, and yet are no more concerned in the Events and Consequences of these things than you are. Doth it not trouble you when you compare your selves with them? Do not such thoughts as these sometimes arise upon such Observations? *Lord, what a difference is there like to be betwixt their end and mine, when there is so apparent a difference in our course and conversation? Doth not God distinguish persons in this World by the frames of their hearts, and tenour of their lives, in order to the great distinction he will make betwixt one and another in the day of Judgment? Have not I as precious a Soul to save or lose as any of them? What is the matter that I sit with folded arms, whilst they are working out their Salvation with fear and trembling? Why should any Man or Woman in the World be more careful for their Souls, than I for mine? Surely its capacity and excellency is equal with theirs, tho' my care and diligence be so unequal.*

10. To conclude, God will shortly give you an irresistable Call to the grave, and after that his Voice shall call to you in your graves, *Arise ye dead, and come to Judgment*: But woe to you, woe and alas that ever you were born, if you

should hear the Call of God to die, before you have heard and obeyed his Call to Christ! Will your death-bed be easie to you? Can you with any hope or comfort shoot the gulph of Eternity, before you have done one act for the securing your Souls from the Wrath to come? 'Tis a dreadful thing for a poor Christless Soul to sit quivering upon the lips of a dying Sinner, not able to stay, nor yet to endure a parting pull from the Body in such a case as it is.

In a word; If that God that made, and will shortly judge you; if the Redeemer that shed his invaluable Blood, and now offers you the purchases and benefits of it; if you have any love to, or care of your own Souls, which are more worth than the whole World; if you have any value for Heaven, or dread of Hell, then for God's sake, for Christ's sake, for your precious Souls sake, trifle with Heaven and Hell no longer, but be in earnest to work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling. Could I think of any other Means or Motives to secure your Souls from danger, I would surely use them. Could I reach your Hearts effectually, I would deeply impress this great Concern upon them; but I can neither do God's part nor yours; it is some ease to me, I have in sincerity (tho' with much imperfection and feebleness) done part of my own: the Lord prosper it by the Blessing of his Spirit on the Hearts of them that read it. *Amen.*

A Practicall Treatise of F E A R.

Wherein the various *Kinds, Uses, Causes, Effects,* and *Remedies* thereof are distinctly opened and prescribed, for the Relief and Encouragement of all those that fear God in these doubtful and distracting Times.

To the Right Worshipful Sir *J O H N H A R T O P*;
Knight and Baronet.

SIR,

Among all the Creatures God hath made (*Devils only excepted*) *Man* is the most apt and able to be his own Tormentor; and of all the scourges with which he lasheth and afflicteth both his Mind and Body, none is found so cruel and intolerable as his own Fears. The worse the times are like to be, the more need the Mind hath of succour and encouragement, to confirm and fortifie it for hard encounters: but from the worst prospect, Fear insinuateth the deepest and most dangerous Wounds upon the Mind of Man, cutting the very Nerves of its passive fortitude and bearing ability.

The grief we suffer from Evil felt, would be light and easie, were it not incensed by Fear; Reason would do much, and Religion more, to demulce and lenise our sorrows, did not Fear betray the succours of both. And it is from things to come that this prospecting Creature raiseth up to himself vast Hopes and Fears; If he have a fair and encouraging prospect of serene and prosperous days from the Scheme and Position of second Causes, Hope immediately fills his heart with cheariness, and displays the signals of it in his very face, answerable to that fair benign Aspect of things: but if the face of things to come be threatening and inauspicious, Fear gains the Ascendant over the Mind, an unmanly and unchristian faintness pervades it, and among the many other mischiefs it insinuateth, this is not the least, that it brings the evil of to morrow upon to day, and so makes the Duties of to day wholly unserviceable to the Evils of to morrow; which is as much as if a man having an intricate and difficult business cut out for the next day, which requires the utmost intension both of his Mind and Body, and (happy) might be prosperously managed if both were duly prepared, should lie all the night restless and disquieted about the event, torturing and spending himself with his own presaging fears, so that when the day is come, and the business calls for him, his strength is no way equal to the burden of it, but he faints and fails under it.

There is indeed an excellent use that God makes of our Fears to stimulate our slothful hearts to greater vigilance and preparation for evils; and there is a mischievous use Satan makes of our Fears, to cast us under Dependancy and unbecoming Puffblowniness; and I reckon it one of the great difficulties of Religion to cut by a thread here, and so to manage our selves under threatening or doubtful Providences, as to be touched with so much sense of those approaching evils, as may prepare us to bear them; and yet to enjoy that constancy and firmness of mind in the worst times, that may answer the excellent Principles we are professedly governed by.

These last times are certainly the most perilous times; great things are yet to be acted upon the Stage of this World before it be taken down, and the *Scena autepenultima*, later-end, I say not the last, will be a Tragedy. There is an *ultima clades ad hoc metuenda*, a dismal slaughter of the Witnesses of Christ, yet to be expected: the last bite of the cruel Beast will be deadly, and if we flatter not our selves, all things seem to be disposing themselves in the course of Providence towards it.

But, Sir, if our Union with Christ be sure in it self, and sure to us also; if Faith give us the daily visions and Prædilections of the World to come, what well-composed Spectators shall we be of these Tragedies! Let things be tossed sulque, deque, and the Mountains cast into the midst of the Sea, yet then the afflicted Christian may sing his Song upon *Alamoth*, A Song composed for God's hidden ones. This so poseth and steadies the mind, that we may enjoy the comfort and tranquillity of a resigned will, when others are at their wits end.

Psalm. 43.

With design to promote this blessed frame in my own and others hearts in these frightful times, I meditated, and now publish this small Treatise, to which a dear Friend (from whom I have often had the fair Idea and Character of your excellent Spirit) hath occasioned the prefixing of your worthy Name; I beg pardon for such an unusual presumption, as also your charity in censuring the faults that will appear in it, when it shall come under so exalt and judicious an eye; it may be useful, tho' it be not elegant; its seasonableness is its best commendation, and its aim better than its performance. As for You, Sir, I hope Faith hath really placed your Soul in that serene and happy station where Seneca fancied *Moral Virtue* to have placed a good man, *Fatum est, cacumine Olympi constitutus, supra ventos & procellas, & omnes res humanas*. Above the Storms and Tempests of this unquiet and distracting World. But there are many gracious persons in this day labouring under their own Fears, and whose hearts are ready to fail with looking for those things that are coming to try them that dwell upon the Earth; and possibly somewhat of relief may be administered to many such by this Discourse; some divisions and staggering Souls may be established; some discouraged and fainting Spirits may be revived; some doubts may be dissolved that have long perplexed gracious hearts. Whatever use it may be of to any, I humbly call in the aid of your Prayers to my own for a special Blessing upon it, and remain, Sir,

Yours to honour, love, and serve you,

John Flavell:

Isa. viii. v. 12, 13, and part of the 14.

Say ye not a confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy; neither fear ye [their fear] nor be afraid. v. 13. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread; v. 14. And he shall be for a sanctuary.

C H A P. I.

Wherein the Text and Context are opened, the Doctrines propounded, and the general method stated.

THERE is not more diversity found in the outward features, than in the inward tempers and dispositions of men: some are astimorous as Hares, and start at every sound, or yelp of a dog: others are bold as Lions, and can face dangers without trembling. Some fear more than they ought, and some before they ought, and others when they ought not at all. The carnal person fears man, not God; the strong Christian fears God, not man; the weak Christian fears man too much, and God too little.

There is a Fear which is the effect of sin, springing from guilt, and hurrying the Soul into more guilt; and there is a Fear which is the effect of grace, springing from our love to God and his interest, and driving the Soul to God in the way of duty. The less fear any man hath, the more happiness, except it be of that fear which is our happiness and our excellency.

It cannot be said of any man as it is said of Leviathan, Job 41. 33. that he is made without fear; those that have most fortitude, are not without some fears: And when the Church is in the storms of Persecution, and almost covered with the waves, the stoutest passengers in it may suffer as much from this boisterous passion within, as from the Storm without; and all for want of thoroughly believing, or not seasonably remembering, that the Lord High Admiral of all the Ocean, and Commander of all the Winds is on board the Ship, to steer and to preserve it in the storm.

A pregnant instance hereof is furnished to our hands in this Context, where you find the best men trembling in expectation of the worst events both on the Church in general, and themselves in particular. *Their hearts were moved like the trees of the wood shaken with the wind*, ch. 7. v. 2.

And indeed if their dangers were to be measured by sense only, their fears were not above the value of the cause, yea, their dangers seemed to exceed their fears; for it was the invasion of a foreign and cruel enemy, even the Assyrian, who were to break in upon them like a breach of the Sea, and overflow the land of Immanuel, v. 7. *The Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river strong and many; even the King of Assyria and all his glory, and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks.* And as the 7 ver. resembles the enemy to waters which quickly drown the country into which they break, so the 8 ver. tells you how far they should prevail, and how near it should come to a general and total ruine. *He shall pass through Judah, he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck, and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.* All the body should be

under water, except the capital City, which remained above water.

Having thus described the power and success of the invading enemy, in the 9 and 10 verses he derides their plots and combinations, assuring them that altho' God for just and holy ends would permit them for a time to afflict his people, yet in the issue all their counsels and cruelties should recoil upon themselves, and end in their own ruine and confusion.

And thereupon Isaiah is commanded to encourage the feeble and trembling hearts of such as feared God in those distracted and frightful times, v. 11, 12, 13. *The Lord spake unto me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not a confederacy, &c.*

God speaking to the Prophet by a strong hand, imports the strong and mighty impression that was made upon his heart by the Spirit of Prophecy: wherein the Lord did as it were lay his hand upon him, as a man doth upon one to whom he is about to impart some special secret in a familiar way, q. d. Come hither Isaiah (drawing him to him at the same instant with a friendly hand) take deep notice of what I am now to give thee in charge, both with respect to thy self, and my elect people that follow thee; *Say not you a confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy*, (i. e.) let not these frightful tidings work upon you, as they do upon Abaz, and the common multitude with him, who are so terrified and feared with the approaching dangers, that all their counsels, thoughts and studies are taken up in preventing it, by making a confederacy or league with the Assyrian; or if that cannot be, then with some foreign power that may secure them against the Assyrian: but their eyes are not all to me for protection and deliverance; they expect more from Egypt than from Heaven, from a broken reed than from the Rock of ages. Fear not you their fear; their fear drives them from God to the Creature; it first distracts them, and then ensnares them.

But on the contrary, see that thou, and all the faithful in the land with thee, do sanctify me in your hearts, and make me your fear and your dread, (i. e.) rely upon me by faith in this day of trouble, and see that you give me the glory of my Wisdom, Power, and Faithfulness; by relying intirely upon those my Attributes engaged for you in so many tried promises: and do not betake your selves to such sinful and vain shifts as those do that have no interest in me, nor experience of me. This is the general scope and design of the Text; wherein more particularly you have,

1. An evil practice prohibited.
2. An effectual remedy prescribed.
3. A singular encouragement to apply that remedy.

1. An

1. An evil practice prohibited, *Fear not their fear, neither be afraid.* This is that sinful principle, which was but too apt to incline them to do as others did, *scil.* to say a confederacy. Sinful fears are apt to drive the best men into sinful compliances, and in direct shifts to help themselves. Their fear may be understood two ways;

1. Subjectively.
2. Effectively.

1. *Subjectively*, for the self same fear wherewith the carnal and unbelieving Jews feared: a fear that enslaved them in bondage of Spirit; a fear that is the fruit of sin, a sin in its own nature, the cause of much sin to them, and a just punishment of God upon them for their other sins.

2. *Effectively*, Let not your fear produce in you such mischievous effects as their fear doth; to make you forget God, magnifie the creature, prefer your own wits and policies to the Almighty power, and unsupported faithfulness of God; if you say, but how shall we help it;

2. Why in the next place you have, *An Effectual remedy prescribed, But sanctifie the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear and your dread.* The fear of God will swallow up the fear of Man, a reverential awe and dread of God will extinguish the slavish fear of the creature; as the Sun-shine puts out fire; or as one fire fetches out another: so will this fear fetch out that.

By *sanctifying the Lord of Hosts himself*, is meant a due ascription of the glory of his Sovereign power, wisdom and faithfulness, not only in verbal and professed acknowledgments thereof, but especially in those internal acts of affiance, religion, and intire dependence on him, which as they are the choicest respects of the creature towards its God, and give him the greatest glory, so they are certainly the most beneficial and comfortable acts we can perform for our own peace and safety in times of danger.

If a man do really look to God in a day of trouble and fear, as to the *Lord of Hosts*, (*i. e.*) one that governs all the creatures, and all their actions; at whose beck and command all the Armies of Heaven and Earth are; and then can rely upon the care and love of this God, as a child in danger of trouble repotes on, and commits himself with greatest confidence to the care and protection of his Father: O what peace, what rest must necessarily follow upon this! Who would be afraid to pass through the midst of Armed Troops and Regiments, whilst he knows that the General of that Army is his own Father? The more power this filial fear of God obtains in your hearts, the less will you dread the power of the Creature. When the *Dictator* ruled at Rome, then all other Officers ceased; and so in a great measure will all other fears where the fear of God is *Dictator* in the heart. This is the Remedy.

3. And to enable us to apply this remedy in the worst and most difficult times, we have a singular *encouragement* proposed. If we will thus sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself, by such an acknowledgment of, and child-like dependence on him in times of danger, then he will be to us for a *Sanctuary* (*i. e.*) he will surely protect, defend and provide for us in the worst times and cases, then will the Lord Create upon every dwelling-place of *mount Zion* and upon her *Assemblies*, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence, and there shall be a Tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge and for a covert

from the storm, and from rain. Let the winds roar, the rain beat, the lightnings flash, you are in safety and have a good roof over your heads. Hence these two points of Doctrine offer themselves.

That the best men are too apt to be overcome with slavish fears in times of eminent distress and danger. *Doct. I.*

That the fear of God is the most effectual means to extinguish the sinful fear of man, and to secure us from danger. *Doct. II.*

These two points take in the substance and scope of the Text, but because I design to treat in the following Chapters, of the *Kind, Nature, Uses, Causes, Effects, and Remedies* of Fear, I shall not distinctly prosecute them, but proceed in this order in the following Chapters.

CHAP. II.

Wherein the kinds and nature of Fear are opened, and particularly the distracting slavish Fear of Creatures.

Here is a threefold Fear found in men. *viz. Sect. I.*

1. Natural
2. Sinful
3. Religious

} Fear.

Natural Fear, of which all are partakers that partake of the common nature, not one excepted.

Natural Fear is the trouble or perturbation of mind from the apprehension of approaching evil, or impending danger.

The Greek word *πίος* comes from a Verb that signifies Flight; this is not always sinful, but it is always the fruit and consequent of sin. Since sin entred into our nature there is no shaking off *πίος* Fear, no sooner had Adam transgressed, but he *ἐκπύοντο* feared and fled, hiding himself among the Trees of the Garden, *Gen.* 3. 8. when he had transgressed the Covenant, he presently feared the execution of the Course. First he *cast*, then he *hides*. And his afflictive passion is from him transmittid and derived to all his children.

To this natural Fear it pleased our Lord *Jesus Christ* to subject himself in the days of his flesh, he was afraid, yea, he was fore amazed. *Mark* 14. 33. For though his humane nature was absolutely free from sin, yet he came in the likeness of sinful flesh. *Rom.* 8. 3.

This fear creates great trouble and perturbation in the mind, *1 John* 4. 18. *Fear hath torment*; in proportion to the danger is the fear, and in proportion to the fear, the trouble and distraction of the mind, if the fear be exceeding great, reason is displaced, and can conduct us no farther, as the *Psalmist* speaks of Mariners in a Storm, *they are at their wits end, Psal.* 107. 27. or as it is varied in the Margin, all wisdom is swallowed up, and this is the meaning of *Deut.* 28. 25. that they should go out against their enemies one way, and flee before them seven ways, (*i. e.*) so great shall be the fright and distraction that they shall attempt now one way, then another, striving every way, but liking none; for fear so far betrays the succours of reason, that their counsels are always in uncertainty and at a loss, and the usual voice of a man in this condition is, *I know not what to do, I know not which way to turn.*

Evil is the object of fear, and the greater the evil is, the stronger the fear must needs be, and therefore the terrors of an awakened; and terrified conscience must be allowed to be the greatest of terrors, because in that case a man hath to do with a great and terrible God, and is scared with apprehensions of his infinite and eternal wrath

wrath, than which no evil is or can be greater. You see at what height Christ's conflict with it wrought, when it made him sweat as it were great clots of blood. Of all temporal evils death is the greatest, and therefore Job calls it *the King of Terrors*, Job 18. 14. or the most terrible of ter-

Dux quidam indigno mortis metu, adeo concussus fuit, ut sanguineum sudorem toto corpore fudit. *Hist. lib. 11.*

Juvenis ob levein causam à Sixto V. damnatus, præ doloris vehementia teritur lacrymas cruentes fudit, *lib. 80.*

ribles. *Timanus* relates two strange instances of the fear of death: One of a certain Captain who was so terrified with the fear of death, that he poured out a kind of bloody sweat from all parts of his body. Another is of a young man condemned for a small matter by *Sixtus Quintus*, who was so vehemently terrified with the fears of death, that he shed a kind of bloody tears. These are strange and terrible effects of fear, but vastly short of what Christ felt and suffered, who grappled with a far greater evil than the terrors of Death, even the wrath of an incensed God poured out to the full, and that immediately upon him.

But yet evil, as evil, is rather the object of hatred than of fear, it must be an imminent or near approaching evil, which we see not how to escape or put by, that provokes fear, and rowzes this Lion. And therefore the Saints in glory are perfectly freed from fear, because they are out of the reach of all danger: Nor do we that are here in the midst of evils fear them till we see them approaching us, and we see not how to avoid them. To hear of Fire, Plague, or the Sword in the *Indies*, doth not fright us, because the evil is so remote from us: its far enough off, we are in no danger of it; but when it is in the Town, much more when within our own dwellings, we tremble. Evil hurts us not by a simple apprehension of its nature, but of its union; and all propinquity is a degree of union, as a learned Divine speaks. And it's worth observation, that all carnal security is maintained by putting evils at a great distance from us; as it is noted of those secure sensualists, *Amos 6. 3. they put far from them the evil day.* The meaning is not that they did, or could put the evil one minute farther from them in reality, but only by imagination and fancy; they shut their own eyes, and would not see it, lest it should give an unpleasing interruption to their mirth; and this is the reason why Death puts the living into no more fear, because it is apprehended as remote, and at an undetermined distance, whereas if the precise time of Death were known, especially if that time were near, it would greatly scare and terrify.

This is the nature of natural Fear, the infelicity of nature, which we all groan under the effects of: It is in all the Creatures in some degree, but among them all none suffer more by it than man, for hereby he becomes his own tormentor; nor is any torment greater than this when it prevails in a high degree upon us. Indeed all constitutions and tempers admit not the same degrees of fear; some are naturally courageous and stout, like the *Lion* for magnanimity and fortitude; others exceeding timorous and faint-hearted, like the *Hare* or *Hart*, one little Dog will make a hundred of them fear and flee before him. *Luther* was a man of great courage and presence of mind in dangers, *Melancthon* very timorous and subject to despondency. Thus the difference betwixt them is expressed in one of *Luther's* Letters to him; 'I am well-high a fierce spectator of things,

and esteem not any thing these fierce and threatening *Papists*. I much dislike those anxious cares which as thou writest do almost consume thee. There might be as great a stock of grace in one as in the other, but *Melancthon's* grace had not the advantage of so stout and courageous a temper of body and mind as *Luther's* had. Thus briefly of natural Fear.

There is a Fear which is formally and intrinsically sinful, not only our infelicity, but our fault, not our simple affliction and burden, but our great evil and provocation; and such is the fear here dissuaded, called *their fear*, (i. e.) the fear where-with carnal and unbelieving men do fear, when dangers threaten them; and the sinfulness of it lies in five things.

1. In the spring and cause of it, which is unbelief, and an unworthy distrust of God, when we dare not rely upon the security of a divine promise, nor trust to God's protection in the way of our duty. This was the very case of that people; *Isa. 30. 15. Thus saith the Lord, the body One of Israel, in returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength; and ye would not, but ye said no, for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and we will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift, one thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one, &c.*

Thus stood the case, *Sennacherib* with a mighty Host was ready to invade them; this puts them into a fright; in this distress God assures them by the mouth of the Prophet, that in returning and rest they should be saved, in quietness and confidence should be their strength. The meaning is, never perplex your selves with various counsels and projects to secure your selves under the wings of *Egypt* or any other *Protector*, but with a composed, quiet, and calm temper of mind rest upon my power by faith, take my promises for your security, this shall be your salvation and your strength, more effectual to your preservation than Armies, Garisons, or any Creature-defence in the world; one act of Faith shall do you better service than *Pharaoh* and all his Forces can do.

But ye said no, *q. d.* we dare not trust to that, a good horse will do us more service at such a time than a good promise; *Egypt* is a better security in their eye than Heaven. This is the fruit of gross infidelity. And as wicked men do thus forsake God, and cleave to the Creature in time of trouble, so there is found a spice of this distrustfulness of God producing fear and trouble in the best men. It was in the Disciples themselves, *Mat. 8. 26. Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith?* A Storm had befallen them at Sea, and danger began to threaten them, and presently you find a storm within, their fears were more boisterous than the winds, and had more need of calming than the sea; and it was all from their unbelief, as Christ tells them; the less their faith, the greater their fear. If a man can but rely upon God in a promise, so far as he is enabled to believe, so far he will reckon himself well secured. *Hyrcanus* in his Catalogue of the witnesses relates this remarkable passage of one *Andreas Proles*, a godly aged Divine who lived somewhat before *Luther*, and taught many points soundly, according to his light then, he was called to a Synod at *Milain*, and after wards in the *Lateran*, where opposing a proposition of the Pope about burdening the Church with a new Holiday, he was brought into much danger, and escaping very narrowly from *Rome*, he bought him a Bow and Weapons, but as

Dr. Reynolds.

Epist. ad Melanc. An. 1549.

Hyrc. Ca. Trid. lib. 19.

he was riding, he began to bethink himself, That the cause was not *his* but *God's*, and not to be maintained with sword and bow, and if it were yet what could such a decrepit old man do with weapons? Upon which he threw away his weapons, committed himself, his cause, and his journey to God, relied upon his promises more than sword or bow, and came home safe, and afterward died quietly in his bed.

2. The sinfulness of Fear lies in the excess and immoderacy of it. when we fear more than we ought? for it may be truly said of our fears as the *Philosopher* speaks of waters, *difficile suis terminis continentur*, 'tis hard to keep them within bounds, every bush is a Bear, every petty trouble puts us into a fright, our fear exceeds the value and merit of the cause. 'Tis a great sin to love or fear any creature above the rate of a creature, as if they were Masters of all our temporal and eternal comforts. Thus when the men of *Israel* heard of the confederacy and conjunction of their enemies against them, the Text saith, *their hearts were moved, as the Trees of the wood are moved with the wind, Isai. 7. 1.* or as we use to say proverbially, like an *Aspine leaf*: 'tis a sad sight to behold men shaking and quivering as the trees do in a windy day, yet thus did the house of *David*, partly through the remembrance of past calamities, but especially through incredulity in Gods protecting care in their present and future dangers? yea, this is too often the fault of good men in creature fear, as well as in creature love, to transgress the due bounds of moderation. 'Tis noted of *Jacob* though a man of much Faith, and one that had the sweetest encouragements to strengthen it both from former experiences, and God's gracious promises to be with him; yet when *Esau* was come nigh, he was greatly afraid and distressed, *Gen. 32. 7.* It was but a little before that God had graciously appeared to him, and sent a Royal guard of Angels to attend him, even two hosts or armies of Angels, *verse 1, 2.* and yet as soon as *Esau* approached him, he was afraid, greatly afraid, yea, greatly afraid and distressed, notwithstanding such an encouraging vision as this was.

3. The sinfulness of our Fears lies in the inordinacy of them; to fear it more than we ought is bad enough, but to magnifie its power above the power of a creature; to exalt the power of any creature by our fears, and give it such an Ascendant over us, as if it had an Arbitrary and absolute dominion over us, or over our comforts, to do with them what it pleased; this is to put the creature out of its own Class and rank, into the place of God, and is therefore a very sinful and evil fear.

To trust in any creature as if it had the power of a God to help us, or to fear any creature, as if it had the power of a God to hurt us, is exceeding sinful, and highly provoking to God. This inordinate trust is taxed and condemned in *Isai. 31. 3.* They would needs go down to *Egypt* for help, and trust in their horses and horsemen, because they were strong (*i. e.*) in their opinion they were able to secure them against all those dangers the Prophet from the Lord's own mouth had threatened them with, but to take them off from this sinful and inordinate dependence on the creature he tells them. *v. 3. Now the Egyptians are men and not God, and their horses flesh, and not spirit, when the Lord shall stretch forth his hand, both*

he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down; and they shall fail together, q. d.

'Tis a sinful and dangerous mistake for one creature, to give that trust and dependence to another creature which is due only to God, to look upon men as if they were Gods, and horses as if they were Spirits: All creatures, even the strongest, are but as the Hop, the Vine, or the Ivy, if they clasp about the pole, the wall, or the oak; they may be supported, as you also may by leaning upon God, but if they depend, and intangle themselves one upon another, as you and the *Egyptians* do, you shall fail, and fall all together.

And as one creature is apt inordinately and sinfully thus to trust and lean upon another; so there is as great a proneness in the creatures inordinately to fear and dread each other, as if the creature feared were rather a God, than a man, rather a Spirit than flesh; and thus our fear magnifies and exalts the creature, and puts it as it were into the room and place of God. This was the sin which God rebuked in his own people, *Isai 51. 12, 13. I even I am he that comforteth thee, who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass, and forgetteth the Lord thy maker, &c.* See how fear exalts man, and deprecates God, it thinks upon the noxious power of men so much, that it forgets the saving power of God, as if that stood for nothing; thus a mortal worm that shall perish as the grass, eclipses the glory of the great God, that stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth.

And this was the evil against which Christ cautioned his own Disciples in *Math. 10. 28. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. q. d.* Have a care you never fear any man, be he armed with never so much power, and rage; as if the power of making or marring you for ever were in his hands, as if you lay at the feet of his will and pleasure to be saved or ruined for ever. Fear not him that can only touch your bodies as if he would damn your souls, invest not any creature with the sovereign and incommunicable power of God.

4. The sinfulness of Fear consists in the distracting influence it hath upon the hearts of men, whereby it discomposeth and unfits them for the discharge of their duties.

Fear sometimes puts men into such an hurry, and their thoughts into such disorder, that for the present they have scarce any succour or relief from their graces, or from their reason; for under an extraordinary fear both grace and reason like the wheels of a watch wound above its due height, stand still, and have no motion at all. It is rare to find a man of that largeness and constancy of heart and mind in a day of fear, that was found in *Jehoshaphat*, *2 Chro. 20. 2, 3. Then there came some that told Jehoshaphat saying, there cometh a great multitude against thee from beyond the sea, on this side Syria, and behold they be in Hazazon Tamar which is Engedi, and Jehoshaphat feared; and set himself to seek the Lord. He set himself (i. e.) he composed and fixed his heart for Prayer in the time of so great fright, and terrible an Alarm: But it is rare to find such constancy and evenness of mind as this; in like cases it is with most in great frights, as the Prophet describes the condition of the Jews, *Isaiah 22. 2, 3.* when the City of Jerusalem was besieged and the enemy came*

came under the walls of it; that which a little before was the *joyous City*, or as some read the *re-velling City*, is now in such a panick fear, that it is full of stirs and tumults, some run up to the tops of the houses either to hide or bewail themselves, or take a view of the dreadful enemy without; others prevent the sword of the enemy, and die by fear before hand, their own apprehensions of misery killed them before the sword of any other enemy once touched them, but you read of none that ran into their closets to seek the Lord; the City was full of stirs, but not of prayers; alas, Fear made them cry to the mountains, rather than to God, *ver. 5.* The best men find it hard to keep their thoughts from wandering and their minds from distraction in the greatest calm of peace, but a thousand times harder in the hurries and tumults of fear.

5. The sinfulness of Fear consists in the power it hath to dispose and incline men to the use of sinful means to put by their danger, and to cast them into the hands and power of temptation. *The fear of men bringeth a snare, Prov. 29. 25.* or puts and lays a snare before him; Satan spreads the net, and Fear like the stalking horse drives men right into it. It was Fear which drew *Abraham* that great believer into the snare of dissimulation, to the great disparagement of Religion, for it was somewhat an odd sight to see *Abimelech* an heathen so schooling an *Abraham* for it, as he did *Gen. 20. 9.* And for the same evil you find God chiding his people in *Isaiah 57. 11.* *And of whom hast thou been afraid, or feared that thou hast lied and hast not remembered me?* There is a double lie occasioned by Fear, one in words, another in deeds: Hypocrysie is a lie done, a practical lie, and our Church History abounds with sad examples of dissimulation through fear: 'tis Satan's great engine to make his Temptations Victorious and successful with men.

3. There is an holy and laudable Fear, a Fear which is our *treasure*, not our *torment*, the chief ornament of the Soul, its beauty and perfection, not its infelicity or sin, *viz.* the awful filial fear of God; natural fear is a pure or simple passion of the Soul; Sinful fear is the disordered and corrupt passion of the soul; but this is the natural passion sanctified, and thereby changed and baptized into the name and nature of a Spiritual grace. This fear is also mentioned in my Text, and prescribed as an Antidote against sinful fears; it devours carnal fears as *Moses* serpent did those of the *Enchanters*. It's one of the sorest judgments to be in the fear of man day and night, *Deut. 28. 65, 66, 67.* and one of the sweetest mercies to be in the fear of God all the day long, *Prov. 23. 17.* The fear of men shortens our days, *Isaiah 22. 34.* but the fear of the Lord prolongeth our days, *Prov. 10. 27.* The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life *Prov. 14. 27.* But the fear of man a fountain of mischiefs and miseries. By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil, *Prov. 16. 6.* but by the fear of men, men run themselves into evil *Prov. 29. 25.*

This Fear is a *gracious habit* or principle planted by God in the soul, whereby the soul is kept under an holy awe of the eye of God, and from thence is inclined to perform and do what pleaseth him, and to shun and avoid whatsoever he forbids and hates.

1. It is planted in the soul as a permanent and fixed habit, it is not of the natural growth and production of man's heart, but of supernatural in-

fusion and implanatation. *Jer. 32. 40. I will put my fear into their inward parts.* To fear man is natural, but to fear God is wholly supernatural.

2. This gracious fear puts the soul under the awe of God's eye, *Psal. 119. 161. my heart standeth in awe of thy word.* 'Tis the reproach of the servants of men to be *eye-servants*, but it is the praise and honour of God's servants to be so.

3. This respect to the eye of God inclines them to perform and do whatsoever pleaseth him, and is commanded by him; hence fearing God, and working righteousness are connected and linked together, *Acts 10. 35.* if we truly fear God, we dare not but do the things he commands, and if his fear be exalted in our hearts to an high degree, it will enable us to obey him in duties accompanied with deepest self denial, *Gen. 22. 12. Now I know thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.*

4. This fear ingageth, and in some degree in-ableth the soul, in which it is to shun and avoid whatsoever is displeasing to God, and forbidden by him, in this *Job* discovered himself a true fearer of God, he would not touch what God had forbidden, and therefore was honoured with this Excellent Character, *He was one that feared God and eschewed evil, Job 1. 3.*

And thus of the several kinds of Fear.

CHAP. III.

Shewing the various uses of Fear, both Natural, Sinful, and Religious, in the Government of the world by providence.

HAVING taken a brief view of the several kinds and sorts of Fear that are found among men, our next work will be to upon the Uses of them in the Government of this world; for one way or other they all subserve the most wise and holy purposes of God therein. And we will first enquire into.

1. The Use of Natural Fear.

Which if we well consider, it will be found exceeding necessary and useful to make man a governable creature by Law, and consequently the order, comfort and tranquillity of the world necessarily depends upon it. How immorigerous and intractable would the corruptions of man's nature make him, and incapable of any moral **Est timor* restraint from the most flagitious and barbarous instar *frz* crimes, had not God planted such a passion as *ni quo equis regi-* this in his nature, which like a **bridle* curbs in *cur, hic* the corrupt propensions thereof. If fear did not *metus* clasp its manacles and fetters upon the wild and toleretur, boysterous lusts of men, they would certainly bear *omnia con-* down all milder motives and break loose from *cidere.* all ingenuous bands of restraint, the world would *Lev. 18* inevitably be filled with disorders, tumults, *pro. 29. v.* pines, theft, murders, and all manner of uncleanness, and unrighteousness, *nec hospes ab hospite* *tuus*, men would become like the fishes of the sea as the Prophet complains, *Habak. 1. 14.* where the greater swallow up a multitude of the smaller fry alive at one gulp; propriety could not be maintained in the world, no man's person could be safe or inviolate; power and opportunity to do

Intell. *Intell. creatura eo ipso quod creatura est, superiorem habet, cujus providentia & ordinationi subiacet: & qua intellectualis est capax est gubernationis moralis, qua dirigatur ad bonum, & arceatur a malo, & talis lex est illi simpliciter necessaria, ut conservet enter suam naturam vivere possit. Suarez de leg. lib. 1. c. 3.*

mischiefs

mischief would measure out to men their Lot and Inheritance, and consequently all Societies must disband and break up. We say, and the observation is sure, *He that fears not his own, may easily be master of another man's life.* 'Tis Law, and fear of Punishment that keeps the World in order; men are afraid to do evil, because they are afraid to suffer it; they see the Law hath inseparably link'd penal and moral evils together; if they will presume upon the one, they must necessarily pull the other upon them too: and this keeps them in some order and decorum; there would be no order or security without Law: but if Laws had no annexed penalties to enforce them, and give them their sanction, as good there were no Laws; they would have no more power to restrain the corruptions of mens hearts, than the new cords or green withs had to bind *Samsoun*. And yet, if the severest penalties in the World were annexed to, or appointed by the Law, they could signifie nothing to the ends of Government without Fears. This is that tender sensible power or passion on which threatenings work, and so brings men under moral government and restraint, *Rom. 13. 3, 4. Magistrates are a terror to evil works; wilt thou not then be afraid of the power? but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain.* And by this means a world of evil is restrained and prevented in the world.

It was the custom and policy of the *Persians* (I cannot say laudable) at the death of their Kings to give every man liberty for the space of five days to do what he would; and such mischiefs were done every-where by the unbridled lusts of men in those days, that it made the people long and pray for the instalment of their next King, it exceedingly endeared Government to them: Blessed be God for Law and Government, for curbing by this means the raging lusts of the hearts of men, and procuring rest and comfort for us in the world this way.

2. The Use of sinful Fear.

This is formally evil and sinful in its own nature, as well as the fruit of sin, and offspring of sinful nature, yet the Lord knows how to overrule it in his providential Government of the world to his own wise and holy purposes; and he doth so,

First, by making it his scourge to punish his enemies. If men will not fear God, they shall fear men, yea, they shall be made a terror to themselves. And indeed it is a dreadful punishment for God to deliver a man up into the hands of his own fears. I think there is scarce a greater torment to be found in the world, than for a man to be his own Terrorer, and his mind made a Rack, an Engine of torture to his Body. We read in *2 Kings 17. 25.* that God sent Lions among the people; but certainly that is not so bad as for God to let loose our own Fears upon us. No Lion is so cruel as this Passion, and therefore *David* esteemed it so great a deliverance to be delivered from all his Fears, *Psal. 34. 4.* It is a dreadful threatening which is recorded in *Deu. 28. 65, 66, 67.* against the disobedient and rebellions, *Thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest, but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind, and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have no assurance of thy life; in the morning thou shalt say, would God it were even,*

and at even thou shalt say, would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. When Fear hath once seized the heart, you may see deaths colours displayed in the Face. What a dismal life do they live, who have neither any peace by day, nor rest by night, but wearisome days and nights are appointed them! The days of such men are tiresome days; they wish for the night, hoping it may give them a little rest; but their Fears go to bed with them, their hearts pant, and meditate terror; and then, Oh that it were day again!

2. By Fear God punisheth his enemies in Hell: it is that *flagellum Dei*, terrible scourge of God, by which a great part of the torment of the damned is inflicted on them: Divines use to make this tripartite distinction of Hell-torments, and tell us God punishes the wicked there partly by remembrance what is past, *viz.* the mercies and means they once had, but are there irrecoverably lost, partly by the sense of things present, even the wrath of God overlaying soul and body, and partly by the fear of what is to come; and sure this is not the least part of the misery of those wretched cast-aways. Oh that fearful expectation of fiery indignation! more and more of God's wrath still coming on as the waves of the Sea, thrusting forward one another; yea, this is that which makes the Devils tremble, *James 2. 19. belson*; the word signifies such a noise as the rore of the Sea, or the roaring of the Waves when they break themselves against the Rocks, and this is occasioned by the Fears which are continually held as a Whip over them.

3. Providence makes use of the slavish Fears and Terrors of wicked men to dissipate and scatter them when they are combined and confederated against the people of God; by these have they been routed and put to flight when there hath been no other visible power to do it: It is said, *Psal. 78. 55.* God cast out the Heathen before his people *Israel*; and by what means were those mighty Nations subdued? not by the strength or multitudes of the *Israelites*, but by their own fears; for it is said, *Josh. 24. 11,*

12. *The Lord sent the hornet before them, which drove them out.* These Hornets were the fears and terrors of their own guilty and pre-saging minds, which buzzed and swarmed in their own breasts, and stung them to the heart worse than the Swords of the *Israelites* could do. *Theodore* relates a memorable story of *Sapores* King of *Persia*, who had besieged many Christians in the City *Nisibis*, and put them to great straits, so that little hopes of safety were left them; but in the depth of their distress God sent an Army of Hornets and Gnats among their enemies, which got into the trunks of their Elephants and ears and nostrils of their Horses, which

so enraged them, that they brake their harness, cast their riders, and put all to the rout, by which providence the Christians escaped. These Hornets were terrible to them; but Fears, which are Hornets in a Figure, are ten thousand times more terrible: they will quell and sink the very hearts of the stoutest men, yea, they will quickly

Calamitas est animus futuri anxius, & ante milicias miser Sen.

Crabrones per metaphoram repentinum terrorem significant, qui in animis male sibi confisus a Deo immisus fuit. *Leviter in loc.*

Sapores Rex Persarum cum urbem Nisib in qua erant Christiani, obsideret, eamque assigeret, magna vis Crabronum, & Culicum repente venit, & in Promulcas cavas Elephantorum confedit, complevit; aures Equorum, ita ut sellatores excussissent, & turbatos ordines in fugam converterint. *Hist. lib. 2. cap. 30.*

make

make those that in their pride and haughtiness took themselves rather to be Gods and Almighty Powers, to know themselves to be but Men, as it is *Psal. 9. 20. Put them in fear, O Lord, that they may know themselves to be but men: One fright will scare them out of a thousand fond conceits and idle dreams.*

3. The Use of religious Fear.

If God can make such Fruit to grow upon such a Bramble as the sinful slavish Fear of man is, what may we expect from religious Fear, a choice root of his own Spirits planting? The uses and benefits hereof are innumerable and inestimable; but I must contract, and will only instance in three special uses of it.

1. By this Fear the people of God are excited to, and confirmed in the way of their duty. *Eccles. 12. 13. Fear God, and keep his Commandments.* It is *Custos utriusque Tabule*, the keeper of both Tables, because the duties of both Tables are influenced by it. 'Tis this Fear of God that makes us have a due respect to all his Commands, and it is as powerful to confirm us in, as it is to excite us to our duties, *Jer. 32. 40. I will put my fear into their inward, and they shall not depart from me.* Look, as he that soweth doth not regard the Winds, but goes on in his labour whatever Weather the face of Heaven threatens; so he that fears God will be found in the way of his duty, let the aspect of the times be never so lowering and discouraging; and truly, this is no small advantage in times of frights and distractions. Slavish Fear sets a man upon the Devil's ground, Religious Fear upon God's ground: and how vast an odds is there in the choice of our ground, when we are to endure a great fight of affliction!

2. Another excellent use of this Fear, is to preserve the purity and peace of our Consciences, by preventing grief and guilt therein, *Prov. 16. 6. The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil.* See how it kept *Joseph, Gen. 39. 9.* and *Nehemiah, ch 5. 15.* And this benefit is invaluable, especially in a day of outward calamity and distress. Look in what degree the Fear of God prevails in our hearts, answerable thereunto will the serenity, peace and quietness of our Consciences be; and proportionable unto that will our strength and comfort be in the evil day, and our courage and confidence to look dangers in the face.

3. To conclude, A principal use of this Fear of God is to awaken us to make timely provisions for future distresses, that whensoever they come, they may not come by way of surprize upon us. Thus *Noah*, being moved with fear, prepared an Ark, *Heb. 11. 7.* It was the instrument of his and his Families salvation. Some men owe their Death to their fears; but good men in a sense owe their Lives to their fears; sinful fears have slain some, and godly fears have saved others. *A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil,* (saith *Solomon*) *but a fool rageth and is confident.* His fears give him a timely Alarm before the enemy fall into his quarters and beat them up, by this means he hath time to get into his chambers of security and rest, before the storm fall; but the fool rageth and is confident, he never fears till he begin to feel, yea, most times he is past all hope before he begin to have any fears.

These are some of the uses God makes of the several kinds of Fear.

C H A P. IV.

Wherein the springs and causes of sinful Fear are searched out, and the evils of such fears thence discovered.

HAVING shewn before the kinds and uses of *scd. 1.* Fear, it remains that next we search out the springs from which these Waters of *Marah* are derived, and fed. And,

First, we shall find the sinful Fears of most good men to spring out of their ignorance, and the darkness of their own minds. All darkness disposes to fear, but none like intellectual darkness. You read, *Cant. 3. 8. how Solomon's Life-guard had every man his Sword upon his Thigh, because of fear in the night.* The night is the frightful season, in the dark every bush is a Bear; we sometimes smile by day, to see what silly things those were that scared us in the night: So it is here; were our judgment but duly informed, how soon would our hearts be quieted?

Now there is a five-fold ignorance out of which our Fears are generated.

1. Ignorance of God. Either we know not, or at least duly consider not his Almighty Power, vigilant care, unspotted faithfulness, and how they are all engaged by Covenant for his people. This ignorance and inconsiderateness lay at the root of their Fears, *Isa. 40. 27, 28. My may (saith Sion) is hid from the Lord, and my judgment passed over from my God:* Words imparting a suspicion that God had left her out of the account of his Providence, and the catalogue of those whom he would look after, and take care for.

But were it once thoroughly understood and believed what Power there is in God's hand to defend us, what tenderness in his bowels to commiserate us, what faithfulness in all the promises in which they are made over to us, Oh how quiet and calm would our hearts be! Our Courage would quickly up, and our Fears down.

2. Our ignorance of Men generates our fears of Men; we fear them because we do not know them; if we understood them better, we would fear them less; we over-value them, and then fright at them: They say the Lion is painted more fierce than he is; I am sure our fancy paints out Man more dreadful than indeed he is. If wicked Men, especially if multitudes of wicked Men, be confederated against us, our hearts quail, and presently apprehend inevitable ruine. *The floods of the ungodly made me afraid,* saith *David, (i. e.)* the multitudes of them, which he thought, like a flood, or mighty torrent of waters, must needs sweep away such a straw, such a feather as he was before them; but mean time we know or consider not that they have no power against us, but what is given them from above, and that it's usual with God to cramp their hands, and clap on the bands of restraint upon them, when their hearts are fully set in them to do mischief: did we see and consider them as they are in the hand of our God, we should not tremble at them as we do.

3. Ignorance of our selves, and the relations we have to God, creates slavish fears in our hearts. For did believers but thoroughly understand how dear they are to God, what relations they sustain to him, of what account and value they are in his eyes, and how well they are secured by his faithful promises and gracious presence, they would not start and tremble at every noise, and appearance

rance of danger as they do. God reckon'd it enough to cure all *Abraham's* sinful Fears, when he told him how his God stood engaged for his defence, *Gen. 15. 1. Fear not, Abraham, I am thy shield.*

And noble *Nehemiah* valu'd himself in times of danger and fear by his interest in God, as his words import, *Neh. 6. 11.* The conspiracy against him was strong, the danger he and the faithful with him at that time were in, was extraordinary; some therefore advis'd to flee to the Temple, and barrado themselves there against the enemy: but *Nehemiah* understood himself better; *Should such a man as I flee? and who being as I am, would flee?* saith he; *g. d.* a man so called of God to this service, a man under such promises, a man of such manifold and manifest experiences, should such a man flee? Let others who have no such encouragements flee if they will; for my part I will not flee. I remember it was an argument used by *Tertullian* to quiet the fears, and stay the flight of Christians in those bloody times; Art thou afraid of a man, oh Christian!

Tertul. de fuga. Times hominem, Christiane, quem timeri oportet ab Angelis, siquidem Angelos judicaturus es: quem timeri oportet a Demonibus, siquidem & in Demonibus, accepti potestatem: quem timeri oportet ab universo mundo, siquidem & in te mundus judicatur.

in such times of danger and fear when the heart is so prone to dejection and sinking fears.

4. Ignorance of our dangers and troubles causes our frights and terrors; we mistake them, and therefore fright at them; we are ignorant of two things in our troubles among others, viz.

1. The comforts that are in them.
2. The outlets and escapes from them.

There is a vast odds betwixt the outward appearance and face of trouble and the inside of it; 'tis a Lion to the eye at a distance, but open it, and there is honey in its belly. *Paul* and *Silas* met that in a Prison that made them sing at midnight, and so have many more since their day.

And as we are ignorant of the comforts that are sometimes found in our troubles, so of the outlets and doors of escape God can, and often doth open out of trouble; *To God the Lord belong the issues from death, Psal. 68. 20. he knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation,* 2 Pet. 2. 9. he can with every temptation make a way to escape, 1 Cor. 10. 13. the poor captive exile cast upon nothing but dying in the pit, making their graves in the land of their captivity, *Isa. 51. 14.* for they could think upon none but the usual methods of deliverance, Power or Price, and they had neither; little did they dream of such immediate influences of God upon the King's heart, to make him dismiss them freely, contrary to all Rules of State-Policy, *Isa. 45. 13.*

5. But especially the fears of good men arise out of their ignorance and inconsiderateness of the Covenant of Grace. If we were better acquainted with the nature, extent, and stability of the Covenant, our hearts would be much freed thereby from these tormenting passions; this Covenant would be a Panacea, a universal Remedy against all our Fears upon spiritual or temporal accounts, as will be made evident hereafter in this discourse.

Vol. I.

2, Another cause and fountain of sinful Fear is ^{2 Cause.} guilt upon the Conscience. A servant of sin cannot but first or last be a slave of Fear; and they that have done evil cannot chuse but expect evil. No sooner had *Adam* defiled and wounded his Conscience with guilt, but he presently trembles and hides himself: so it is with his children; God calls to him not in a threatening, but gentle dialect; not in a tempest, but in the cool of the day: yet it terrifies him, there being in himself *mens conscia facti*, a guilty and condemning Conscience, *Gen. 3. 8.* 'Tis *Seneca's* observation, that a guilty Conscience is a terrible whip and torment to the sinner, perpetually lashing him with solicitous thoughts and fears, that he knows not where to be secure, nor dare he trust to

Male facinorum conscientia flagellari, & plurimum illi tormentum esse, eo quod perpetuo illum sollicitudo urget, ac verberat quod sponsoribus securitatis suae non potest credere. *Senec. Epist. 97.*

any promises of Protection, but distrusts all, doubts and jealouseth all. Of such it is said, *Jeb 15. 21.* That a dreadful sound is in their ears; noting not only the effects of real, but also of imaginary dangers: his own prefiging mind and troubled fancy scares him where no real danger is, suitable to that *Pro. 28. 1.* *The wicked fleeth when none pursues, but the righteous is bold as a lion.* Just as they lay of Sheep, that they are frightened by the clattering of their own feet when once they are set a running, so is the guilty Sinner with the noise of his own Conscience, which sounds nothing in his ears but misery, wrath and hell. We may say of all wicked men in their frights as *Tacitus* doth of Tyrants, That if it were possible to open their inside, their mind, and conscience, many terrible stripes and wounds would be found there; and it's said, *Isa. 33. 14.* the sinners in *Sion* are afraid, trembling taketh hold of the hypocrite. Fear and trembling as naturally arises & ariseth out of guilt, as the sparks do out of a fiery charcoal. Histories abundantly furnish us with sad examples of the truth of this observation.

Si recludantur mentes Tyrannorum, possent aspicilani videri, quid in illis esset. *Senec. de ira.*

Caesare, that Monster of wickedness, would start at any sudden noise, being haunted with the Furies of his own evil Conscience. *Charles IX.* after his bloody and barbarous Massacre of the Protestants, could neither sleep nor wake without Musick to divert his thoughts. And our *Richard III.* after the murder of his two innocent Nephews, saw divers images or shapes like Devils in his sleep, pulling and haling him. Mr. *Ward* tells of a Jesuit in Lancashire, who being followed by one that had found his glove, out of no other design but to restore it to him, but being pursued by his own guilty Conscience also, he leapt'd over the next hedge, and was drown'd. And remarkable is that which Mr. *Fox* relates of Cardinal *Crescentius*, who fancied the Devil walking in his chamber, and sometimes couching under his Table, as he was writing Letters to Rome against the Protestants. *Impius tantum metuit, quantum nocuit:* so much mischief as Conscience tells them they have done, so much it bids them expect. *Walsley* tells us of one *John Houslister* who fell sick with the very terrors of his own Conscience in his Inn, as he was travelling towards *Ausperge* in Germany, and was frightened by his own Conscience to that degree, that they were fain to bind him in his bed with chains; and all that they could get from him was, *I am cast away for ever, I have grievously wounded my own Conscience.*

To this wounded and trembling Conscience is opposed the Spirit of a sound mind, mentioned 2

O o o o

Tim.

2 Tim. 1. 7. God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind; A sound mind is in this place the same thing with a pure and peaceable Conscience, a mind or Conscience not infirmed or wounded with guilt, as we say a sound or heal body which hath no disease to infirm it, such a mind is opposed to the spirit of fear; it will make a man bold as a Lion; *Nil conficere tibi, nulla t'allefcere culpa, hic murus abe-nus esto*—

An evil and guilty Conscience fomenters fears and terrors three ways.

1. By aggravating small matters and b'owing them up to the height of the most fatal and destructive evils; so it was with Cain, Gen. 4. 11. *Every one that meets me will slay me*. Now every Child was a Giant in his eye, and any body he met, his overmatch. A guilty Conscience gives a man no light of his enemy, but through a magnifying, or a multiplying glass.

2. It begets Fears, by interpreting all doubtful cases in the worst sense that can be fastened upon them; *Pessimus in dubiis Arguitur timor*. If the *Swallows* do but chatter in the chimney, *Bessus* interprets it to be a discovery of his crime, that they are telling tales of him, and saying, *Bessus* killed a man. Nay,

3. If a guilty Conscience have nothing to aggravate, and magnify, nor any doubtful matter to interpret in a frightful sense, it can and often doth create fears and terrors out of nothing at all: the rules of Fear are not like the rules in *Arithmetick* where many nothings make nothing, but fear can make something out of nothing, yea, many things and great things out of nothing at all *Psal. 53. 5. there were they in great fear where no fear was*; here was a great fear raised or created out of nothing at all; had their fear been examined, and hunted home to its original, it would have been found a pure creature of fancy, a *Chimæra* having no *fundamentum in re*, no other foundation but a troubled fancy, and a guilty Conscience; thus it was with *Passion*, he was a very wicked man, and a bitter enemy to the *Prophet Jeremy*, and if there be none to fright and terrise from abroad rather than he shall want it, he shall be a terror to himself, *Jer. 20. 3, 4.* he was his own bugbear, afraid of his own shadow; and truly this is a great plague and misery; he that is a terror to himself, can no more flee from terrors than he can flee from himself. O the efficacy of Conscience! how doth it arrest the stoutest sinners, and make them tremble when there is no visible external cause of fear! *Nemo, se judice, nocens absolvitur*.

1 *Objec.* But may not good man whose sins are pardoned be affrighted with his own fancies, and scared with his own imaginations?

Sol.

No doubt he may, for there is a twofold fountain of fears, one in the body, another in the soul, one in the constitution, another in the conscience; it is the affliction and infelicity of many pardoned and gracious souls to be united and married to such distempered and ill habited bodies as shall afflict them without any real cause from within, and wound them by their own diseases and distempers, and these wounds can no more be prevented or cured by their reason or Religion, than any other bodily disease, suppose an Ague or a Fever, can be so cured. Thus Physicians tell us when adult choler and melancholy overflows and abounds in the body, as in the Hypochondriacal

distemper, &c. what sad effects it hath upon the mind as well as upon the body. there is not only a sad and fearful aspect or countenance without, but sorrow, fear and afflicting thoughts within; this is a sore affliction to many good men whose Consciences are sprinkled with the blood of Christ from guilt, but yet God sees good to clog them with such afflictions as this for their humiliation, and for the prevention of worse evils.

But many bold and daring sinners are found, 2 *Objec.* who notwithstanding all the guilt with which their consciences are loaded, can look dangers in the face without trembling, yea, they can look death it self the King of terrors in the face, with less fear than better men.

True, but the reason of that is from a spiritual judgment of God upon their hearts and consciences, whereby they are hardened, and scared as with an hot iron, 2 Tim. 4. 2. and so Conscience is disabled for the present, to do its office, it cannot put forth its efficacy and activity now, when it might be useful to their salvation, but it will do it to purpose hereafter when their case shall be remedied.

3. We see what a forge of fears a guilty Conscience is, and no less is the sin of 'Unbelief', the real and proper cause of most distracting and afflictive fears; so much as our Souls are empty of faith, they are in times of trouble filled with fear: We read of some that have died by no other hand but their own fears; but we never read of any that died by fear, who were once brought to live by faith: If men would but dig to the root of their fears, they should certainly find unbelief there, *Mat. 8. 26. Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* The less faith still the more fear: Fear is generated by unbelief, and unbelief strengthened by fear, as in nature there is an observable *visus* *per* *se* *non* *circu-* lar generation, vapours beget showers, and showers new vapours; so it is in things moral, and therefore all the skill in the world can never cure us of the disease of fear, till God first cure us of our unbelief: Christ therefore took the right method, to rid the disciples of their fear, by rebuking their unbelief. The remains of this sin in God's own people is the cause and fountain of their fears, and more particularly to shew how fear is generated by unbelief, let a few particulars be heedfully adverted.

1. Unbelief weakens and stumbles the assenting act of Faith, and thereby cuts off from the soul in a great measure its principal relief against dangers and troubles. It is the use and office of Faith to realize to the Soul the invisible things of the world to come, and thereby encourage it against the fears and dangers of the present world: Thus *Moses* forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the King, for he endured, as seeing him that is invisible, *Heb. 11. 27.* If this assenting act of Faith be weakened or staggered in the soul, if once invisibles seem uncertainties and visibles the only realities, no wonder we are so scared and frightened when these visible and sensible comforts are exposed and endangered, as they often are and will be in this mutable world. That man must needs be afraid to stand his ground, that is not thoroughly persuaded the ground he stands on is firm and good; 'tis not to be wondered that men should tremble,

Fernal. Pastoral. lib. 2. c. 16.
Corporis habitus siccus &
macilentus, aspectus inco-
nstans, horridus ac metus,
in morbis animæ metus &
maestitia, tædianitas, so-
litudinis, inanis rerum con-
templatio in omnes corporales
ut, horrendis infomias de-
clians, & agitarus spectis
rerum nigrarum, &c.

In metu &
periculo
plura &
majora vi-
dentur
mentienti-
bus, cum
creduntur
faciliter,
tum fin-
guntur
impunius.
Cicero.

tremble, who seem to feel the ground shake and reel under them.

2. Unbelief shuts up the refuges of the Soul in the divine promises, and by leaving it without those refuges, must needs leave it in the hands of fears and terrors. That which fortifies and emboldens a Christian in evil times, is his dependence upon God for a protection, *Psal. 143. 9. I fly unto thee to hide me.* The cutting off of this retreat (which nothing but unbelief can do) deprives the soul of all those succours and supports which the promises afford, and consequently fills the heart with anxiety and fear.

3. Unbelief makes men negligent and careless in providing for troubles before they come, and so brings them by way of surprize upon them; and the more surprizing any evil is, the more frightful it is always found to be: we cannot think that *Noah* was so frightened at the Flood when it began to swell above all the hills and mountains, as all the rest of the world was; nor was there any reason that he should, having foreseen it by Faith, and made provision for it, *Heb. 11. 7. By faith Noah being warned of God, prepared an Ark.* *Augustin* relates a very pertinent and memorable story of *Paulinus* Bishop of *Nola*, who was a very rich man both in Goods and Grace; he had much of the World in his hands, but little of it in his heart; and it was well there was not, for the *Goths*, a barbarous people, breaking into that City, like so many Devils, fell upon the prey; those that trusted to the Treasures which they had, were deceived and ruined by them, for the rich were put to tortures to contents where they had hid their Moneys: This good Bishop fell into their hands, and lost all he had, but was scarce moved at the loss, as appears by his prayer, which my Author relates thus: *Lord, let me not be troubled for my gold and silver; thou knowest it is not my Treasure, that I have laid up in Heaven, according to thy command. I was warned of this Judgment before it came, and provided for it; and where all my interest lies, Lord, thou knowest.*

Thus Mr. *Bradford*, when the Keeper's Wife came running into his chamber suddenly, with words able to have put the most men in the world into a trembling posture: Oh Mr. *Bradford*! I bring you heavy tidings; to morrow you must be burned, and your chain is now buying: he put off his hat, and said, *Lord, I thank thee; I have looked for this a great while, it is not terrible to me; God make me worthy of such a Mercy.* See the benefit of a prospect of, and preparation for sufferings!

4. Unbelief leaves our dearest interests and concerns in our own hands, it commits nothing to God, and consequently must needs fill the heart with distracting fears when imminent dangers threaten us. Reader, if this be thy case, thou wilt be a *Mager missibib*, surrounded with terrors, whensoever thou shalt be surrounded with dangers and troubles. Believers in this as well as in many other things have the advantage of thee, that they have committed all that is precious and valuable to them into the hands of God by faith, to him they have committed the keeping of their Souls, *1 Pet. 4. 19.* and all their eternal concerns, *2 Tim. 1. 16.* And these being put into safe hands, they are not distracted with fears about other matters of less value, but can trust them where they have intrusted the greater, and enjoy the quietness and peace of a resigned Soul

to God, *Prov. 16. 3.* but as for thee, thy life; thy liberty, yea, which is infinitely more than all these things, thy Soul will lie upon thy hands in the day of trouble, and thou wilt not know what to do with them, nor which way to dispose of them. Oh! these be the dreadful straits and frights that unbelief leaves men in; 'tis a fountain of fears and distractions. And indeed it cannot but distract and confound carnal men, in whom it reigns, and is in its full strength, when sad experience shews us what fears and tremblings the very remains and reliques of this sin begets in the best men, who are not fully freed from it. If the unpurged reliques of unbelief in them can thus darken and cloud their evidences, thus greaten and multiply their dangers; if it can draw such sad and frightful conclusions in their hearts, notwithstanding all the contrary experiences of their lives, as we see in that sad instance, *1 Sam. 27. 1.* What panick fears, and unrelieved terrors must it put those men under, where it is in its full strength and dominion.

Moreover, we shall find many of our Fears raised and provoked in us by the Promiscuous administrations of Providence in this World, when we read in Scripture, that there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, and all things come alike to all, *Eccles. 9. 2.* that when the Sword is drawn, God suffers it to cut off the righteous and the wicked, *Ezek. 21. 3.* The Sword makes no difference, where God hath made so great a difference by grace; it neither distinguishes faces, nor breasts, but is as soon sheath'd in the bowels of the best as the worst of men. When we read how the same fire of God's indignation devours the green tree and the dry tree, *Ezek. 20. 47.* how the basket of good Figs (the Emblem of the best Men of those times) were carried into *Babylon* as well as the bad, *Jer. 24. 5.* how the flesh of God's Saints hath been given for meat to the Fowls of Heaven, and to the Beasts of the field; *Psal. 97. 12.* and how the wicked have devoured the man that is more righteous than himself, as it is *Hab. 1. 13.* I say, when we observe such things in Scripture, and find our observations confirmed by the Accounts and Histories of former and latter ages; when we reflect upon the unspeakable miseries and butcheries of those plain-hearted and precious servants of Christ the *Albigeneses* and *Waldenses*, how they fell as a prey to their cruel Adversaries, notwithstanding the convincing simplicity and holiness of their lives, and all their fervent cries and appeals to God; how the very flower of the reformed Protestant Interest in *France* was cut off with more than barbarous inhumanity, so that the streets were washed, and the canals of *Paris* ran with their precious blood.

What horrid and unparallel'd torture the servants of God felt in that cruel Massacre in *Ireland*, a History too tragical for a tender-hearted Reader to stay long upon; and how in our own Land the most eminent Ministers and Christians were sent to Heaven in a fiery Chariot in those doleful *Marian* days: I say, when we read and consider such things as these, it rouzes our fears, and puts us into frights, when we see our selves threatened with the same enemies and dangers; when the feet of them that carried out the dear servants of God in bloody winding-sheets to their graves stand at the door to carry us forth next, if Providence loose their chain, and give them a permission so to do; and our fears on this account

are heightened by considering and revolving these four things in our thoughts, which we are always more inclined to do, than the things that should fortify our Faith, and heighten our Christian Courage; as,

1. We are very apt to consider, that as the same race and kind of men that committed these outrages upon our brethren are still in being; and that their rage and malice is not abated in the least degree, but is as fierce and cruel as ever it was, *Gal. 4. 29. As then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.* So it was then, and just so it is still, the old enmity is entailed upon all wicked men from generation to generation. *Multi adhuc sunt qui clavum sanguine Abelis rubrem adhuc circumferunt.* Cain's Club is to this day carried up and down the world stained with the blood of Abel, as *Bucholtzer* speaks. 'Tis a rooted antipathy, and it runs in a blood, and will run as long as there are wicked men, from whom and to whom it shall be propagated, and a Devil in Hell, by whom it will not fail to be exasperated and irritated.

2. We know also that nothing hinders the execution of their wicked purposes against us, but the restraints of Providence; should God loose the chain, and give them leave to act forth the malice and rage that is in their hearts, no pity would be shewn by them, or could be rationally expected from them, *Psal. 124. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.* We live among Lions, and them that are set on fire of Hell, *Psal. 57. 4.* The only reason of our safety is this, that he who is the Keeper of the Lions is also the Shepherd of the Sheep.

3. We find that God hath many times let loose these Lions upon his people, and given them leave to tear his Lambs in pieces, and suck the blood of his Saints: how well soever he loves them, yet hath he often delivered them into the hands of his enemies, and suffered them to perpetuate and act the greatest cruelties upon them; the best men have suffered the worst things, and the histories of all ages have delivered down unto us the most tragical relations of their barbarous usage.

4. We are also conscious to our selves how far short we come in holiness, innocency, and spiritual excellency of those excellent persons who have suffered these things, and therefore have no ground to expect more favour from Providence than they found; we know also there is no promise in the Scriptures to which they had not as good a claim and title as our selves: with us are found as great, yea, greater sins than in them, and therefore have no reason to please our selves with the sordid imaginations of extraordinary exemptions. If we think these evils shall not come in our days, 'tis like many of them thought so too; and yet they did, and we may find it quite otherwise, *Lam. 4. 12. Who would have thought that the enemy should have entered in at the gates of Jerusalem?* The revolving of these and such-like considerations in our thoughts, and mixing our own unbelief with them, creates a world of fears even in good men, till by resignation of all to God, and acting Faith upon the promises that assure us of the sanctification of all our troubles, as that *Rom. 8. 28.* God's presence with us in our troubles, as that *Psal. 91. 15.* his moderation of our troubles to that measure and degree in which they are supportable, *Isa. 27. 8.* and the safe and comfortable outlet and final deliverance from them all at last,

according to that in *Rev. 7. 17.* We do at last recover our hearts out of the hands of our fears again, and compose them to a quiet and sweet satisfaction in the wise and holy pleasure of our God.

5. Our immoderate love of life, and the comforts and conveniencies thereof, may be assigned, *Conf.* as a proper and real ground and cause of our sinful fears, when the dangers of the times threaten the one or other: did we love our lives less, we should fear and tremble less than we do. It is said of those renowned Saints, *Rev. 12. 11. They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

They overcame not only the fury of their enemies without them, but their sinful fears within them; and this victory was achieved by their mortification, to the inordinate and immoderate love of life. Certainly their own fears had overcome them, if they had not first overcome the love of life: it was not therefore without very great reason that our Lord enjoined it upon all his disciples and followers, to *hate their own lives, Luke 14. 26.* not absolutely, but in comparison and competition with him, (*i. e.*) to love it in so remiss a degree, as to slight and undervalue it as a poor low thing in such a comparison; he foresaw what sharp trials and sufferings were coming upon them, and he knew if the fond and immoderate love of life were not overcome and mortified in them, it would make them warp and bend under such temptations.

This was it that freed *Paul* from slavish fears, and made him so magnanimous and undaunted. Indeed he had less fear upon his spirit, tho' he was to suffer those hard and sharp things in his own person, than his friends had who only sympathized with him, and were not farther concerned than by their own love and pity: he spake like a man who was rather a spectator than a sufferer, *Acts 20. 24, 25. none of these things move me, saith he.* Great soul! not moved with bonds and afflictions! how did he attain so great courage and constancy of mind in such deep and dreadful sufferings! It was enough to have moved the stoutest man in the world, yea, and to have removed the resolutions of any that had not loved *Christ* better than his own life: but life was a trifle to him in comparison with *Jesus Christ*, for so he tells us in the next words, *I count not my life dear unto me; q. d.* 'Tis a low-priz'd commodity in my eyes, not worth the saving or regarding on such sinful terms. Oh! how many have parted with *Christ*, peace, and eternal life, for fear of losing that which *Paul* regarded not. And if we bring our thoughts closer to the matter, we shall soon find that this is a fountain of fears in times of danger, and that from this excessive love of life we are rack'd and tortur'd with ten thousand terrors. For,

1. Life is the greatest and nearest interest men naturally have in this world, and that which wraps up all other inferior interests in it self, *Job 2. 4. Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.* It is a real truth, though it came from the mouth of the father of lies; afflictions never touch the quick till they touch the life; liberty, estates, and other accommodations in this world receive their value and estimation from hence, if life be cut off these accidents perish, and are of no account. *Gen. 25. 32. Behold, I am at the point to die, (said Esau) and what profit shall this birthright do to me?* 2. Life

2. Life being naturally the dearest interest of men in this world, the richest treasure, and most beloved thing on earth to a natural man; that which strikes at, and endangers life, must in his eyes be the greatest evil that can befall him; on this account death becomes terrible to men, yea, as *Job* calls it, the *King of Terrors*, *Job* 18. 14. The black prince or the prince of clouds and darkness, as some translate those words: Yea, so terrible is death upon this account, that the very fear of it hath sometimes precipitated men into the hands of it, as we sometimes observe in times of pestilence, the excessive fear of the Plague hath induced it.

Nonnulli ob timorem mortis subitaneae perire refert Galenus. Quod igitur homo, timore mortis quæ est terribilissima: ex sententia Aristotelis aliorumque; penè omnium moriatur, mirandum non est. Fuga mali, ipsum interdum accersit, quod liquet exemplis eorum, quorum metus mortem à iudice ipsis designatam prevenit. *Sicra. de mori. p. 167.*

3. Though death be terrible in any shape, in the mildest form it can appear in; yet a violent and bloody death by the hands of cruel and merciless men, is the most terrible form that death can appear in; 'tis now the King of terrors indeed, in the most ghastly representation and frightful form, in its scarlet Robes, and terrifying formalities, in a violent death all the barbarous cruelty that the wit of our enemies can invent, or their malice inflict, is mingled together; in a violent death are many deaths contrived into one, and it oftentimes approaches men by such slow and deliberated paces, that they feel every tread of its foot as it advanceth towards them. *Moriatur, ut sentiat se mori*, Let him so die, (said the Tyrant) that he may feel himself to die, yea, and how he dies by inch-meal or slow and lingering degrees; this is exceeding frightful, especially to those that are of a more soft and tender nature and temper, who must needs be struck through with the terrors of death, except the Lord arm them against it with the assurance of a better life, and sweeten these bitter apprehensions by the foretaste of it. This is enough to put even sanctified nature into a consternation, and make a very gracious heart to sink, unless it be so upheld by Divine strength and comfort: And hence come many, very many of our fears, and terrors, especially when the same enemies that have been accustomed to this bloody work, shall be found confederating and designing again to break in upon us, and act over again as much cruelly as ever they have done upon our brethren in times past.

6 Cause

To conclude, many of our sinful fears and consternations flow from the influences of Satan upon our phantasies. They say winds, and storms are oft times raised by Satan both by sea and land, and I never doubted but the Prince of the power of the air by God's permission can, and often doth put the world into great frights and disturbances by such tempests, *Job* 1. 19. He can raise the loftiest winds, pour down roaring showers, rattle in the air with fearful claps of thunder, and scare the lower world with terrible flashes of lightning. And I doubt not but he hath by the same permission a great deal of influence and power upon the fancies and passions of men. And can raise more terrible storms and tempests within us, than ever we heard or felt without us: he can by leave from God approach our *Phantasies*, disturb and trouble them exceedingly by forming frightful Ideas there; for Satan not only works upon men mediately by the

ministry of their external senses, but by reason of his Spiritual angelical nature, he can have immediate access to the internal sense also, as appears by diabolical dreams, and by practising upon that power of the Soul, he influences the passions of it, and puts it under very dreadful apprehensions and consternations: Now if Satan can provoke and exasperate the fury and rage of wicked men, as it is evident he can do, *Rev.* 2. 10. and so disturb our Fancies and influence our passions, as there is no reason to doubt but by leave from God he can do, as well as he can go to the magazines and store-houses of thunder, lightnings, and storm. O what inward storms of Fear, can he shake our hearts withal, and if God give him but a permission how ready will he be to do it; seeing it is so conducive to his design: for by putting men into such frights he at once weakens their hands in duty as is plain from his attempt this way upon Nehemiah, *Chap.* 6. 13. and if he prevail there, he drives them into the snares, and trains of his temptations, as the fisherman and fowler do the birds and fishes into their nets, when once they have flushed and frightened them out of their coverts. And thus you have some account of the principal and true causes of our Sinful Fears.

CHAP. V.

Laying open the sinful and lamentable effects of slavish and inordinate Fear both in carnal and regenerate persons.

HAVING taken a view in the former Chapters *Sett. 12* of the Kinds and Causes of Fear, and seen what lies at the root of Slavish Fear and both breeds and feeds it, what fruit can we expect from such a cursed Plant, but gall and wormwood, fruit as bitter as death it self? Let us then in the next place examine and well consider these following and deplorable effects of Fear to excite us to apply our selves the more concernedly to those directions that follow in the close of this Treatise for the cure of it. And,

The first Effect of this sinful and exorbitant passion, is *distraction* of mind and thoughts in duty; both *Cicero* and *Quintilian* will have the word *tumultus*, a tumult to come from *timor tumultus*, much fear, 'tis a compound of those two words; much fear raises great uproars and tumults in the Soul, and puts all into hurries and distractions, so that we cannot attend upon any service of God, with profit or comfort. It was therefore a very necessary mercy that was requested of God, *Luke* 1. 74. *That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear*. For it is impossible to serve God without distractions, till we can serve him without the slavish fear of enemies. The reverential fear of God is the greatest spur to duty, and choicest help in it, but the distracting fears of men will either wholly divert us from our duty, or destroy the comfort and benefit of our duties; 'tis a deadly snare of the Devil, to hinder all comfortable intercourse with God.

It is very remarkable; that when the Apostle was giving his advice to the *Corinthians*, about marriage in those times of persecution and difficulty, he commends to them a single life as most eligible: where it may be without other sinful inconveniencies,

1 Effect

conveniencies, and that principally for this reason, *That they might attend upon the Lord without distractions*, 1 Cor. 7. 35. He foresaw what straits, cares, and fears must unavoidably distract them in such times that were most clogged and incumbered with families, and relations; when a man should be thinking, O what shall I do now to get my doubts and fears resolved about my interest in Christ? How may I so behave my self in my sufferings as to credit Religion, and not become a scandal and stumbling stone to others? His thoughts are taken up with other cares and fears! O what will become of my wife and poor little ones! what shall I do with them, and for them, to secure them, from danger?

I doubt not but it is a great design of the Devil to keep us in continual alarms and frights, and to puzzle our heads and hearts with a thousand difficulties which possibly may never befall us, or if they do, shall never prove so fatal to us as we fancy them, and all this is to unfit us for our present duties, and destroy our comfort therein; for if by frights and terrors of mind he can but once distract our thoughts, he gains three great points, upon us, to our unspeakable loss.

1. Hereby he will cut off the freedom and sweetness of our communion with God in duties, and what an empty shell will the best duties be, when this kernel is worned out by such a subtle artifice? Prayer as *Damasen* aptly expresses it, is *Abraham's* *Gen. 22* the ascension of the mind or soul to God; but distraction clips its wings; he can never offer up his soul and thoughts to God, that hath not the possession of them himself; and he that is under distracting fears possesseth not himself. The life of all communion with God in Prayer, consists in the harmony that is betwixt our hearts and words, and both with the will of God, this harmony is spoiled by distractions, and so Satan gains that point.

2. But this is not all he gains, and we lose by distracting fears; for as they cut off the freedom and sweetness of our intercourse with God in prayer, so they cut off the Soul from the succours and reliefs it might otherwise draw from the promises. We find when the *Israelites* were in great bondage, wherein their minds were distracted with fears and sorrows, they regarded not the supporting promises of deliverance sent them by *Moses*, *Exod. 6. 3.* *David* had an express and particular promise of the Kingdom from the mouth of God, which must needs include his deliverance out of the hand of *Saul*, and all his stratagems to destroy him; but yet when eminent hazards were before his eyes, he was afraid, and that fear betrayed the succours from the promise, so that it drew a quite contrary inclusion, 1 Sam. 27. 1. *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*: And again he is at the same point, *Psal. 116. 11.* *All men are liars*, not excepting *Samuel* himself who had assured him of the Kingdom. This is always the property and nature of fear (as I shewed before) to make men distrust the best security when they are in eminent peril: But Oh! what a mischief is this to make us suspicious of the promises which are our chief relief and support in times of trouble: Our fears will unfit us for prayer, they will also shake the credit of the promises with us, and so great is the damage we

receive both ways, that it were better for us to lose our two eyes, than two such advantages in trouble. But,

3. This is not all, by our present fears we lose the benefit and comfort of all our past experiences, and the singular relief we might have from all that faithfulness and goodness of God which our eyes have seen in former straits and dangers, the present fear clouds them all, *Isai. 51. 12, 13.* Men and dangers are so much minded, that God is forgotten, even the God that hath hitherto preserved us, though our former fears told us, the enemy was daily ready to devour us. All these sweet reliefs are cut off from us by our distracting fears, and that at a time when we have most need of them.

Disimulation and Hypocrisy is the fruit of slavish Fear; distraction you see is bad enough, but disimulation is worse than distraction, and yet as bad as it is, fear hath driven good men into this snare; it will make even an upright soul warp and bend from the rules of that integrity and candor which should be inseparable at all times from a Christian: Of whom (saith God to his *Israhel*) hadst thou been afraid, that thou hadst lied, and hadst not remembered me? God finds falsehood, and charges it upon Fear, *g. d. I* know it was against the resolutions of my peoples hearts thus to dissemble, this certainly is the effect of a fright; Who is he that hath feared you into this evil? It was *Abraham's* fear that made him dissemble to the reproach of his Religion, *Gen. 20. 2, 11.* And indeed it was but an odd sight to see an Heathen so schooling and reproving great *Abraham* about it as he there doth.

It was nothing but fear that drew his son *Isaac* into the like snare, *Gen. 26. 7.* And it was fear that overcame *Peter* against his promise as well as principle to say concerning his dear Saviour, *I knew not the man*, *Matth. 26. 69.* Had *Abraham* at that time remember'd and acted his Faith freely upon what the Lord said to him, *Gen. 17. 1.* *Fear not Abraham, I am thy shield*, he had escaped both the sin and shame into which he fell, but even that great believer was foil'd by his own fears; and certainly this is a great evil, a complicated mischief. For,

1. By these falls and scandals, Religion is made vile and contemptible in the eyes of the world, it reflects with much reproach upon God and his promises, as if his word were not sufficient security for us to rely upon in times of trouble, as if it were safer trusting to our wit, yea, to sin; than to the Promises.

2. It greatly weakens the hands of others, and proves a sore discouragement to them in their trials, to see their brethren faint for fear, and ashamed to own their principles; sometimes it hath this mischievous effect, but it is always improved by Satan and wicked men to this purpose. And,

3. It will be a terrible blow and wound to our own Consciences, for such flaws in our integrity we may be kept waking and sighing many a night; O see the mischiefs of a timorous and faint spirit!

Slavish Fears of the Creature exceeding by 3 *Esa.* strengthen our temptations in times of danger, and make them very efficacious and prevalent upon us. *Prov. 29. 25.* *The fear of man brings a snare.* Satan spreads the net, but we are not within its reach,

reach, till our own fears drive us into it; the recoiling of our Spirits from some imminent danger, may cause the pulse of a true Christian to intermit and falter, how regular soever it beats at other times; this will cause great trepidation and timidity in men that are sincere and upright, and that is it that brings the snare over their souls.

Aaron was a good man, and Idolatry he knew to be a great sin, yet fear prevailed with that good man to give too much way to that great evil, *Ex 32. 22.* *Thou knowest the people that they are set upon mischief,* saith he in his own excuse in the matter of the golden calf, *g. d. Lord,* I durst do no otherwise at that time, the people were violently and passionately set upon it; had I resisted them, it might have cost me dear.

It was fear that prevailed with *Origen* to yield so far as he did in offering incense to the *Idol*, the consideration of which fact brake his heart to pieces. It was nothing but fear that made *David* play the fool, and act so dishonourably as he did, *1 Sam. 21. 12.* Fear is a snare in which Satan hath caught as many souls as in any other of his stratagems and toils whatsoever. It were easy to give instances, so many and so sad, as would enlarge this head even to tediousness, but I chuse rather to come to the particulars wherein the danger of this snare of the Devil consists. And,

1. Herein lies the ensnaring danger of sinful fear, that it drives men out of their proper station, out of their place and duty, beside which there is none to be found but what is Satan's ground. The subtle enemy of our Salvation is aware that we are out of gunshot, beyond his reach, whilst we abide with God in the way of our duty, that the Lord is with us, whilst we are with him, and there is no attempting our ruin under the wings of his protection. If ever therefore he meaneth to do any thing upon us, he must get us off that ground, and from under those wings; and there is nothing like fear to do this; then we are as the Birds that are wandering from their Nests, *Prov. 27. 8.* or like *Shimei* out of his limits.

2. Fear is usually the first passion in the Soul that beats a parley with the enemy, and treats with the tempter about terms of rendition: and, as the French Proverb is, *The Castle that parleys is half won.* 'Tis Fear that consults with flesh and blood, whilst Faith is engaged with God for the supply of strength to endure the siege. We have a sad and doleful instance of this in *Spira*; he tells us how his own fears betrayed him, by parlying with the tempter; for thus Mr. Bacon in the History of his Life records the occasion of his fall: 'Whilst *Spira* was tossing upon the restless waves of doubts, without Guide to trust to, or Haven to flee to for succour, on the sudden, God's spirit assisting, he felt a calm, and began to discourse with himself in this manner: *Why wonderest thou at this uncertainty? Unhappy man! cast away fear, put on thy shield of faith; where is thy wonted courage, thy goodness, thy constancy? Remember that Christ's glory lies at the stake, suffer then without fear, and he will defend thee, he will tell thee what thou shalt answer; he can beat down all danger, bring thee out of prison, raise thee from the dead, consider Peter in the dungeon, the Martyrs in the fire, &c.*

'Now was *Spira* in reasonable quiet, being resolved to yield to those weighty reasons; yet holding it Wisdom to examine all things, he consults also with flesh and blood; thus the battle renews, and the flesh begins in this manner: *Be*

well advis'd, fond man, consider reasons on both sides, and then judge: how earnest thou dost overcome thine own sufficiency, as thou neither regardst the examples of thy progenitors, nor the judgment of the whole Church? dost thou not consider what misery this days rashness will bring thee unto? Thou shalt lose all thy substance gotten with so much care and travel, thou shalt undergo the most exquisite torments that malice itself can devise, thou shalt be counted an Heretic of all, and to close up all, thou shalt die shamefully. What thinkest thou of the loathsome stinking dungeon, the bloody ax, the burning faggot? are they delightful? &c. Thus thro' fear he first parly'd with the tempter, consulted with flesh and blood, and at last fainted and yielded.

3. 'Tis fear that makes men impatient of waiting God's time and method of deliverance, and so precipitates the Soul, and drives it into the snare of the next temptation, *IJa. 51. 14.* *The captive exile hasteth to be delivered out of the pit.* Any way or means of escape that comes next to hand; saith Fear, is better than to lie here in the pit; and when the Soul is thus prepared by its own fears, it becomes an easy prey to the next temptation; by all which you see the mischief that comes by fear in times of danger.

4. Fear naturally produceth pusillanimity and cowardliness in men, a poor low spirit, that presently faints and yields upon every slight affliction; it extinguisheth all Christian Courage and Magnanimity where-ever it prevails, and therefore you find it joined frequently in the Scriptures with discouragement, *Deut. 1. 21.* *Fear not, neither be discouraged with fainting and trembling,* *Deut. 20. 3.* *Let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble;* with dismayedness, *Deut. 31. 6.* and faint-heartedness, *IJa. 7. 4.* these are the effects and consequences of sinful fear: And how dangerous a thing it is to have our courage extinguish'd, and faintness of heart prevail upon us in a time when we have the greatest need and use of courage, and our perseverance, peace, and eternal happiness rely and depend so much upon it, let all serious Christians judge. 'Tis sad to us, and dishonourable to Religion, to have the hearts of

Women, as it's said of *Egypt*, *IJa. 19. 16.* when we should play the men, as the Apostle exhorts us, *1 Cor. 16. 13.* We find in all ages those that have manifested most courage for Christ in time of trial, have been those whose Faith hath surmounted Fear, and whose hearts were above all discouragements from this world.

Such a man was *Rafsi*, as appears by his answer to *Valens* the Emperor, who tempting him with offers of preferment, received this answer, *Offer these things,* said he, *to children;* and when he threatened him with grievous suffering, he replied, *Threaten these things to your purple gallants, that give themselves to pleasure, and are afraid to die.*

And this was the spirit of courage and magnanimity with which the generality of the primitive Christians were animated, they feared not the faces of Tyrants, they shrank not from the most cruel torments; and it redounded not a little to the credit of Christianity, when one of *Julian's* Nobles, present at the tormenting of *Marcus*, Bishop of *Arctus*, told the Apostate to his face, *We are ashamed, Oh Emperor, the Christians laugh at your cruelty and grow more resolute by it.* So *Lactantius* also testifies of them, *Our women and children,* saith he, *not to speak of men, overcome their torments, and the fire cannot scorch so much as a sigh from*

4 Effct.

from them. If carnal fear once get the ascendant over us, all our courage and resolution will flag, and melt away, we may suffer out of unavoidable necessity, but shall never honour Christ and Religion by our sufferings.

5 Effect. Carnal fear is the very root of Apostacy, it hath made thousands of Professors to faint and fall away in the hour of temptation; it is not so much from the fury of our enemies without, as from our own fears within, that temptations become victorious over us; from the beginning of fears Christ dates the beginning of Apostacy, *Mat. 24. 9, 10. then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name sake, and then shall many be offended.* When troubles and dangers come to an height, then fears begin to work at an height too, and then is the critical hour; fears are high, and faith is low; temptation strong, and resistance weak. Satan knocks at the door, and fear opens it, and yields up the soul to him, except special aid and assistance come in seasonably from Heaven; so long as we can profess Religion without any great hazard of Life, Liberty, or Estates, we may shew much zeal and forwardness in the ways of godliness: but when it comes to the sharps, to resisting unto blood, few will be found to own and assert it openly in the face of such dangers. The first retreat is usually made from a free and open to a close and concealed practice of Religion; not opening our windows, as *Daniel* did, to shew we care not who knows we dare worship our God, and are not ashamed of our duties, but hiding our principles and practices with all the art and care imaginable, reckoning it well if we can escape danger by letting fall our profession which might expose us to it: but if the inquest go on, and we cannot be secured any longer under this refuge, we must comply with false Worship, and give some open signal that we do so, or else be marked out for ruin; then faith fear, Give a little more ground, and retreat to the next security, which is to comply seemingly with that which we do not allow, hoping God will be merciful to us, and accept us, if we keep our hearts for him, tho' we are forced thus to dissemble and hide our principles. *Eamus ad communem errorem*, said *Calderinus*, when going to the Mass, Let us go to the common error; and, as *Seneca* adviseth about worshipping the Roman gods, *In animi religione non habebat, sed in actibus fingat*; let us make a semblance and shew of worshipping them, tho' our hearts give no religious respect to them. But if still the temptation hunt us farther, and we come to be more narrowly sifted, and put to a severer Test, by subscribing contrary Articles, or renouncing our former avowed Principles, and that upon penalty of death, and loss of all that is dear to us in this world; now nothing in all the world hazards our eternal salvation as our own fears will do; this is like to be the rock on which we shall split, and make an horrible shipwreck both of Truth and Peace. This was the case of *Cranmer*, whose fears caused him to subscribe against the dictates of his own conscience, and cowardly to betray the known Truth; and indeed there is no temptation in the world that hath overthrowen so many, as that which hath been back'd and edg'd with fear; the love of Preferments and Honours hath slain its thousands, but fear of Sufferings its ten thousands.

6 Effect. Sinful Fear puts men under great bondage of

spirit, and makes death a thousand times more terrible and intolerable than it would otherwise be to us. You read of some, *Heb. 2. 15. who thro' the fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage*, (i. e.) it kept them in a miserable anxiety and perplexity of mind, like slaves that tremble at the whip which is held over them: thus many thousands live under the lash; so terrible is the name of death, especially a violent death, that they are not able with patience to hear it mentioned; which gave the ground of that saying, *Præstat semel, quam semper mori*; It's better to die once, than to be dying always. And surely there is not a more miserable life any poor creature can live, than such a trembling life as this is. For,

1. Such a bondage as this destroys all the comfort and pleasure of life; no pleasure can grow or thrive under the shadow of this cursed Plant. *Nisi beatus cui semper aliquis terror impendat*, saith *Cicero*; All the comforts we possess in this world are imbib'd by it. 'Tis storied of *Democles*, a flatterer of *Dionysius* the Tyrant, that he told him he was the happiest man in the world, having Wealth, Power, Majesty, and abundance of all things: *Dionysius* sets the flatterer in all his own Pomp at a Table furnished with all dainties, and attended upon as a King, but with an heavy sharp Sword hanging by a single Horse-hair right over his head; this made him quake and tremble, so that he could neither eat nor drink, but desired to be freed from that estate. The design was to convince him how miserable a life they live who live under the continual terrors of impending death and ruin. It was a sore judgment which God threatened against them in *Jer. 5. 6. A Lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a Wolf of the evening shall spoil them; a Leopard shall watch over their Cities, every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces.* What a miserable life must those people live, who could not stir out of the City, but they presently were seized by Lions, Wolves and Leopards, that watch'd over them, and lurk'd in all the avenues to make them a prey! and yet this is more tolerable than for a man's own fear to watch continually over him.

2. And yet I could wish this were the worst of it, and that our fears destroyed no better comforts than the natural comforts of this life: but, alas! they also destroy our spiritual comforts, which we might have from God's promises and our own and others experiences, which are incomparably the sweetest pleasures men have in this world: But as no creature-comfort is pleasant, so no promise relishes like it self to him that lives in this bondage of fear; when the terrors of Death are great, the consolations of the Almighty are small.

In the written word are found all sorts of refreshing, strengthening, and heart-reviving promises, prepared by the wisdom and care of God for our relief in the days of darkness and trouble; promises of support under the heaviest burdens and pressures, *Isa. 41. 10. Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.* A promise able to make the most timorous and trembling Soul to shout with the joy of men in harvest, or as they that divide the spoil.

There are found the encouraging promises of defence and protection, *Isa. 27. 2, 3. and Isa. 33. 2.* promises that lead us into the Almighty pro-

et

er of God, and put us under the wings of his care in time of danger.

Promises of moderation and mitigation in the day of sharp affliction that we may be able to bear it, *Iſa.* 27. 8. *1 Cor.* 10. 13. Promises of deliverance out of troubles, if the malice of man bring us into trouble, the mercy of God will assuredly bring us out, *Pſal.* 91. 14, 15. and *Pſal.* 125. 3. And, which is most comfortable of all the rest, Promises to sanctify and bless our troubles to our good, so that they shall not only cease to be hurtful, but by virtue of the promise become exceeding beneficial to us, *Iſa.* 27. 9. *Rom.* 8. 28.

All these promises are provided by our tender Father for us against a day of straits and fears; and because he knew our weakness, and how apt our fears would be to make us suspect our security by them, he hath for the performance of them engaged his wisdom, power, care, faithfulness, and unchangeableness, *2 Per.* 2. 9. *Iſa.* 27. 2, 3. *2 Chron.* 16. 9. *1 Cor.* 10. 13. *Iſa.* 43. 1, 2. In the midst of such promises so sealed, how cheerful and magnanimous should we be in the worst times! And say as *David*, *Pſal.* 49. 5. *Why should I fear in the day of evil?* Let those that have no God to flee to, no promise to rely upon, let them fear in the day of evil, I have no cause to do so. But even from these most comfortable refuges in the promises our own fears beat us; we are so scared that we mind them not, so as to draw encouragement, resolution, and courage from them. Thus the Shields of the mighty are vilely cast away.

So for all the choice Records of the Saints experiences in all former troubles and distresses, God hath by a singular Providence (aiming at our relief in future distresses) preserv'd them for us; if danger threaten us, we may turn to the recorded experiences his people have left us of the strange and mighty influence of his providence upon the hearts of their enemies, to shew them favour, *Gen.* 31. 29. *Pſal.* 106. 46. *Jer.* 15. 11.

There are also found the ancient Rolls and Records of the admirable methods of his peoples deliverance, contriv'd by his infinite and unsearchable Wisdom for them, when all their own thoughts have been at a loss, and their understandings pos'd and staggered, *Exod.* 15. 6. *2 Chron.* 20. 12, 15. *2 Kings* 19. 3, 7.

There are the recorded experiences of God's unspotted faithfulness, which never failed any Soul that durst trust himself in its arms, *Mica* 6. 4, 5. *Jesh.* 7. 9.

There are also to be found the Records of his tender and most fatherly care for his children, who have been to him as a peculiar treasure in times of danger, *Pſal.* 40. 17. *Dim.* 32. 10, 11, 12. *Iſa.* 49. 16. *Job* 36. 7. *2 Chron.* 16. 9.

All these and many more supports and cordials are made ready to our hand, and provided for a day of trouble: but alas! to what purpose, if our own fears fo transport us, that we can neither apply them, nor so much as calmly ponder and consider them.

3. To conclude by these Fears we are depriv'd of those manifold advantages we might gain by the calm and composed meditations of our own death, and the change it will make upon us; could we sit down in peace, and meditate in a familiar way upon death: could we look with a composed and well settled mind into our own graves, and not be scared and frighted with the thoughts of death, and startle whenever we take

it (tho' but in our thoughts) by the cold hand: to what seriousness would those meditations frame us? and what abundance of evils would they prevent in our conversations? The sprinkling of dust upon new writing prevents many a blot and blur in our Books or Letters: and could we thus sprinkle the dust of the grave upon our minds, it would prevent many a sin and miscarriage in our words and actions. But there is no profit or advantage redounding to us either from promises, experiences, or death itself, when the Soul is discomposed and put into confusion by its own fears. And thus you see some of those many mischievous effects of your own fears.

C H A P. VI.

Prescribing the Rules to cure our sinful Fears, and prevent these sad and woful effects of them.

WE are now come to the most difficult part *Seſt. 1.* of the work, viz. the Cure of the sinful and slavish fear of creatures in times of danger, which if it might through the blessing of God be effected, we might live at hearts ease in the midst of all our enemies and troubles, and, like the Sun in the Heavens, keep on our steady course in the darkest and gloomiest day. But before I come to the particular Rules, it will be necessary, for the prevention of mistakes to lay down three useful Cautions about this matter.

Understand that none but those that are in *1 Caution.* Christ are capable to improve the following Rules to their advantage. The security of our Souls is the great argument used by Christ to extinguish our fears of them that kill the body, *Mat.* 10. 28. But if the Soul must unavoidably perish when the Body doth, if it must drop into Hell before the Body be laid in the Grave, if he that kills the Body doth by the same stroke cut off the Soul from all the means and possibilities of Mercy and Happiness for ever: what can be offered in such a case, to relieve a man against fear and trembling?

Expect not a perfect cure of your fears in this life; *2 Caution!* whilst there are enemies and dangers; there will be some fears working in the best hearts: if our Faith could be perfected, our Fears would be perfectly cured; but whilst there is so much weakness in our Faith, there will be too much strength in our Fears. And for those who are naturally timorous, who have more of this passion in their constitution than other men have, and those in whom Melancholy is a rooted and chronical disease, it will be hard for them totally to rid themselves of fears and dejections, tho' in the use of such helps and means as follow they may be greatly relieved against the tyranny of them, and enabled to possess their souls in much more tranquility and comfort.

Whosoever expects the benefit of the following *3 Caution.* Prescriptions and Rules, must not think the reading or bare remembering them will do the work, but he must work them into his heart by believing and fixed meditation, and live in the daily practice of them. It is not our opening of our case to a Physician, nor his Prescriptions and written Directions, that will cure a man, but he must resolve to take the bitter and nauseous Potions, how much soever he loath it; to abstain from hurtful diet, how well soever he loves it, if ever he expect to be a sound and healthful Man. So it is in this case also. These things premised, the

The first Rule to relieve us against our Slavish Fears, Is seriously to consider, and more thoroughly

to study the Covenant of Grace, within the blessed Class and Bond whereof all believers are. I think the clear understanding of the Nature, Extent, and Stability of the Covenant, and of our interest therein, would go a great way in the cure of our sinful and slavish Fears.

A Covenant is more than a naked promise, in the Covenant, God hath graciously consulted our weakness, fears, and doubts, and therefore proceeds with us in the highest way of solemnity, confirming his Promises by Oath, *Heb. 6. 13, 17.* and by Seals, *Rom. 4. 11.* Putting himself under the most solemnities and engagements that can be, to his people, that from so firm a ratification of the Covenant with us, we might have strong consolation, *Heb. 6. 18.* He hath so ordered it, that it might afford strong supports, and the most reviving cordials to our taint and timorous Spirits, in all the plunges of trouble both from within, and from without. In the Covenant God makes over himself to his people, to be unto them a God, *Jer. 31. 33. Heb. 8. 10.* Wherein the Lord bestows himself in all his Glorious Essential properties upon us, to the end that whatsoever his Almighty power, Infinite wisdom, and Incomprehensible mercy can afford for our protection, support, deliverance, direction, pardon, or refreshment; we might be assured shall be faithfully performed to us in all the straits, fears, and exigencies of our lives. This God expects we should improve by Faith, as the most sovereign antidote against all our Fears in this world. *Isaiah 43. 1, 2. Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel; fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine; when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, &c. *Isa. 41. 10. Fear not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed for I am thy God.**

And if thou Reader, be within the bond of this Covenant, thou mayest surely find enough thereto quiet thy heart, whatever the matter or ground of thy fears be: If God be thy Covenant God, he will be with thee in all thy streights, wants and troubles, he will never leave, nor forsake thee. From the Covenant it was that David encouraged himself against all his troubles. *2. Sam. 23. 5. Although my house be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting Covenant, well ordered in all things and sure; and this is all my salvation, and all my desire, though he make it not to grow.* He could fetch all reliefs, all comforts, all salvations out of it, and why cannot we? He desired no more for the support of his heart; *this is all my desire*; and sure if we understood and believed it as he did, we could desire no more to quiet and comfort our hearts than what this Covenant affords us. For,

1. Are we afraid what our enemies will do? We know we are in the midst of Potent, Politick, and enraged enemies; we have heard what they have done, and see what they are preparing to do again; we tremble to think what bloody Tragedies are like to be acted over again in the World by their cruel hands: But O what heroick and noble acts of Faith should the Covenant of thy God enable thee to exert amidst all these fears? If God be thy God, then thou hast an Almighty God on thy side, and that is enough to extinguish all these fears, *Psal. 118. The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me.* Your fears come in the name of man, but your help in the name of the Lord: Let them

plot, threaten, yea, and smite too; God is a shield to all that fear him, and if God be for us, who can be against us?

2. Are we afraid what God will do? Fear it not, your God will do nothing against your good; think not that he may forget you, it cannot be; sooner, may a tender mother forget her sucking child, *Isai. 49. 15. 20, 20, He will draweth not his eye from the Righteous, Job 36. 7.* His eyes are continually upon all the dangers and wants of our Souls and Bodies, there is not a danger or an enemy stirring against you, but his eye is upon it. *2 Chron. 16. 9.*

Are you afraid he will forsake and cast you off? 'Tis true, your sins have deserved he should do so, but he hath secured you fully against that fear in his Covenant, *Jer. 32. 40. I will not turn away from them, to do them good.* All your fears of God's forgetting or forsaking you, spring out of your ignorance of the Covenant.

3. Are you afraid what you shall do? 'Tis usual for the people of God to propose difficult cases to themselves, and put startling questions to their own hearts; and there may be an excellent use of them, to rouse them out of security, put them upon the search and tryal of their conditions and estates, and make preparation for the worst; but Satan usually improves it to a quite contrary end, to deject, affright, and discourage them. O if fiery trials should come, if my liberty and life come once to be toucht in earnest, I fear I shall never have strength to go on a step farther in the way of Religion: I am afraid I shall faint in the first encounter, I shall deny the words of the holy one, make shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience in the first gust of temptation. I can hear, and pray, and profess; but I doubt I cannot burn, or bleed, or lie in a dungeon for Christ. If I can scarce run with footmen in the land of peace, how do I think to contend with Horses in these swellings of Jordan?

But yet all these are but groundless fears, either forged in thy own misgiving heart, or secretly shuffled by Satan into it; for God hath abundantly secured thee against fear in this very particular, by that most sweet supporting and blessed promise, annexed to the former, in the same Text, *Jer. 32. 40. I will put my fear into their hearts, and that they shall not depart from me.* Here is another kind of Fear, than that which so startles thee, promised to be put into thy heart, not a fear to shake and under-mine thy assurance as this doth, but to guard and maintain it. And this is the fear that shall be enabled to vanquish and expel all thy other fears.

4. Or are you afraid what the Church shall do? And what will become of the Ark of God? Do you see a storm gathering, winds begin to roar, the waves to swell; and are you afraid what will become of that vessel the Church, in which you have so great an interest?

It is an argument of the publickness and excellency of thy Spirit, to be thus toucht with the feeling sense of the Churches sufferings, and dangers. Most men seek their own things, and not the things that are of Christ, *Phil. 2. 21.* But yet it is your sin so to fear as to sink and faint under a spirit of dependency, and discouragement, which yet many good men are but too apt to do. I remember an excellent passage in a Letter of Luther's to Melancthon upon this very Account. *In Private troubles, saith he, I am* ^{Ep. ad Melanct.} *1549- weaker,*

weaker, and thou art stronger; thou despisest thy own life, but fearest the publick Cause: but for the Publick I am at rest, being assured that the Cause is just and true, yea, that it is Christ's and God's Cause. I am well-nigh a secure spectator of things, and esteem not any thing these fierce and threatening Papists. I beseech thee by Christ neglect not so Divine Promises and Consolations, where the Scripture saith, Cast thy care upon the Lord, wait upon the Lord, be strong, and he shall comfort thy heart. And in another Epistle: I much dislike those anxious cares, which as thou writest do almost consume thee. 'Tis not the greatness of the danger, but the greatness of thy unbelief. John Huls and others were under greater danger than me; and if it be great, he is great that orders it. Why do you afflict your self? Is the Cause be bad, let us renounce it; if it be good, why do we make him a liar who bids us be still? as if you were able to do any good by such impracticable cares. I beseech thee, thou that in other things art valiant, fight against thy self, thine own greatest enemy, that puts weapons into Satan's hand.

You see how good men may be even overwhelmed with publick fears; but certainly if we did well consider the bond of the Covenant that is betwixt God and his people, we should be more quiet and composed. For by reason thereof it is, 1. That God is in the midst of them, *Pl. 46. 1. 2, 3, 4.* When any great danger threatned the reformed Church in its tender beginnings in Luther's time, he would say, Come, let us sing the 46 Psalm; and indeed it is a lovely Song for such times; it bears the title of *A Song upon Alamoth*, or a Song for the hidden ones, God is with them to cover them under his wings. 2. And it is plain matter of fact, evident to all the world, that no people under the Heavens have been so long and so wonderfully preserved as the Church hath been; it hath over-lived many bloody Mailleures, terrible Persecutions, subtle and cruel Enemies; still God hath preserved and delivered it, for his promises oblige him to it, amongst which those two are signal and eminent ones, *Jer. 30. 11. Isa. 27. 3.* 3. And it is obvious to all that will consider things, that there are the self-same motives in God, and the self-same grounds and reasons before him, to take care of his Church and People, that ever were in him, or did ever lie before him from the beginning of the world. For (1.) The relation is still the same. What tho' Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, those renowned Believers, be in their graves, and those that succeed be far inferior to them in Grace and spiritual Excellency; yet saith the Church, Doubtless thou art our Father. There is the same tie and bond betwixt the Father and the youngest weakest child in the family, as the eldest and strongest. (2.) His pity and mercy is still the same, for that endures for ever: his bowels yern as tenderly over his people in their present, as ever they did in any past afflictions or straits. (3.) The rage and malice of his and his peoples Enemies is still the same, they will reflect as blasphemously and dishonourably upon God now, should he give up his people, as ever they did. *Moses's* argument is as good now as ever it was, *What wilt the Egyptians say? and so is Josuah's* too, *What wilt thou do unto thy great name?* Oh! if these things were more thoroughly studied and believed, they would appease many Fears.

2 Rule.

Work upon your hearts the consideration of the many mischiefs and miseries men draw upon themselves and others, both in this world and that to come, by their own sinful fears.

1. The miseries and calamities that sinful fear brings upon men in this world are unspeakable: this is it that hath plunged the Consciences of so many poor wretches into such deep distresses; this it is that hath put them upon the Rack, and made them roar like men in Hell among the damned. Some have been recovered, and others have perished in these deeps of horror and despair. In the year 1550 there was at Ferrara in Italy one *Fa-* Clarke's ex-
amp. p. 27. *tinus*, who by reading good Books was by the grace of God converted to the knowledge of the truth, wherein he found such sweetness, that by constant reading, meditation and prayer he grew so expert in the Scriptures, that he was able to instruct others; and tho' he durst not go out of the bounds of his calling to preach openly, yet by conference and private exhortations he did good to many. This coming to the knowledge of the Pope's Clergy, they apprehended and committed him to Prison, where he renounced the Truth, and was thereupon released: But it was not long before the Lord met with him for it; so as falling into horrible torments of Conscience he was near unto utter despair; nor could he be freed from those terrors, before he had fully resolved to venture his life more faithfully in the service of Christ.

Dreadful was that voice which poor *Spira* seemed to hear in his own Conscience, as soon as ever his sinful fears had prevailed upon him to renounce the truth. Thou wicked wretch, thou hast denied me, thou hast renounced the Covenant of thine obedience, thou hast broken thy vow; hence, Apostate, bear with thee the sentence of thine eternal damnation. Presently he falls into a swoon, quaking and trembling, and still affirmed to his death, that from that time he never found any ease or peace in his mind; but professed, that he was captivated under the revenging hand of the Almighty God; and that he continually heard the sentence of Christ, the just Judge, against him; and that he knew he was utterly undone, and could neither hope for Grace, or that Christ should intercede for him to the Father.

In our dreadful Marian days, Sir *John Cheek*, who had been Tutor to King *Edward VI.* was cast into the Tower, and kept close Prisoner, and there put to this miserable choice, either to forgo his life, or that which was more precious, his liberty of Conscience; neither could his liberty be procured by his great friends at any lower rate than to recant his Religion: This he was very unwilling to accept of, till his hard Imprisonment, joined with threats of much worse in case of his refusal, at last wrought so upon him whilst he consulted with flesh and blood, as drew from him an Abrenunciation of that Truth which he had so long professed, and still believed. Upon this he was restored to his liberty, but never to his comfort; for the sense of his own Apostacy, and the daily sight of the cruel butcheries exercised upon others for their constant adherence to the Truth, made such impressions upon his broken Spirit, as brought him to a speedy end of his life, yet not without some comfortable hopes at last.

Our own Histories abound with multitudes of such doleful examples.

Some have been in such horror of conscience, that they have chosen strangling rather than life; they have felt that anguish of conscience that hath put them upon desperate resolutions and attempts against their own lives to rid themselves of it. This was the case of *Peter Moon*, who being driven by his own fears to deny the Truth, presently fell into such horror of conscience, that seeing

P p p p a

a sword hanging in his Parlor, would have sheathed it in his own bowels. So *Spiras* beforement'd when he was near his end, saw a knife on the table, and running to it, would have mischiefed himself, had not his friends prevented him; thereupon he said, *O that I were above God, for I know that he will have no mercy on me. He lay about eight weeks (saith the Historian) in a continual burning, neither desiring, nor receiving any thing but by force, and that without digestion, till he became as an Anatomy; vehemently raging for Drink, yet fearful to live long; dreadful of Hell, yet coveting Death; in a continual torment, yet his own tormentor; and thus consuming himself with grief and horror, impatience and despair, like a living man in Hell, he represented an extraordinary example of God's Justice and Power, and so ended his miserable life.*

Surely it were good to fright our selves by such dreadful Examples out of our sinful Fears: is any misery we can fear from the hands of man like this? Oh, Reader! believe it, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God. Hadst thou ever felt the rage and efficacy of a wounded and distressed Conscience, as these poor wretches felt it, no fears or threats of men should drive thee into such an Hell upon Earth as this is.

2. And yet, tho' this be a doleful case, it is not the worst case your own sinful fears will cast you into, except the Lord overcome and extinguish them in you by the fear of his Name, they will not only bring you into a kind of Hell upon Earth, but into Hell it self for evermore: for so the righteous God hath said in his Word of truth, *Rev. 21. 8. But the fearful and unbelieving, &c. shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.* Behold here the Martial Law of Heaven executed upon *Commanders and Renegades*, whose fears make them revolt from Christ in the time of danger. Think upon this, you *timorous and saint-hearted Professors*: you cannot bear the thoughts of lying in a nasty Dungeon, how will you lie then in the lake of fire and brimstone? You are afraid of the face and frowns of a Man that shall die, but how will you live among Devils? Is the wrath of man like the fury of God poured out? Is not the little finger of God heavier than the loins of all the Tyrants in the world? Remember what Christ hath said, *Mat. 10. 33. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.* Reader, the time is coming when he that spake these words shall break out of Heaven with a shout, accompanied with Myriads of Angels, and ten thousands of his Saints, the Heavens and the Earth shall be in dreadful conflagrations round about him; the last Trump shall sound, the Graves shall open, the Earth and Sea shall give up the dead that are in them. Thine eyes shall see him ascend the awful Throne of Judgment, his faithful ones that feared not to own and appear for him in the face of all enemies and dangers, sitting on the Bench as Assessors with him; and then to be disclaimed and renounced for ever by *Jesus Christ* in the face of that great Assembly, and proclaimed a Delinquent, a Traitor to him, that deniedst his Name and Truths because of the frowns of a fellow-creature long since withered as the grass. Oh how wilt thou be able to endure this! Now put both these together in thy serious consideration, think on the terrors of Conscience here, and the desperate horror of it in Hell; this as a parboiling, that as a roasting in

the flames of God's insufferable wrath: these as some scalding drops sprinkled before-hand upon thy Conscience, that tender and sensible part of man; that as the lake burning for ever with fire and brimstone. Oh! who would suffer himself to be driven into all this misery, by the fears of those sufferings which can but touch the flesh; and for their duration, they are but for a moment!

Think, and think again upon those words of Christ, *Mark 8. 35. He that will save his life, shall lose it.* It may be a prolonging of a miserable life, a life worse than death, even in thine own account; a life without the comfort or joy of life; a life ending in the second death; and all this for fear of a trifle compared with what thou shalt afterwards feel in thine own Conscience, and less than a trifle, nothing, compared with what thou must suffer from God for ever.

He that will overcome his fears of suffering, must foresee and provide beforehand for them.

The fear of *Cannion* is a good cure to the fear of *Distraction*; the more of that, the less of this; this fear will cure that, as one fire draws forth another. *Heb. 11. 7. Noah being moved with fear, prepared an Ark.* In which he provided as much for the rest and quiet of his mind, as he did for the safety of his person and family. That which makes evils so frightful as they are, is their coming by way of surprize upon us. Those troubles that find us secure do leave us distracted and desperate. Presumption of continued tranquility proves one of the greatest aggravations of misery. Trouble will lie heavy enough when it comes by way of expectation, but it is intolerable when it comes quite contrary to expectation. It will be the Lot of *Babylon* to suffer the unexpected Vials of God's wrath, and I with none but she and her children may be so surprized. *Rev. 18. 7. Oh! it were well for us, if in the midst of our pleasant enjoyments we would be putting the difficultest Cases to our selves, and mingle a few such thoughts as these with all our earthly enjoyments and comforts.*

I am now at ease in the midst of my habitation, but the time may be at hand when my habitation shall be in a Prison. I see no faces at present but those of friends, full of smiles and honours; I may see none shortly but the faces of enemies, full of frowns and terrors. I have now an Estate to supply my wants, and provide for my family; but this may shortly fall as a prey to the enemy, they may sweep away all that I have gathered, reap the fruits of all my labours. *Impius has segetes.* I have yet my life given me for a prey; but, oh! how soon may it fall into cruel and blood-thirsty hands! I have no better security for these things than the Martyrs had, who suffered the loss of all these things for Christ's sake. A double advantage would result to us from such meditations as these. *viz.* the advantage,

1. Of acquaintance with
2. Of preparation for

} Troubles.

1. Hereby our thoughts would be better acquainted with these evils; and the more they are acquainted, the less they will start and fright at them. We should not think it strange concerning the fiery trial, as it is *1 Per. 4. 12.* It is with our thoughts as it is with young Colts, and so they start at every new thing they meet; but we cure them of it, by bringing them home to that they start at, and making them smell to it; better acquaintance cures this startling humour

Dr. Edw.
Reynolds.

Epi Ser.

at them. The newness of evil, faith a late grave and Learned Divine, is the cause of fear, when the mind it self hath had no preceding encounter with it, whereby to judge of its strength, nor example of another mans prosperous issue, to confirm its hopes in the like success: For, as I noted before out of the *Philosophers*, experience is instead of armour, and is a kind of fortitude, enabling both to judge, and to bear troubles; for there are some things which are *μεταβολαὶ καὶ περιστάσεις*, scarecrows and vizards which children fear, only out of ignorance; altho as they are known they cease to be terrible.

I know our minds naturally reluctate, and decline such harsh and unpleasant subjects: 'Tis hard to bring our thoughts to them in good earnest, and harder to dwell so long as is necessary to this end upon them. We had rather take a pleasant prospect of future felicity and prosperity in this world; of multiplying our days as the sand, and at last dying quietly in our Nest, as *Job* speaks. Our thoughts run nimbly upon such pleasant faucies like oyled wheels, and have need of trigging, but when they come into the deep and dirty ways of suffering, there they drive heavily like *Pharaoh's* Chariots, dismounted from their wheels. But that which is most pleasant, is not always most useful and necessary; Our Lord was well acquainted with griefs, though our thoughts be such great strangers to them, he often thought and spake of his sufferings, and of the bloody Baptism, with which he was to be baptized, *Luke* 12. 50. and he not only minded his own sufferings before hand, but when he perceived the fond imaginations, and vain fancies of some that followed and professed him, deluding them with expectations of earthly prosperity and rest; he gave their thoughts a turn to this less pleasing, but more needful subject, the things they were to suffer for his name; instead of answering a foolish and groundless question, of sitting on his Right and Left hand, like earthly Grantees, he rebukes the folly of the *Questionist*, and asks a less pleasing question, *Matth.* 20. 22. But *Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask, are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? And to be baptized with the baptism that I shall be baptized with? q. d.* You do but abuse your selves with such fond and idle dreams, there is other employment cut out for you in the purpose of God; Instead of sitting upon Thrones and Tribunals, it would become you to think of being brought before them as Prisoners to receive your doom and sentence: to die for my sake; these thoughts would do you a great deal more service.

2. As such meditations would acquaint us better, so they would prepare us better to encounter troubles and difficult things when they come. Readiness and preparation would subdue and banish our fears; we are never much feared with that for which our minds are prepared. There is the same difference in this case, as there is betwixt a Soldier in complete Armour, and ready at every point for his enemy; and one that is allarm'd in his bed, who hath laid his cloaths in one place, and his Arms in another, when his enemy is breaking open his chamber door upon him. It was not therefore without the most weighty reason, that the Apostle professes so earnestly, *Eph.* 6. 13. 14. Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to with-

stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand, stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of Righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. We see the benefit of such provisions and provisions for suffering in that great example of courage and constancy, *Acts* 12. 13, *I am ready, (saith Paul) not only to be bound, but to die at Jerusalem.* And the same courage and constancy remained in him, when he was entering the very Lists, and going to lay his very neck upon the block, *2 Tim.* 4. 6. *I am ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand.* The word *εὐθυμία* properly signifies a libation or drink-offering, wherein some conceive he alluded to the very kind of his own death, viz. by the Sword: His heart was brought to that frame; that he could with as much willingness pour out his blood for Christ, as the *Pharisee* used to pour out the drink offering to the Lord. 'Tis true; all the meditations and preparations in the world made by us, are not sufficient in themselves to carry us through such difficult services, 'tis one thing to see death as our fancy limnes it out at a distance and another thing to look death it self in the face. We can behold the painted Lyon without fear, but the living Lyon makes us tremble; but yet though our suilering-strength comes not from our own preparations, or forethoughts of Death; but from Gods gracious assistance; yet usually that assistance of his is communicated to us, in and by the conscionable and humble use of these means; let us therefore be found waiting upon God for strength, patience, and resolutions to suffer as it becomes Christians, in the daily serious use of those means whereby he is pleased to communicate to his people.

If ever you will subdue your own slavish fears, Commit your selves, and all that is yours into the hands of God by Faith. 4 Rule.

This Rule is fully confirmed by that Scripture, *Prov.* 16. 3. *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.* The greatest part of our trouble and burden in times of danger, arises from the unskilfulness and distraction of our own thoughts, and the way to calm and quiet our thoughts is to commit all to God. This rule is to be applied for this end and purpose when we are going to meet Death it self, and that in all its terrible formalities, and most frightful appearances, *1 Pet.* 4. 19. *Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* And if this committing act of Faith be so useful at such a time, when the thoughts must be supposed to be in the greatest hurry, and fears in their full strength; much more will it establish the heart, and calm its passions in lesser troubles, you know what ease and relief it would be to you, if you had a Trial depending in Law for your Estates, and your hearts were overloaded and distracted with cares and fears about the issue of it: If one whom you know to be very skilful and faithful, should say to you at such a time, trouble not your self any farther about this business, never break an hour's sleep more for this matter; be you as an unconcerned Spectator, commit it to me, and trust me with the management, of it; I will make it my own concernment, and save you harmless. O what a burden, what an heavy load would you feel your selves eased of, altho as you had thus transferred, and committed it to such a hand!

hand ! then you would be able to eat with pleasure, and sleep in quietness : Much more ease and quietness doth your committing the matter of your fears to God give, even so much more, as his power, wisdom, and faithfulness is greater than what is to be found in men. But to make this Rule practicable, and improveable to peace, quietness of heart in an evil day, it will be necessary that you well understand,

1. *What the committing act of Faith is.*
2. *What grounds and encouragements Believers have for it.*

1. Study well the nature of this committing act of Faith, and what it *supposes or implies* in it ; for all men cannot commit themselves to God, 'tis his own people only that can do it ; nor is it every thing they can commit to God, they cannot commit themselves to his care and protection in any way but only in *his own ways*. Know more particularly,

1. That he who will commit himself to God, must commit himself to him in well-doing, as the Apostle limits it in *1 Pet. 4. 19.* and in things agreeable to his will ; else we would make God a Patron and Protector of our sins, *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing.* We cannot commit our *Sins*, but our *Duties*, to God's protection : God is so great a friend to *Truth* and *Righteousness*, that in such a case he will not take your part, how dear soever you be to him, if *Truth* be found on your enemies part, and the mistake on yours. Think not to entitle God to your *errors* and *failings*, much less to any *sinful designs* : you may commit a doubtful case to him to be decided, but not a sinful case to be protected. It is in vain to shelter any cause of your own under his wings, except you can write upon it as *David* did, *Ps. 74. 22. Thine own cause, O Lord, thine own as well as mine.* Lord, plead thine own cause.

2. He that commits his All to God, supposes and firmly believes that all events and issues of things are in God's hands ; that he only can direct, over-rule, and order them all as he pleases. Upon this supposition the committing acts of Faith in all our fears and distresses are built : *I trusted in thee, O Lord, I said thou art my God, my times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hands of my enemies, and from them that persecute me.* His firm assent to this great truth, that his times were in God's hands, was the reason why he committed himself into that hand. If our times, our lives, or comforts were in our enemies hands, it were to little purpose for us to commit our selves into God's hands. And here the contrary senses and methods of Faith and Unbelief are as conspicuous as in any one thing whatsoever : Unbelief persuades men that their lives and all that is dear to them is in the hands of their enemies, and therefore persuades them the best way they can take to secure themselves is by compliance with the will of their enemies, and pleading them : But Faith determines quite contrary, it tells us, *He and all that is ours is in God's hand, and no enemy can touch us or ours till He give them a permission ; and therefore it is our duty and interest to please him, and commit all to him.*

3. The committing of our selves to God implies the resignation of our wills to the will of God, to be disposed of as seems good in his eyes : So *David* commits to God the event of that sad and doubtful Providence which made him fly for his life from a strong conspiracy, *2 Sam. 15. 25.*

And the king said unto Zadock, Carry back the Ark of God into the city ; if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and stem me both it and his habitation : but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I. let him do to me as seemeth good to him ; q. d. Lord, the conspiracy against my life is strong, the danger great, the issue exceeding doubtful : but I commit it all into thy hand ; if *David* may yet be used in any farther service for his God, I shall see this City and thy lovely Temple again : but if not, I lie at thy foot to be disposed either for life or death, for the earthly or the heavenly Jerusalem, as seemeth best in thine eyes. This submission to divine pleasure is included in the committing act of Faith. Christian, what saist thou to it ? Is thy will content to go back, that the will of God may come on, and take place of it ? It may be thou canst refer a difficult case to God, provided that he will determine and issue it according to thy desires ; but in truth that is no submission or resignation at all, but a sinful limiting of, and prescribing to God. It was an excellent reply that a choice Christian once made to another ; when a beloved and only child lay in a dangerous sickness at the point of death, a friend asked the Mother, What would you now desire of God in reference to your child ? would you beg of him its life or death in this extremity it is now in ? The Mother answered, *I refer that to the will of God.* But, said her friend, if God would refer it to you, what would you chuse then ? *Why truly,* said she, *if God would refer it to me, I would even refer it to God again.* This is the true committing of our selves and our troublesome concerns to the Lord.

4. The committing act of Faith implies our renouncing and disclaiming all confidence and trust in the arm of flesh, and an expectation of relief from God only. If we commit our selves to God, we must cease from man, *Isa. 2. 22.* To trust God in part, and the creature in part, is to set one foot upon a Rock and the other in a Quicksand. Those acts of Faith that give the intire glory to God, give real relief and comfort to us.

2. Let us see what grounds and encouragements the people of God have to commit themselves and all the matters of their fear to God, and so to enjoy the peace and comfort of a resigned will ; and there are two sorts of encouragements before you, let the case be as difficult and frightful as it will ; you may find sufficient encouragements in God, and somewhat from your selves, viz. your relation to him, and experiences of him.

1. In God there is all that your hearts can desire to encourage you to trust him over all, and commit all into his hands. For,

1. He is able to help and relieve you ; let the case be never so bad, yet let *Israel* hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is plenteous redemption, *Ps. 130. 7.*
 8. Plenteous redemption (i. e.) all the stores of Power, choice of methods, plenty of means, abundance of ways to save his people, when they can see no way out of their troubles : therefore hope *Israel* in *Jehovah*.

2. As his Power is Almighty, so his Wisdom is Infinite and unsearchable ; He is a God of Judgment, blessed are all they that wait for him, *Isa. 30. 18.* When the Apostle *Peter* had related the wonderful preservations of *Noah* in the Deluge, and of *Lot* in *Sodom*, one in a general destruction of the World by Water, and the other in the overthrow of those Cities by Fire ; he concludes, and so should we, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly*

ly out of temptation, 2 Pet. 2. 9: Some men have much Power, but little Wisdom to manage it; others are wise and prudent, but want ability; in God there is an infinite fullness of both.

3. His love to, and tenderness over his people, is transcendent and unparallel'd; and this sets his Wisdom and Power both a work for their good; hence it is that his eyes of Providence run continually throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose hearts are perfect, (6. c.) upright towards him, 2 Chron. 16. 9. Thus you see how he is every way fitted as a proper Object of your trust.

2. Consider your selves, and you shall find encouragements to commit all to God. For,

1. You are his children, and to whom should children commit themselves in dangers and fears but to their own father? Doubtless thou art our father, saith thy distressed Church, *Isa.* 63. 15, 16. Yea, Christian, *Thy maker is thy husband, Isa.* 54. 5. Is not that a sufficient ground to cast thy self upon him? What! a Child not trust its own Father? a Wife not commit her self to her own Husband?

2. You have trusted him with a far greater concern already than your estates, liberties, or lives; you have committed your souls to him, and your eternal interests, 2 Tim. 1. 12. Shall we commit the Jewel, and dispute the Cabinet? trust him for Heaven, and doubt him for Earth?

3. You have ever found him faithful in all that you trusted him with, all your experiences are so many good grounds of confidence, *Psal.* 9. 10. Well then, resolve to trust God over all, and quietly leave the dispose of every thing to him; he hath been with you in all former straights, wants and fears, hitherto he hath helped you, and cannot he do so again, except you tell him how? Oh! trust in his Wisdom, Power and Love, and lean not to your own understandings. The fruit of resignation will be peace.

If ever you will get rid of your fears and distractions, get your affections mortified to the world, and to the inordinate and immoderate love of every enjoyment in the world.

The more you are mortified, the less you will be terrified; 'tis not the dead, but the living world, that puts our hearts into such fears and tremblings; if our hearts were once crucified, they wou'd soon be quieted. 'Tis the strength of our affections that puts so much strength into our affections. It was not therefore without great reason that the Apostle compares the life of a Christian to the life of a Soldier, who if he mean to follow the Camp, and acquire himself bravely in fight, must not intangle himself with the affairs of this life, 2 Tim. 2. 4. Sure there is no following Christ's Camp, but with a disintangled heart from the world, for proportionable to the heat of our love will be the strength and height of our fears about these things; more particularly, if ever you will rid your selves of your uncomfortable and uncomely fears, use all God's means to mortify your affections to the exorbitant esteem and love of,

1. Your Estates. 2. Your Liberty. 3. Your Lives.

1. Get mortified and cooled hearts to your Possessions and Estates in the world. The poorest age afforded the richest Christians and noblest Marryrs. Ships deepest laden are not best for encounters. The believing Hebrews took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and enduring substance, Heb. 10. 34. They carried it rather like unconcerned

spectators than the true proprietors; they rejoiced when rude Soldiers carried cut their goods, as if so many friends had been bringing them in. And whence was this, but from an heart fixed upon Heaven, and mortified to things upon Earth? Doubtless they esteemed and valued their Estates as the good Providences of God for their more comfortable accommodation in this world; but it seems they did, and oh that we could look upon them as Mercies of the lowest and meanest rank and nature. The substance laid up in Heaven was a better substance, and as long as that was safe, the loss of this did not afflict them.

They could bless God for these things which for a little time did minister refreshment to them; but they knew them to be transitory enjoyments; things that would make to themselves wings and flee away, if their enemies had not touch'd them; but the substance laid up for them in Heaven, that was an enduring substance. So far as those earthly things might further them towards heavenly things, so far they prized and valued them, but if Satan would turn them into snares and temptations to deprive them of their better substance in Heaven, they could easily slight them, and take the spoiling of them joyfully. In a stress of weather, when the Ship is ready to sink and founder in a Storm, all haids are readily employed to throw the richest goods over-board; no man saith it's pity to cast them away, but reason dictates to a man in that case, Better these perish, than I perish with and for them. These be the wares that some will not cast over-board, and therefore they are said to drown men in perdition, 1 Tim. 6. 9. Demas would rather perish than part with these things, 2 Tim. 4. 10. But, Reader, consider seriously what comfort they can yield thee, when thou must look upon them as the price for which thou hast sold Heaven, and all the hopes of Glory; even as much as the price of blood yielded Judas; and so they will enslave thee, if thy unmortified heart be over-heated with the love of them as his was.

2. Be mortified to your liberty, and take heed of placing too great an esteem upon it, or necessity in it. Liberty is a desirable thing to the very Birds of the Air, accommodate them the best you can in your cages, feed them with the richest fare, they had rather be cold and hungry with their liberty in the Woods, than fat and warm in your houses. But yet, as sweet as it is, there may be more comfort and sweetness in parting with it, than in keeping it, as the case may stand. The doors of a Prison can lock you in, but they cannot lock the Comforter out. Paul and Silas lost their liberty for Christ, but put their comfort with it; they never were so truly at liberty as when their feet were made fast in the stocks, they never far'd so deliciously as when they fed upon Prisoners fare. God spread a table for them in the Prison, sent them in a rich Feast, yea, and they had Musick at their Feast too, and that at midnight, Acts 16. 25.

Patmos was a barren Island, and a place designed for banish'd persons; it lay in the *Aegean Sea*, not far from the coast of the lesser *Asia*; it was inhabited by none, because of the exceeding barrenness of it, but such who were appointed to it for their punishment; so that here John could meet with no more earthly refreshment than what the barren rocks, or wild and desperate persons condemned to live upon it, could afford.

AY,

Ay, but there, there it was that Christ appeared to him in unexpressible glory; there it was that he had those ravishing Visions, and saw the whole scheme of Providence in the government of this world; there he saw the *New Jerusalem* coming down from God out of Heaven, as a Bride prepared for her Husband. This made a *Palmas* become a *Paradise*; never did any place afford him such comfort as this did. So that Christians may not think there is so strict and necessary a connexion betwixt *Liberty* and *Comfort*, that he that takes away the *first*, must needs deprive them of the other.

Again, Suppose we should be so fond of our Liberty as to exchange Truth and a good Conscience for it: cannot God so imbitter it to you, yea, hath he not so imbitter'd it to many, that they were quickly weary of it, and glad of an opportunity to exchange it for a Prison. Our own *Martyrology* furnishes us with many sad examples of it. Oh! what will you do with your bitter dear-bought Liberty, when your peace is taken away from the inward man? when God shall clap up your Souls in Prison, and put your Consciences into his bonds and fetters, then you will say as the Martyr did, *I am in Prison till I be in Prison*.

3. Be mortified to the inordinate and fond love of life, as ever you expect relief against the fears of death. Reason thy self into a lower value of thy life. Methinks you have arguments enough to cure your fondness in this point. Have you found it such a pleasant life to you, for so much of it as is past? you know how the Apostle represents it, *2 Cor. 5. 4. We that are in this tabernacle do groan being burthened*. And is a burthen'd and a groaning life so desirable? You know also as he speaks in the next verse, that *whilst you are at home in the body, you are absent from the Lord*. And is a state of absence from *Jesus Christ* so desirable to a soul that loves him? can you find much pleasure so far from home? You may fancy what you will, but upon serious recollection you will be able to tell your selves, that till you be dead you will never be out of the reach of Satan's temptations, never freed from your own indwelling corruptions, these conflicts cannot have an end till life be ended. You also stand convinc'd that till you be dead your Souls cannot be satisfied, nor your desires be at rest; have what comforts so ever from God in the way of Faith and course of Duties, your hearts are still off the center, and will still gravitate and gasp heavenward. You also know that die you must, and the time of your departure is at hand; and of all deaths, if you might have your choice, none is more honourable to God, or like to be so evidential and comfortable to you, as a violent death for Christ; therein you come to him by consent and choice, not by necessity and constraint; therein you give a publick testimony for Christ, which is the highest life that ever our blood can be put to, or honoured by; and for the pain and torment, as the Martyr said, *He that takes away from my torment, takes away from my reward*. But even in that point God can make it easier to you than a natural death would be; he will be with you in your extremity, and administer such reviving cordials as other men must not look to taste, at least not ordinarily, they being prepared and reserved for such, against such an hour.

Oh then work out the inordinate love of life

by working in such mortifying considerations upon your own hearts; and if once you gain but this point, you will quickly find all your pains and prayers richly answered in the ease and rest of your hearts, in the most scaring and frightful times.

Eye the encouraging examples of those that have trod the path of sufferings before you, and strive to imitate such worthy patterns.

Behold the cloud of witnesses encompassing you round about; a cloud like that over the *Isradites* to direct you; yea, a cloud for multitude of excellent persons to animate and encourage you, *Heb. 12. 1. Ob take them for an ensample in suffering affliction and patience*. *Ja. 5. 10.* Examples of excellent persons that have broken the ice, and beaten the path before us, are of excellent use to suppress our fears, and rouse our courage in our own encounters.

The first sufferers had the hardest task; they that first entered the lists for Christ, wanted those helps to suppress fear which they have left unto us. Strange and untried torments are most terrible, for *magnitudinem rerum consuetudo subducit*, trial and acquaintance abates the formidable greatness of evils; they knew not the strength of that enemy they were to engage, but we fight with an enemy that hath been often beaten and triumph'd over by our brethren that went before us. Certainly we that live in the last times have the best helps that ever any had to subdue their fears; we have heard of the courage and constancy of our brethren, in as sharp trials of their courage as ever we can be called to; we have read with what Christian gallantry they have triumphed over all sorts of sufferings and torments, how they have been strengthened with all might in the inner man unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness, *1 Col. 11.* how they have gone away from the Courts that censured and punished them, rejoicing that they were honoured to be dishonoured for Christ, as the strict reading of that Text is, *Acts 5. 41.* counting the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, *Heb. 11. 26.* which at that time was the Magazine of the world for Riches: You read what trials they have had of cruel mocking, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments; how they were stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain with the sword, wandered about in Sheep skins, and Goat skins, destitute, afflicted, tormented, *Heb. 11. 36, 37.* In all which they obtained a good report; they came out of the field with triumphant faith and patience; and this was not the effect of an over-heated zeal at the first outset, but the same spirit of courage was found among Christians in after Ages, who have put their persecutors with a kind of pleasant scorn and contempt of Torments.

So did *Basil*, truly surnamed the great, when *Valens* the Emperour in a great rage threatened him with banishment, and tortures, as to the first, said he, I little regard it, for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulcils thereof; and as for tortures what can they do upon such a poor thin body as mine, nothing but skin and bone? And at another time when *Eusebius* Governour of *Pontus* told him in a great rage, he would tear his very liver out of his bowels: Truly said *Basil*, you shall do me a very good turn in it, to take out my naughty liver; which inflames and discafeeth my whole body. Their enemies have pro-fessed

felled the Christians put them to shame, by smiling at their Cruelties and threatnings. *Ignatius* his love to Christ had so perfectly overcome all fears of sufferings, that when he was going to be thrown for a prey among the Lyons and Leopards, he professed he longed to be among them, and, said he, if they will not dispatch me the sooner, I will provoke them, that I may be with my sweet Jesus. And if we come down to later ages, we shall find as stout Champions for Christ. The Courage and undauntedness of *Luther* is trumpeted abroad throughout the Christian world, it would swell this small *Traſt* too much, but to note the most eminent instances of his courage for Christ: The last he gave was by his sorrow in his last sickness, that he must carry his blood to the Grave. The like Heroick Spirit appeared in divers persons of Honour and eminency, who zealously espoused the same cause of reformation with him. Remarkable to this purpose is that famous Epistle written by *Ulricus ab Hutten* a German Knight, in defence of *Luther's* cause against the Cardinals and Bishops assembled at Worms. *I will go through (said he) with what I have undertaken against you, and will stir up men to seek their freedom: Such as yield not to me at first. I will overcome with impunity; I neither care nor fear what may befall me, being prepared for either event; either to ruin you, to the great benefit of my Country, or my self to fall with a good Conscience; therefore that you may see with what confidence I condemn your threats; I do profess myself to be your irreconcilable enemy, whilst ye persecute Luther and such as he is. No power of yours, no injury of fortune shall alter this mind in me; though you take away my life, yet this well deserving of mine towards my countries liberty shall not die. I know that my endeavour to remove such as you are, and to place worthy Ministers in your room, is acceptable to God; and in the last judgment, I trust it will be safer for me to have offended you, than to have had your favour.*

It was also a brave Heroick spirit by which *John Duke of Saxony* was acted to defend the Reformation, who despising all the favours and offers of the Court, and of *Rome*, and the terrors of Death it self; appeared as my Author speaks in its behalf against all the Devils, and the Pope, in three publick Imperial Assemblies, saying openly to their faces, I must serve God, or the world; and which of these two do ye think is the better? And as soon as *Luther's* Sermons were forbidden, he hasted away, saying, I will not stay there where I cannot have my liberty to serve God.

And now Reader, thou hast a little taste of the courage and zeal of those worthies who are gone before thee in defence of that cause for which thou fearest to suffer. Most men, saith *Chrysostom*, that read or hear such examples, are like the Spectators of the *Roman Gladiators*, who stood by and praised their courage, but durst not enter the Lists, to undertake what they did. If ever thou wilt get like courage for Christ, thus improve such famous examples.

1. Make use of them to obviate the prejudice of singularity; you see you have store of good company, the same things you are like to suffer for Christ, have been accomplished in the rest of your brethren in the world. *1 Pet. 5. 9.*

2. Improve them against the prejudice of all that shame that attends sufferings, here you may

see the most excellent persons in the world reckoning it their glory to suffer the vilest things for Jesus Christ, *Acts 5. 31. Heb. 11. 26.*

3. Improve them against the conceit of the insupportableness of sufferings. Lo here, poor weak creatures which have been carried honourably and comfortably through the cruellest and difficultest sufferings for Christ. Our Women and Children, not to speak of men (saith *Tertullian*) overcome their Tormentors, and the fire cannot fetch so much as a sigh from them.

4. Improve them against thine own unbelief, and staggerings at the faithfulness of God in that promise, *Isa. 43. 2. When thou passest through the fire, I will be with thee, &c.* Lo here you have the recorded and faithful testimonies of such as have tried it, with one voice witnessing for God, *Thy word is truth, thy word is truth.*

5. Improve them against the sensible weakness of your own graces, are you afraid your faith, love, and patience are too weak to carry you through great trials? Why, doubtless so were many of them too, they were men of like fears, troubled with a bad heart, and a buse devil as well as you, they also had their clouds and damps as you have; yet the Almighty power of God supported them; and out of weakness they were made strong: Despond not therefore but get a judgment satisfied, *Psal. 44. 22. A Confidence sprinkled, 2 Tim. 1. 7.* And a call cleared, *Dan. 6. 10.* Exercise Faith also with respect to Divine assistances, and everlasting rewards as they did; and doubt not but the same God that enabled them to finish their course with joy, will be as good to you as he was to them. Consider, Christ hath done as much for you as he did for any of them, and deserves as much from you as from any of them; and hath prepared the same glory for you, that he prepared for them: O that such considerations might provoke you to shew as much courage and love to Christ, as any of them ever did,

If ever you will get above the power of your own fears in a suffering day, make haste to clear your interest in Christ, and your pardon in his blood before that evil day come. 7 Rule

The clearer this is, the bolder you will be; an assured Christian was never known to be a coward in sufferings: It is impossible to be clear of fears, till you are cleared of the doubts about interest in, and pardon by Christ. Nothing is found more strengthening to our fears, than that which clouds our evidences; and nothing more to quiet and cure our fears than that which clears our evidences. The shedding abroad of God's love in our hearts, will quickly fill them with a spirit of glorying in tribulations, *Rom. 5. 5.* When the believing *Hebrews* once came to know in themselves that they had an enduring substance in Heaven, they quickly found in themselves an unconcerned heart for the loss of their comforts on earth, *Heb. 10. 34.* and so should we too. For,

1. Assurance satisfies a man that his treasure and true happiness is secured to him, and laid out of the reach of all his enemies; and so long as that is safe, he hath all the reason in the world to be quiet, and cheerful, *I know (saith Paul) whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day, 2 Tim. 1. 12.* And he gives this as the reason why he was not ashamed of Christ's sufferings.

2. The assured Christian knows that if death

it self come, (which is the worst men can inflict) he shall be no loser by the exchange; nay he shall make the best bargain that ever he made since he first parted with all in his afflictions, to follow Christ. There are two rich bargains a Christian makes; one is when he exchanges the world for Christ in his first choice at his conversion, in point of love and estimation: the other is when he actually parts with the world for Christ at his dissolution: both these are rich bargains, and upon this ground it was the Apostle said, *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain, Phil. 1. 21.* The death of a believer in Christ, is gain unspeakable, but if a man would make the utmost gain by dying, he shall find it in dying for Christ as well as in Christ: And to shew you wherein the gain of such a death lies, let a few particulars be weighed, wherein the gain will be cast up in both; he that is assured he dies in Christ, knows,

1. That his living time is his labouring time, but his dying time is his harvest time, whilst we live we are plowing and sowing in all the duties of Religion, but when we die, then we reap the fruit and comfort of all our labours and duties, *Gal. 6. 8, 9.* As much therefore as the reaping time is better than the sowing and plowing time, so much better is the death than the life of a believer.

2. A Believers living time is his fighting time, but his dying time is his conquering and triumphing time, *1 Cor. 15. 55, 56.* The conflict is sharp, but the triumph is sweet; and as much as victory and triumph is better than fighting, so much is death better than life, to him that dieth in Jesus.

3. A Believers living time is his tiresome and weary time, but his dying time is his resting and sleeping time, *Isai. 57. 2.* Here we spend and faint, there we rest in our beds, and as much as refreshing rest in sleep is better than tiring and fainting, so much is a Believers death better than his life.

4. A Believers living time is his waiting and longing time, but his time of dying is the time of enjoying what he hath long wished and waited for, *Phil. 1. 23.* Here we groan and sigh for Christ, there we behold and enjoy Christ, and so much as vision and fruition is better and sweeter than hoping and waiting for it; so much is a Believers death better than his life.

2. As the advantage a Believer makes of death is great to him by dying only in Christ; so it is much greater, and the richest improvement that can be made of death to die for Christ as well as in Christ: For compare them in a few particulars and you shall find,

1. That though a natural death hath less honour, yet a violent death for Christ hath more honour in it. To him that dies united with Christ the grave is a bed of rest; but to him that dies as a Martyr for Christ, the grave is a bed of honour. To you (saith the Apostle) it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe, but also to suffer for his sake, *1 Phil. 29.* To you it is granted as a great honour and favour to suffer for Christ; all that live in Christ have not the honour to lay down their lives for Christ. It was the great trouble of *Ludovicus Marfacus* a Knight of France, to be exempted because of his dignity, from wearing his chain for Christ, as the other Prisoners did; and he resented it, as a great injury, Give me (saith he to his Keeper) my chain as well as they, and create me a Knight of that noble Order.

2. By a natural death we only submit our selves to the unavoidable consequence of sin, but in dying a violent death for Christ, we give our testimony against the evil of sin, and for the precious truths of Jesus Christ. The first is the payment of a debt of justice due by the fall of Adam; the second is the payment of a debt of thankfulness and obedience due to Christ, who redeemed us with his own blood. Thus we become witnesses for God, as well as sufferers upon the account of sin: In the first, sin witnesseth against us, in this we witness against it; and indeed it is a great testimony against the evil of sin: We declare to all the world that there is not so much evil in a Dungeon, in a bloody Ax, or consuming flames; as there is in sin: That it is far better to lose our carnal friends, estates, liberties, and lives, than part with Christ's truths and a good Conscience, as *Zuinglius* said, What sort of death should not a Christian chuse, what punishment should he not rather undergo; yea into what vault of hell should he not rather chuse to be cast than to witness against truth and Conscience.

3. A natural death in Christ may be as safe to our selves, but a violent death for Christ, will be more beneficial to others; by the former we shall come to heaven our selves, but by the latter we may bring many souls thither. The blood of the Martyrs is truly called the seed of the Church. Many waxed confident by Paul's bonds, his sufferings fell out to the furtherance of the Gospel, and so may ours: In this case a Christian, like *Sampson*, doth greater service against Satan and his cause, by his death, than by his life.

If we only die a natural death in our beds we die in possession of the truths of Christ our selves; but if we die Martyrs for Christ, we secure that precious inheritance to the generations to come, and those that are yet unborn shall bless God, not only for his truths, but for our courage, zeal, and constancy by which it was preserved for them, and transmitted to them.

By all this you see that death to a Believer is great gain, it's great gain if he only die in Christ, it's all that, and a great deal more added, if he also die for Christ: and he that is assured of such advantages by death either way, must needs feel his fears of death shrink away before such assurances; yea, he will rather have life in patience, and death in desire; he will not only submit quietly but rejoyce exceedingly to be used by God in such honourable employment. Assurance will call a bloody death a safe passage to Canaan through the Red Sea. It will call Satan that instigates these his instruments, and all that are employed in such bloody work by him, so many *Balaams* brought to curse, but they do indeed bless the people of God, and not curse them. The assured Christian, looks upon his death as his wedding day, *Rev. 19. 7.* And therefore it doth not much differ whether the horse sent to fetch him to Christ be pale, or red, so he may be with Christ his love as *Ignatius* call'd him.

He looks upon death as his day of enlargement out of Prison, *2 Cor. 5. 8.* and it is not much odds what hand opens the door, or whether a friend or enemy close his eyes, so he have his liberty, and may be with Christ.

O then, give the Lord no rest till your hearts be at rest by the assurance of his love, and the pardon

Cum me non
quocumque
que domas,
et illustris
illius ordi-
nis militem
non creas.

Quæ non
ores mor-
tuæ præbe-
rent, quod
non sup-
plicium
potius ferret,
immo inquam
profundius
inferni ad-
huc non
impetret,
quam con-
fessionem ac-
torem?

potius nobis
delicta
quam ver-
guenda iustis
Basil.

pardon of your sins; when you can boldly say the Lord is your help, you will quickly say what immediately follows, *I will not fear what man shall do unto me, Heb. 13. 6.* And why, if thy heart be upright, maist thou not attain it? Full assurance is possible, else it had not been put into the command, *2 Pet. 1. 10.* The sealing graces are in you, the sealing spirit is ready to do it for you, the sealing promises belong to you; but we give not all diligence, and therefore go without the comfort of it. Would we pray more, and strive more, would we keep our hearts with a stricter watch, mortific sin more thoroughly, and walk before God more accurately; how soon may we attain this blessed assurance, and in it an excellent cure for our distracting and slavish fears.

8 Rule.

Let him that designs to free himself of distracting fears, be careful to maintain the purity of his conscience, and integrity of his ways, in the whole course of his conversation in this world.

Uprightness will give us boldness, and Purity will yield us peace. *Isa. 32. The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.* Look as fear follows guilt and guile, so peace and quietness follow righteousness and sincerity, *Prov. 28. 1. The wicked flee when none pursueth, but the righteous are bold as a lion.* His confidence is great, because his conscience is quiet, the peace of God guards his heart and mind. There are three remarkable steps by which Christians rise to the height of courage in tribulations, *Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4.* First they are justified and acquitted from guilt by Faith, *v. 1.* Then they are brought into a state of favour and acceptance with God, *v. 2.* Thence they rise one step higher, even to a view of heaven, and the glory to come, *v. 3.* and from thence they take an easie step to glorying in tribulations, *v. 4.*

I say, 'tis an easie step; for let a man once obtain the pardon of sin, the favour of God, and a believing view and prospect of the glory to come; and it is so easie to triumph in tribulation, in such a station as that is, that it will be as hard to hinder it, as to hinder a man from laughing when he is tickl'd.

Christians have always found it a spring of courage and comfort, *2 Cor. 1. 12. This is our rejoicing, even the testimony of our consciences, that in all sincerity and godly simplicity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in this world.* Their hearts did not reproach them with by-ends in Religion; their consciences witnessed that they made not Religion a cloak to cover any fleshly design, but were sincere in what they profess'd; and this enabl'd them to rejoice in the midst of sufferings. An earthen vessel set empty to the fire will crack and fly in pieces, and so will an hypocritical, formal, and meer nominal Christian; but he that hath such substantial and real principles of courage as these within him, will endure the trial, and be never the worse for the fire.

The very Heathens discovered the advantage of Moral integrity, and the peace it yielded to their natural consciences in times of trouble.

Nil conscire tibi, nulla pallefcere culpa, Hic murus avenous esto. — It was to them as a wall of brass. Much more will godly simplicity, and the sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon our consciences, secure and encourage our hearts. This Atheistical Age laughs conscience and purity to scorn; but let them laugh, this is it will make thee laugh

Vol. I.

when they shall cry. *Paul* exercised himself, or made it his business, *To have always a conscience void of offence, both towards God and towards men,* *meditor, operam do.* *Acts 24. 16.* And it was richly worth his labour, it repaid him ten thousand fold in the peace, courage, and comfort it gave him in all the troubles of his life, which were great and many.

Conscience must be the bearing shoulder on which the burden must lie; beware therefore it be not galled with guilt, or put out of joint by any fall into sin, 'tis sad bearing on such a shoulder; instead of bearing your burdens, you will not be able to bear its pain and anguish. To prevent this, carefully observe these Rules.

1. Over-awe your hearts every day and in every place with the eye of God. This walking as before God will keep you upright, *Gen. 17. 1.* If you so speak and live as those that know God sees you, such will be your uprightness, that you will not care if all the world see you too. An artist came to *Drusus*, and offered to build him an house so contrived, that he might do what he would within doors, and no man see him: *Nay*, said *Drusus*, so build it that every one may see.

2. Do no action, undertake no design that you dare not preface with Prayer; this is your Rule, *Phil. 4. 6.* Touch not with that you dare not pray for a blessing upon; if you dare not pray, dare not to engage; if you cannot send your prayers before, be confident shame and guilt will follow after.

3. Be more afraid of grieving God, or wounding Conscience, than of displeasing or losing all the friends you have in the world besides; look upon every adventure upon sin to escape danger, to be the same thing as if you should sink the Ship to avoid one that you take to be a Pirate; or as the fatal mistake of two Vials wherein there is Poyson and Physick.

4. What counsel you would give another, that give your selves when the case shall be your own; your judgment is most clear, when interest is least felt. *David's* judgment was very upright, when he judg'd himself in a remote Parable.

5. Be willing to bear the faithful reproofs of your faults from men, as the reproving voice of God; for they are no less when duly administered. This will be a good help to keep you upright, *Psal. 135. 23, 24. Let the righteous smite me, &c.* It is said of *Sir Anthony Cope*, that he sham'd none so much as himself in his Family Prayers, and desir'd the Ministers of his acquaintance not to favour his faults; but tell me, said he, and spare not.

6. Be mindful daily of your dying day, and your great Audit-day, and do all with respect to them. Thus keep your integrity and peace, and that will keep out your fears and terrors.

Carefully record the experiences of God's care over you, and faithfulness to you in all your past dangers, and distresses, and apply them to the cure of your present fears and despondencies. 9 Rule.

Recorded experiences are excellent remedies, *Exod. 17. 14. Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua.* There were two things in that Record; the Victory obtained over *Amalek*, and the way of obtaining it by incessant Prayer: and there were two things to be done to secure this Mercy for their use and benefit in future fears, it must be recorded and rehearsed, preserved from oblivion, and seasonably produced for relief.

Q q q q 2

There

There are two special assistances given us against fear by experience.

1. It abates the terror of sufferings.
2. It assists Faith in the promises.

1. Experience greatly abates the terror of sufferings, and makes them less formidable and scaring than otherwise they would be. Fear faith, They are deep waters, and will drown us; Experience faith, They are much shallower than we think, and are safely fordable; others have, and we may pass through that Red-Sea, and not be overwhelmed. Fear faith, The pains of death are unconceivable, sharp, and bitter, the living little know what the dying feel; and to lie in a stinking Prison in continual expectations of a cruel death, is an insupportable evil: Experience contradicts all these false reports which make our hearts faint, as the second Spies did the daunting stories of the first; and assures us, Prisons and Death are not, when we come home to them for Christ, what they seem and appear to be at a distance. Oh what a good report have those faithful men given, who have searched and tried these things! who have gone down themselves into the valley of the shadow of death, and seen what there is in a Prison, and in Death itself, so long as they were in sight and hearing able by words or signs to contradict our false Notions of it. Oh what a sweet account did *Pomponius Algerius* give of his stinking Prison at *Lions in France*! dating all his Letters whilst he was there, *From the detestable Orchard of the Leonine Prison*: and when carried to *Venice*, in a Letter from the Prison there, he writes thus to his Christian friends: *I shall utter that which scarce any will believe, I have found a nest of Honey in the entrails of a Lion, a Paradise of Pleasure in a deep dark Dungeon, in the place of Sorrow and Death tranquility of Hope and Life. Oh! here it is that the Spirit of God and of Glory rests upon us.*

So blessed Mr. *Philpot*, our own Martyr, in one of his sweet encouraging Letters: *Oh how my heart leaps (saith he) that I am so near to eternal bliss! God forgive me my unthankfulness and unworthiness of so great glory. I have so much joy of the Reward prepared for me, the most wretched sinner, that tho' I be in the place of darkness and mourning, yet I cannot lament, but am night and day so joyful as tho' I were under no cross at all; in all the days of my life I was never so joyful, the name of the Lord be praised.*

Others have given the signals agreed upon betwixt them and their friends in the midst of the flames, thereby to the last confirming this truth, That God makes the inside of sufferings quite another thing what the appearance and outside of them is to sense. Thus the experience of others abates the terrors of sufferings to you; and all this is fully confirmed by the personal experience you your selves have had of the supports and comforts of God, whereinaforever you have conscientiously suffered for his sake.

2. And this cannot but be a singular assistance to your Faith; your own and others experiences, just like *Aaron* and *Hur*, stay up the hands of Faith on the one side and the other, that they hang not down, whilst your fears, like those *Amalekites*, fall before you. For what is experience, but the bringing down of the Divine Promises to the test of sense and feeling? It is our duty to believe the Promises without trial and experiments, but it is easier to do it after so many trials; so that

your own and others experiences, carefully recorded and seasonably applied, would be food to your Faith, and a cure to many of your fears in a suffering day.

You can never free your self from sinful fears, till you thoroughly believe and consider Christ's providential Kingdom over all the creatures and affairs in this lower world. 10 Reli.

Poor timorous Soul! is there not a King, a supreme Lord under whom Devils and Men are? hath not Christ the reins of government in his hands? *Mat. 28. 18. Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11, 12. John 17. 2.* Were this dominion of Christ, and dependence of all creatures on him, well studied and believed, it would cut off both our trust in men, and our fear of men; we should soon discern they have no power either to help us or to hurt us, but what they receive from above. Our enemies are apt to over-rate their own power in their pride, and we are apt to over-rate it too in our fears. *Knowest thou not, saith Pilate to Christ, that I have power to crucify thee, and I have power to release thee? q. d. Resistest thou to answer me? dost thou not know who and what I am? Yes, yes, saith Christ, I know thee well enough to be a poor impotent creature; who hath no power at all but what is given thee from above; I know thee, and therefore do not fear thee. But we are apt to take their own boasts for truth, and believe their power to be such as they vainly vogue it to be; whereas in truth all your enemies are sustained by Christ, Col. 1. 17. they are bounded and limited by Christ, Rev. 2. 10. Providence hath its influences upon all hearts and wills immediately, Jer. 15. 11. *Psal. 106. 46.* So that they cannot do whatever they would do, but their wills as well as their hands are ordered by God. *Jacob* was in *Laban's* and in *Esau's* hands; both hated him, but neither could hurt him. *David* was in *Saul's* hand, who hunted for him as a prey, yet is forced to dismiss him quietly, blessing instead of slaying him. *Melancthon* and *Pomeroy* both fell into the hands of *Charles V.* than whom *Christendom* had not a more prudent Prince, nor the Church of Christ a fiercer enemy; yet he treats these great and active Reformers gently, dismisseth them freely, not once forbidding them to preach or print the Doctrine which he so much opposed and hated.*

Oh Christian! if ever thou wilt get above thy fears, settle these things upon thy heart by faith.

1. That the reins of Government are in Christ's hands; enemies, like wild horses, may prance and tramp up and down the world, as tho' they would tread down all that are in their way; but the bridle of providence is in their mouths, and upon their proud necks, 2 *Kings* 19. 28. and that bridle hath a strong curb.

2. The care of the Saints properly pertains to Christ; he is the head of the body, *Eph. 1. 22, 23.* our consulting head; and it were a reproach and dishonour to Christ, to fill our own heads with distracting cares and fears, when we have so wise an head to consult and contrive for us.

3. You have lived all your days upon the care of Christ hitherto; no truth is more manifest than this, that there hath been a Wisdom beyond your own, that hath guided your ways, *Jer. 10. 23. A Power above your own, that hath supported your burdens, Ps. 73. 26.* a spring of relief out of your selves that hath supplied all your wants, *Luke 22. 35.* He hath performed all things for you.

4. *Jesus Christ* hath secured his people by many promises to take care of them, how dangerous soever the times shall be, *Eccles. 8. 12. Psa. 76. 10. Amos 9. 8. 9. Rom. 8. 28.* Oh! if these things were thoroughly believed and well improved, fears could no more distract or afflict our hearts, than storms or clouds could trouble the upper Region: but we forget his providences and promises, and so are justly left in the hands of our own fears to be afflicted for it.

11 Rule.

Subiect your carnal reasonings to Faith, and keep your thoughts more under the government of Faith, if ever you expect a composed and quiet heart in distracting evil times.

He that laith aside the Rules of Faith, and measures all things by the rule of his own shallow reason will be his own bugbear; if reason may be permitted to judge all things, and to make its own inferences and conclusions from the aspects and appearances of second causes, your hearts shall have no rest day nor night; this alone will keep you in continual Alarms.

And yet how apt are the best men to measure things by this rule, and to judge of all God's designs and mysterious providences by it! In other things it is the Judge and Arbitrator, and therefore we would make it so here too; and what it concludes and dictates we are prone to believe, because its dictates are back'd and befriended by sense, whence it gathers its intelligence and information. *O quam sapiens Argumentatrix sibi videtur ratio humana?* How wise and strong, do its Arguments and Conclusions seem to us! saith *Luther*. This carnal reason is the thing that puts us into such confusions of mind and thoughts. 'Tis this that,

1. Quarrels with the promises, shakes their credit, and our confidence in them, *Ex. 5. 22, 23.*

2. 'Tis this that boldly limits the Divine Power, and assigns it boundaries of its own fixing, *Psal. 78. 20, 41.*

3. 'Tis carnal reason that draws desperate conclusions from providential appearances and aspects, *1 Sam. 27. 1.* and prognosticates our ruin from them.

4. 'Tis this carnal reason that puts us upon sinful shifts and indirect courses to deliver and save our selves from danger, which do but the more perplex and entangle us, *Isa. 30. 15, 16.*

5. It is mostly from our arrogant reasonings that our thoughts are discomposed and divided; from this fountain it is that they flow into our hearts in multitudes when dangers are near, *Pf. 94. 19. Pf. 42. 1.*

All these mischiefs owe themselves to the exorbitant actings and intrusions of our carnal reason; but these things ought not to be so, this is beside rule. For,

1. Tho' there be nothing in the matters of Faith or Providence contrary to right Reason, yet there are many things in both, quite above the reach, and beyond the ken of reason, *Isa. 55. 8.* And,

2. The confident dictates of reason are frequently confuted by experience all the world over; 'tis every day made a liar, and the frights it puts us into, proved to be vain and groundless, *Isa. 51. 13.*

Nothing then can be better for us, than to resign up our Reason to Faith, to see all things through the promises, and trust God over all events.

To conclude, exalt the fear of God in your hearts, and let it gain the ascendancy over all your other fears. 12 Rule.

This is the prescription in my Text for the cure of all our slavish fears, and indeed all the forementioned Rules for the cure of sinful fears run into this, and are reducible to it. For,

1. Doth the knowledge and application of the Covenant of Grace cure our Fears? The fear of God is both a part of that Covenant, and an evidence of our interest in it, *Jer. 32. 40.*

2. Doth sinful fear plunge men into such distresses of conscience? Why, the fear of God will preserve your ways clean and pure, *Psal. 19. 9.* and so those mischiefs will be prevented.

3. Doth forelight and provision for evil days prevent distracting fears when they come? Nothing like the fear of God enables us to such a provision and provision for them, *Heb. 11. 7.*

4. Do we relieve our selves against fear by committing all to God? Surely 'tis the fear of God that drives us to him as our only *Asylum* and sure refuge, *Mal. 3. 16.* They feared God, and thought upon his name, (i. e.) they meditated his Name, which was their refuge, his Attributes their chambers of rest.

5. Must our affections to the world be mortified before our fears can be subdued? This is the instrument of mortification, *Neh. 5. 15.*

6. Do the worthy examples of those that are gone before us, tend to the cure of our cowardice and fears? Why, the fear of God will provoke in you an holy self-jealousie, lest you fail of the grace they manifested, and come short of those excellent patterns, *Heb. 12. 15.*

7. Is the assurance of interest in God, and the pardon of sin, such an excellent Antidote against slavish fear? Why, he that walks in the fear of God, shall walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost also, *Act. 9. 31.*

8. Is integrity of heart and way such a fountain of courage in evil times? Know, Reader, no grace promotes this integrity and uprightness more than the fear of God doth, *Prov. 16. 6. Prov. 23. 17.*

9. Do the reviving of past experiences suppress sinful fears? No doubt this was the subject which the fear of God put them upon, for mutual encouragement, *Mal. 3. 16.*

10. Are the Providences of God in the world such cordials against fear? The fear of God is the very character and mark of those persons over whom his Providence shall watch in the difficultest times, *Eccles. 8. 12.*

11. Doth our trusting in our own reason, and making it our rule and measure, breed so many fears? Why, the fear of God will take men off from such self-confidence, and bring them to trust the faithful God with all doubtful issues and events, as the very scope of my Text fully manifests. Fear not their fear; their fear moving by the direction of carnal reason, drove them not to God, but to the *Assyrian* for help. Follow not you their example in this. But how shall they help it? Why, sanctify the Lord of Hosts, and make him your fear.

CHAP. VII.

Answering the most material Pleas for slavish Fears, and dissolving the common Objections against courage and constancy of mind in times of danger.

THe Pleas and excuses for our cowardliness faintness in the day of trouble are endless, and so would his task be that should undertake particularly to answer them all. 'Tis but the cutting off an *Hydra's* head, when one is gone, ten more start up; what is most material I will here take into consideration. When good men (for with such I am dealing in this Chapter) see a formidable face and appearance of sharp and bloody times approaching them, they begin to tremble, their hearts faint, and their hands hang down with unbecoming despondency, and pusillanimity; their thoughts are so distracted, their reason and faith so clouded by their fears, that their temptations are thereby exceedingly strengthened upon them, and their principles and professions brought under the derision and contempts of their enemies; and if their brethren to whom God hath given more courage and constancy, and who discern the mischief like to ensue from their uncomely carriage, admonish and advise them of it: They have abundance of Pleas and defences for their fears, yea, when they reason the point of suffering in their own thoughts, and the matter is debated (as in such times it's common) betwixt faith and fear, O what endless work do their fears put upon their faith, to solve all the *Puts* and *Is's* which their fears will object or suppose.

Some of the principal of them I think it worth while here to consider, and endeavour to satisfy, that if possible I may prevail with all gracious persons to be more magnanimous. And first of all.

1 Plea. Sufferings for Christ are strange things to the Christians of this age, we have had the happy lot to fall into milder times than the Primitive Christians did, or those that strugled in our own land in the beginning of Reformation; and therefore we may be excused for our fears, by reason of our own unacquaintedness with sufferings in our times.

Answer. 1. One fault is but a bad excuse for another, why are sufferings such strangers to you? Why did you not cast upon them in the days of peace, and reckon that such days must come? Did you not covenant with Christ to follow him whithersoever he should go, to take up your cross and follow him? And did not the World plainly tell you, that *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution*, 2 Tim. 3. 12. And that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God, Acts 14. 22. Did we fall asleep in quiet and prosperous days, and dream of Halcyon days all our time on earth? that the mountain of our prosperity stood strong, and we should never be moved? That we should die in our nest, and multiply our days as the sand; *Babylon's* Children indeed dream so, Rev. 18. 7. but the Children of *Sion* should be better instructed. Alas! how soon may the brightest day be overcast? The weather is not so variable, as the state of the Church in this world is; now a calm, Acts 9. 31. and then a storm, Acts 12. 1, 2. You could not but know what contingent and

variable things all things on earth are; Why then did you delude your selves with such fond dreams? But as a learned man rightly observes, *Mundus senescens patitur Phantasias*, The older the world grows, the more drowsie and doting it still grows, and these are the days in which the wise as well as the foolish Virgins slumber. Sure 'tis but a bad Plea, after so many warnings from the word, and from the rod to say, I did not think of such times, I dreamed not of them.

2. Or if you say, though you have conversed with death and sufferings by speculation, yet you lived not in such times wherein you might see (as other sufferers did) the encouraging faith, patience, and zeal of others set before your eye in a lively pattern and example. Sufferings were not only familiarized to them by frequency, but facilitated also by the daily examples of those that went before them.

But think you indeed that nothing but encouragement and advantage to followers, arose from the trials of those that went before? Alas, there were sometimes the greatest damps and discouragements imaginable; the zeal of those that followed hath often been inflamed by the faintings of those that were tried before them. In the Seventh Persecution under *Decius*, there were *standing before the Tribunal*, certain of the Warriors or Knights, viz. *Ammon, Zenon, Ptolemaeus, Ingenius*, and a certain aged man called *Theophilus*, who all standing by as Spectators when a certain Christian was examined, and there seeing him for fear, ready to decline, and fall away, did almost burst for sorrow within themselves; they made signs to him with their hands, and all gestures of the body to be constant; this being noted by all the standers by, they were ready to lay hold upon them; but they preventing the matter, pressed up of their own accord, before the bench of the Judge, professing themselves to be Christians, inasmuch that both the *President* and the *Benchers* were all astonished, and the Christians which were judged, the more encouraged. Such damping spectacles the Christians of former ages had frequently set them before them.

And it was no small trial to some of them, to hear the faintings and abnegation of those that went before them, pleaded against their constancy; as in the time of *Valens* it was urged by the Persecutors: Those that came to their trial before you, have acknowledged their errors, begged our Pardon, and returned to us; and why will you stand it out so obstinately? But the Christians answered, *Nos hac potissimum ratione civiter stabimus*, For this very reason we will stand to it the more manfully, to repair their scandal, by our greater courage for Christ. These were the helps and advantages they often had in those days, therefore lay not so much stress upon that; their courage undoubtedly flowed from an higher spring and better principle, than the company they suffered with.

3. And if presidents and experiences of others to break the ice before you, be so great an advantage, surely we that live in these latter times have the most and best helps of that nature that ever any people in the world had. You have all their examples recorded for your encouragement, and therefore Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, as though some strange thing had happened to you, as the Apostle speaks, 1 Pet. 4. 12.

This

This Plea is weighed, and no great weight found in it.

2. *Plea.*

But my nature is soft and tender, my constitution more weak and subject to the impressions of fear than others; some that have robust-bodies and hardy stout minds, may better grapple with such difficulties than I can, who by constitution and education am altogether unfit to grapple with those torments that I have not patience enough to hear related; my heart faints and dies within me, if I do but read or hear of the barbarous usages of the Martyrs, and therefore I may well be excused for my fears and faint-heartedness when the case is like to be my own.

Answer.

1. 'Tis a great mistake to think that the meer strength of natural constitution can carry anyone thro' such sufferings for Christ, or that natural tenderness and weakness divinely assisted, cannot bear the heaviest burden that ever God laid upon the shoulders of any sufferer for Christ. Our suffering and bearing abilities are not from Nature, but from Grace. We find men of strong bodies, and resolute daring minds, have fainted in the time of trial. Dr. *Pendleton* in our own story was a man of a robust and massy body, and a resolute daring mind; yet when he came to the trial, he utterly fainted and fell off. On the other side, what poor feeble bodies have sustained the greatest torments, and out of weakness been made strong! *Heb. 11. 34.* The Virgin *Eulalia* of *Emerya* in *Portugal* was young and tender, but twelve years old, and with much indulgence and tenderness brought up in an honourable Family, being a person of considerable Quality; yet how courageously did she sustain the most cruel torments for Christ! When the Judge fawn'd upon her with this tempting language, *Why wilt thou kill thy self, so young a flower, and so near those honourable Marriages and great Dainties thou mightest enjoy?* Instead of returning a retracting or doubtful Answer, *Eulalia* threw down the Idol, and spurn'd abroad with her feet the heap of Incense prepared for the censers; and when the Executioner came to her, the entertain'd him with this language: *Go ye, thou Hangman, burn, cut, mangle thou these earthly members; it is an easie matter to break a brittle substance, but the inward mind thou shalt not hurt.* And when one joint was pull'd from another, she said, *Behold what a pleasure it is for them, Oh Christ! that remember thy triumphant victories, to attain unto these high Dignities.* So that our constitutional strength is not to be made the measure of our passive fortitude: God can make the feeblest and tenderest person stand, when strong bodies and blustering, resolute daring minds faint and fall.

2. Are our bodies so weak, and hearts so tender, that we can bear no sufferings for Christ? Then we are no way fit to be his followers. Christianity is a warfare, and Christians must endure hardship, *2 Tim. 2. 3.* Delicacy and tenderness is as odd a sight in a Christian as it is in a Soldier; and we cannot be Christ's disciples except we deliberate the terms, and having considered well what it is like to cost us, do resolve in the strength of God to run the hazard of all with him and for him. 'Tis in vain to talk of a Religion that we think not worthy the suffering and enduring any great matter for.

3. And if indeed, Reader, thy constitution be so delicate and tender, that thou art not able to bear the thoughts of torments for Christ, how is

it thou art not more terrified with the torments of Hell, which all they that deny Christ on earth must feel and bear eternally? Oh what is the wrath of man in comparison with the wrath of God! but as the bite of a flea to the readings of a Lion. This is the consideration propounded by Christ in *Mat. 10. 28.* *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* The infinite and insupportable wrath of the great and terrible God should make our Souls shrink and shake at the thoughts of it, rather than the sufferings of the flesh, which are but for a moment.

4. Know that the wisdom and tenderness of thy father will proportion the burden thou must bear to thy back that must bear it; he will debate in measure, and not over-load thy feeble shoulders: Thou shalt find those things easie in trial, that now seem insupportable in the terrible prospect; a way of escape or support will certainly be opened, that thou maist be able to bear it.

But others plead the sad experience they have had of their own feebleness and weakness in former trials and exercises of an inferior nature, in which their Faith and Patience hath failed them: and how can they imagine they shall ever be able to stand in the fiercest and most fiery trial? If we have run with the footmen, and they have wearied us in the land of peace, how shall we then contend with horses in the swellings of *Jordan*? *Jer. 12. 5.*

1. We are strong or weak in all our trials, be they great or small, according to the assisting grace we receive from above; if he leave us in a common and light trial to our own strength, it will be our over-match, and if he assist us in great and extraordinary trials we shall be more than Conquerours. At one time *Abraham* could offer up his 'only Son to God with his own hand; at another time he is so afraid of his life, that he acts very unsuitable to the Character of a Believer, and was shamefully rebuk'd for it by *Abimelech*. At one time *David* could say, *Thou art host, encamp against me I will not fear*; at another time he feigns himself mad, and acted beneath himself, both as a man, and as a man enriched with so much faith and experience. At one time *Peter* is afraid to be interrogated by a Maid; at another time he could boldly confront the whole Council, and own Christ and his Truths to their faces. In extraordinary trials we may warrantably expect extraordinary assistances, and by them we shall be carried through the greatest, how often soever we have failed in smaller trials.

2. The design and end of God in giving us experience of our own weakness in lesser troubles, is not to discourage and daunt us against we come to greater, (which is the use Satan here makes of it) but to take us off from self-confidence and self-dependence; to make us see our own weakness, that we may more heartily and humbly betake our selves to him in the way of faith and fervent supplication.

But some will object that they cannot help their fears and tremblings when any danger appears; because fear is the disease, at least the sad effect and symptom of a disease, with which God hath wounded them; a deep and fixed melancholy hath so far prevailed, that the least trouble overcomes them: If any sad afflictive providence befall, or but threaten them; their fears presently

presently rise, and their hearts sink, sleep departs, thoughts tumultuate, the blood boils, and the whole frame of nature is put into disorder. If therefore the Lord should permit such great and dreadful trials to befall them, they can think of nothing less than dying by the hand of their own fears, before the hand of any enemy touch them; or which is a thousand times worse, be driven by their fears into the net of temptation, even to deny the Lord that bought them.

Answer

This I know is the sad case of many gracious persons, and I have reason to pity those that are thus exercised; O 'tis an heavy stroke, a dismal state, a deep wound indeed: But yet the wisdom of God hath ordered this affliction upon his people for gracious ends and uses; hereby they are made the more tender and watchful, circumspect and careful in their ways, that they may shun and escape as many occasions of trouble as they can, being so unable to grapple with them. I say not but there are higher and nobler motives that make them circumspect and tender, but yet the preservation of our own quietness is useful in its place, and 'tis a mercy if that or any thing else be sanctified to prevent sin, and promote care of duty. This is your clog to keep you from straying.

2. And when you shall be called forth to greater trials, that which you now call your snare, may be your advantage, and that in divers respects.

1. These very distempers of body and mind serve to imbitter the comforts and pleasures of this world to you, and make life itself less desirable to you than it is to others, they much wean your hearts from, and make life more burdensome to you than it is to others who enjoy more of the pleasure and sweetness of it than you can do. I have often thought this to be one design and end of Providence in permitting such distempers to seize so many gracious persons as labour under it, and providence knows how to make use of this effect to singular purpose and advantage to you, when a call to suffering shall come; this may have its place and use under higher and more spiritual considerations to facilitate death, and make your separation from this world the more easy to you; for though it be a more noble and raised act of faith and self denial to offer up to God our lives, when they are made most pleasant and desirable to us upon natural accounts, yet it is not so easy to part with them as it is when God hath first imbittered them to us. Your lives are of little value to you now, because of this burdensome clog you must draw after you, but if you should increase your burden by so horrid an addition of guilt, as the denying of Christ, or his known truths would do, you would not know what to do with such a life; it would certainly lie upon your hands as a burthen. God knows how to use these things in the way of his providence to your great advantage.

2. Art thou a poor melancholy and timorous person? Certainly if thou be gracious as well as timorous this will drive thee nearer to God; and the greater thy dangers are, the more frequent and fervent will thy addresses to him be: Thou feelst the need of everlasting arms underneath thee to bear thee up under, and to carry through smaller troubles; that other

persons make nothing of, much more in such deep trials, that put the strongest Christians to the utmost of their faith and patience.

And 3dly. What if the Lord will make an advantage out of your weakness, to display more evidently his own power in your report? you know what the Apostle saith, *1 Cor. 12. 9, 10. And he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness: most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me* — for when I am weak then am I strong. If his infirmities might serve as a foil to set off the grace of God with a more bright and sparkling lustre, he would rejoice in his infirmities, and so should you: Well then, let not this discourage you, the infirmity of nature you complain of may make death the less terrible; it served to that purpose to blessed Basil (as you heard before) when his enemy threatened to tear out his Liver, he thought it a kindness to have that Liver torn out that had given him so much trouble. It may drive thee nearer to God, and minister a fit opportunity for the display of his grace in the time of need.

But what if God should hide his face from my soul in the day of my streights and troubles, and not only so, but permit Satan to buffet me with his horrid temptations and injections, and so I should sail like the Ship in which Paul sailed, betwixt these two boisterous Seas; what can I suspect less than a shipwreck of my soul, body, and all the comforts of both, in this world, and in that to come?

1. So far as the fears of such a misery awaken you to prayer for the prevention of it, it may be serviceable to your souls, but when it only works distraction and despondency of mind, it is your sin, and Satan's snare. The Prophet *Jeremy* made a good use of such a supposed evil by way of deprecation *Jer. 17. 17. Be not a terror unto me, thou art my hope in the day of evil. q. d. In the evil day I have no place of retreat or refuge, but thy love and favour; Lord that is all I have to depend on, and relieve my self by: I comfort my self against trouble with this confidence, that if men be cruel, yet thou wilt be kind; if they frown, thou wilt smile; if the world cast me out, thou wilt take me in; but if thou shouldst be a terror to me instead of a comforter, if they afflict my body, and thou affright my soul with thy frowns too; what a deplorable condition shall I be in then! Improve it to such an end as he did, to secure the favour of God, and it will do you no harm.*

2. It is not usual with God to estrange himself from his people in trouble, nor to frown upon them when men do. The common experience of Believers stands ready to attest and seal this truth, that Christians never find more kindness from God, than when they feel most cruelty from men for his sake: consult the whole cloud of witnesses, and you will find they have still found the undoubted verity of that tried word in *1 Per. 4. 14. That the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon sufferers*. The expression seems to allude to the Dove that Noah sent forth out of the Ark, which flew over the watery world, but could not rest her self any where till she returned to the Ark. So the Spirit of God, called here the Spirit of Glory, from his effects and fruits, viz. his cheering, sealing and reviving influences which makes men glory and triumph in the most afflicted

It was common with the Martyrs to sweeten death to themselves by reckoning what infirmities it would cure them of, one of his blindness, another of his lameness, &c.

ed state. This Spirit of God seems like that Dove to hover up and down, to flee hither and thither, over this person and that, but resteth not so long upon any, as those that suffer for righteousness sake, there he commonly takes up his abode and residence.

3. And what if it should fall out in some respect according to your fears, that Heaven and Earth should be both clouded together? yet it will not be long before the pleasant light will spring up to you again, *Pf. 112.* 4. *Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.* You shall have his supporting presence till the Comforter do come. When Mr. Glover came within sight of the stake, he suddenly cries out, *Oh Austin! he is come! he is come!*

• Plea. Oh! but what if my trial should be long, and the siege of temptations tedious? then I am persuaded I am lost; I am no way able to continue long in a Prison, or in tortures for Christ, I have no strength to endure a long siege, my patience is too short to hold out from month to month, and from year to year, as many have done. Oh! I dread the thoughts of long-continued trials, I tremble to think what must be the issue.

Answer. 1. Cannot you distrust your own strength, and ability, but you must also limit God's? What if you have but a small stock of patience? cannot the Lord strengthen you with all might in the inner man unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness, according to his glorious power, *1 Col. 11?* And is it not his promise to confirm you to the end, *1 Cor. 1. 8?* You neither know *how much*, nor *how long* you can bear and suffer. It is not inherent, but assisting Grace, by which your suffering abilities are to be measured. God can make that little stock of patience you have to hold out as the poor Widow's Cruise of Oyl did, till deliverance come; he can enable your patience unto its perfect work, (*i. e.*) to work as *extensively* to all the kinds and sorts of trials, as *intensively* to the highest degree of trial, and as *protenively* to the longest duration and continuance of your trials, as he would have it: If this be a marvellous thing in your eyes, must it be so in God's eyes also?

2. The Lord knows the proper season to come in to the relief of your sliding and fainting patience, and will assuredly come in accordingly in

that season; for so run the promises, *The Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants when he seeth that their power is gone, and that there is none shut up or left, Dent. 32.* 36. *Cum duplicentur lateres venit Moyses*; In the Mount of difficulties and extremities it shall be seen. *The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity, Psal. 125.* 3. *Ubi desinit humanum, ibi incipit divinum auxilium*; God's power watches the opportunity of your weakness.

But what if I should be put to cruel and exquisite tortures, suppose to the rack, to the fire, or such most dreadful sufferings as other Christians have been? what shall I do? do I think I am able to bear it? is my strength the strength of stone, or are my bones brass, that ever I should endure such barbarous cruelties? Alas! Death in the mildest form is terrible to me: how terrible then must such a Death be?

Who enabled those Christians you mention to endure these things? They loved their lives, and sensed their pains as well you, they had the same thoughts and fears, many of them, that you now have; yet God carried them through all, and so he can you. Did not he make the devouring Flames a bed of Roses to some of them? was he not within the fires? did he not abate the extremity of the torment, and enable weak and tender persons to endure them patiently and cheerfully? some singing in the midst of flames, others clapping their hands triumphantly, and to the last sight that could be had of them in this world nothing appeared but signs and demonstrations of joy unspeakable. Ah friends! we judge of sufferings by the outside and appearance, which is terrible; but we know not the inside of sufferings, which is exceeding comfortable. Oh! when shall we have done with our unbelieving *ifs* and *buts*, our questionings and doubtings of the Power, Wisdom, and tender Care of our God over us, and learn to trust him over all. Now *the Just shall live by Faith*; and he that lives by Faith shall never die by fear. The more you trust God, the less you will torment your selves. I have done; the Lord strengthen, stablish, and settle the trembling and feeble hearts of his people, by what hath been so seasonably offered for their relief by a weak hand. Amen.

The Righteous Man's Refuge.

The Epistle to the Reader.

Christian Reader,

IF Heinius, when he had shut up himself in the Library at Leiden, reckoned himself placed in the Pier-
very lap of Eternity, because he conversed there with so many Divine Souls, and professed, he took
his seat in it with so lofty a Spirit and sweet Content, that he heartily pitied all the Great and Rich
Men of the World, that were ignorant of the happiness he there daily enjoyed: How much more may
that Soul rejoice in its own Happiness, who hath shut himself up in the Chambers of the Divine Attributes,
and exercise pity for the exposed and miserable multitude that are left as a prey to the Temptations and
Troubles of the World?

That the days are evil, is a Truth preached to us by the convincing Voice of Sense; and that they are
like to be worse, few can doubt that look into the Moral Causes of Evil Times, the impudent height of
Sin, or into the Prophecies relating to these latter days; for whom the sharpest Sufferings are appointed,
to make way for the sweetest Mercies. A faithful Watchman of our own hath given us fresh and late
warning in these words of Truth: Hath God said nothing? Doth Faith see nothing of a flood coming
upon us? Is there such a Deluge of Sin among us, and doth not that prophesy to us a Deluge of
Wrath? Lift up your eyes, Christians, stand, and look through the Land, Eastward and West-
ward, Northward and Southward, and tell me what you see? Behold, a Flood cometh, a Flood
of Sin is already broken forth upon us, the Fountains of the great Deep are broken up, and the
Windows of Hell are opened, &c. In such an evil day as this is, happy is the Soul that hath made God
its refuge, even the most high God its habitation. He shall sit, Noah-like, Mediis tranquillis in undis,
safe from the fear of evil. In consideration of the distress of many unprovided Souls for the Misery that is
coming on them, and not knowing how short my useful time will be to any, (for I know it cannot be long) I
have endeavoured once more the Assistance of poor Christians in these two small Treatises, one of Fear, the
other of Preparation for the worst Times; which it may be is the last help I shall this way be able to afford
them. It is therefore my earnest request to all that fear the Lord, and tremble at his Word, to redeem
their time with double diligence, because the days are evil. To clear up their interest in Christ and the
Promises, lest the darkness of their Spiritual Estate, meeting with such a night of outward darkness over-
whelmed them with Terrors insupportable. Some help is offered in this Treatise to direct the gracious Soul
to its Rest in God: May the Blessings of his Spirit accompany them, and bless them to the Soul of him that
readeth; it will be matter of joy beyond all earthly joys to the heart of

Thy Friend and Servant in Christ,

John Flavell.

Isa. xxvi. v. 20.

*Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors
about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment till the
indignation be over-past.*

CHAP. I.

Wherein the literal and real importance of the Text
are considered, the Doctrine propounded, and the
method of the following Discourse stated.

SECT. I.

MAN being a prudent and prospecting crea-
ture, can never be satisfied with present
safety, except he may also see himself well secu-
red against future dangers. Upon all appearances
of trouble, 'tis natural to him to seek a refuge,
that he may be able to shun what he is loath to suf-
fer, and survive those calamities which will ruin
the defenceless and exposed multitude. Natural
men seek refuge in natural things. The rich man's
wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his
own conceit, Prov. 18. 11. Hypocrites make lies
their refuge, and under falsehood do they hide

themselves, Isa. 28. 15. not doubting but they
shall stand dry and safe, when the over-flowing
flood lays all others under water. But,

Godly men make God himself their hiding place,
to him they have still betaken themselves in all
ages, as often as calamities have befallen the world,
Ps. 46. 1. God is our refuge and strength, a very pre-
sent help in trouble. As chickens run under the
wings of the hen for safety when the kite hovers
over them, so do they fly to their God for san-
ctuary, Psal. 56. 3. At what time I am afraid, I
will trust in thee; q. d. Lord, if a storm of trouble
at any time overtake me, I will make bold to
come under thy roof for shelter, and indeed not
so bold as welcome; 'tis no presumption in them
after so gracious an invitation from their God,
Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers.

My

My Friends, a sound of trouble is in our ears, the clouds gather and blacken upon us more and more : Distress of Nations with perplexity seems to be near, our day hastens to an end and the shadows of the night are stretching forth upon us. What greater service therefore can I do for your souls, than by the light of this Scripture (as with a Candle in my hand) to lead you to your Chambers, and shew you your Lodgings in the Attributes and promises of God, before I take my leave of you, and bid you good night.

O with what satisfaction should I part with you, were I but sure to leave you under Christ's wings! It was Christ's lamentation over *Jerusalem*, that they would not be gathered under his wings, when the *Roman* Eagle was ready to hover over that City; and you know how dear they paid for their obduracy and infidelity. Be warned by that dreadful example, and among the rest of your mercies bless God heartily for this, That so sweet a voice sounds from Heaven in your ears this day, this day of frights and troubles; *Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers, &c.*

This Chapter contains a lovely song fitted for the lips of God's *Israel*, notwithstanding their sad captivity; for their God was with them in *Babylon*, and heard their hearts there with many promises of deliverance, and in the mystical fence, it relates to the New Testament Churches, of whose troubles, protections, and deliverances, the *Jews in Babylon* were a Type.

This Chapter, though full of excellent and seasonable truths, will be too long to Analyze; it shall suffice to search back only to the 17. verse, where you find the poor captived Church under despondency of mind, comparing her condition to that of a woman in travail, who hath many sharp pains, and bitter throes, yet cannot be delivered, much like that in 2 *Kings* 19. 3. *The children are come to the birth and there is no strength to bring forth.*

Against this discouragement a double relief is applied in the following Verses, the one is a Promise of full deliverance at last; the other an Invitation into a sure Sanctuary and place of defence for present, until the time of their full deliverance came. The promise we have in verse 19. *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise; awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust, &c.* Their captivity was a civil death, and *Babylon* as a grave to them, So it is elsewhere described, *Ezek.* 37. v. 1, 3, 14. *I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel.* And therefore their deliverance is carried under the notion of a resurrection in that promise.

Object. Yea, (might they reply) the hopes of deliverance at last is some comfort, but alas, that may be far off: How shall we subsist till then?

Sol. Well enough, for as you have in that promise a sure ground of deliverance at last, so in the interim here is a gracious invitation into a place of security for the present, *Come my people, enter thou into thy Chambers.* In which invitation Four things call for our close attention.

1. The Form of the invitation, including in it the qualified subject, *Come my people.* God's own peculiar people, who have chosen God for their portion, and resigned up themselves sincerely to him in the Covenant, are the persons here invited, the same which he before called the righteous nation that kept the truth, verse 2. he means those that remained faithful to God (as many of them did) in *Babylon*, witness their sorrow for *Sion*, *Psal.* 137 per totum; and their solemn Appeal to God that their hearts

were not turned back, nor had their steps declined though they were sore broken in the place of Dragoons, and covered with the shadow of death, *Psal.* 44. 18, 19, 20. These are the people invited to the chambers of security. And the form of invitation is full of tender compassion; *Come my people*; like a tender father that sees a storm coming upon his children in the fields, and takes them by the hand, saying, *Come away my dear children* hasten home with me lest the storm overtake you, or as the Lord said to *Noah* before the Deluge, *Come thou and all thy house into the Ark, and God shut him in, Gen.* 7. 1. 16. This is the form of the invitation, *Come my people.*

2. The privilege invited to; *Enter thou into thy Chambers.* There is some variety, and indeed variety rather than contrariety in the exposition of these words.

In this all are agreed, that by their *Ezek.* 21. 13 Chambers, is not meant the Chambers of their own houses; for alas, their houses were left unto them desolate; and if not, yet they could be no security to them now, when neither their own houses nor their fortified city was able to defend them before.

Grotius expounds it of the Grave, *Grot.* in loc. and makes these Chambers the same with the Chambers of death. *He in cubiculo, i. e. sepulchra vestra.* The grave indeed is a place of security where God sometimes hides some of his people in trouble-some times, as is plain in *Isa.* 57. 1, 2. but I cannot allow this to be the fence of this Text; God doth not comfort his captives with a natural against a civil death, but with protection in their troubles upon earth, as is evident from the scope of the whole Chapter.

By Chambers therefore, others understand the Chambers of Divine providence, where the Saints are hid in evil days. So our *Armatores* on the place, and no doubt but this is in part the special intentment of the Text.

Others understand the Attributes and Promises of God to be here meant, as well as his providences. And I conceive all three make the fence of the Text full, (i. e.) the Divine Attributes engaged in the promise and exercised or actuated in the providences of God; these are the sanctuaries and refuges of God's people in days of trouble,

Calvin understands it of the quiet repose of the Believers mind in God, but that is rather the effect of his security, than the place of it. It's God's Attributes or his name (which is the same thing) to which the righteous fly and are safe, *Prov.* 18. 10.

Object. But you will say, why are they called their Chambers? Those Attributes are not theirs, but Gods.

Sol. The answer is easie, though they be God's Properties, yet they are his Peoples privileges, and benefits; for when God makes over himself to them in Covenant to be their God, he doth as it were deliver to them the Keys of all his Attributes for their benefit and security; and is as if he should say, my wisdom is yours, to contrive for your good; my power is yours, to protect your persons; my mercy yours, to forgive your sins; my all-sufficiency yours to supply your wants; all that I am, and all that I have, is for your benefit and comfort. These are the Chambers provided for the Saints lodgings, and into these they are invited to enter. *Enter thou into thy Chambers.* By entering into them understand their actual faith exercised in acts of affiance, and resignation to God in all their dangers. So *Psal.* 56. 3. *At what time I am afraid (said David) I will trust*

In general, hereby the Being and righteousness of God is cleared and vindicated against the Atheism and Infidelity of the world, *Psal. 9. 16. The Lord is known by the judgments that he executeth.* Impunity is the occasion of many Atheistical thoughts in the world. *Jer. 48. 11. Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath relied on his strength, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity; therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed.* So *Psal. 55. 19. Because they have no changes therefore they fear not God.* Kingdoms, Families, and particular persons, like standing waters and ponds, are apt to corrupt by long continued peace and prosperity; the Lord therefore sees it necessary to purge the world by his judgments; *When thy judgments are in the Earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.* Those Sermons that God preaches from heaven by the terrible voice of his judgments, startle and rouse the secure world, more than all the warnings and exhortations of his Ministers could ever do. Those that slept securely under our Ministry, will fear and tremble under his rods; those that are without faith are not without sense and feeling, their own eyes will affect their hearts, though our words could make no impression on them.

SECT. II. But of what use soever these National Judgments are to others, to be sure they shall be beneficial to God's own people; when others die by fear, they shall live by faith, If they be baneful poison to the wicked, they shall be healthful physick to the Godly. For,

1. By these Calamities God will mortify and purge their corruptions; this Winter weather shall be useful to destroy and rot those rank weeds, which the Summer of prosperity breed, *Isa. 27. 9. By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged.* Physick in its own nature is griping and unpleasant; but very useful and necessary to purge the body from noxious and malignant humours, which retained may put life itself in hazard: and it is with the body Politick, as with the body Natural.

2. National Judgments drive the people of God nearer to him, and one to another; they drive the people of God to their knees, and make them pray more frequently, more fervently, and more feelingly than they were wont to do; in this posture you find them in *ver. 8. 9.* of this Chapter. *Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee, the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.*

3. In a word, by these distractions and distresses of Nations, the people of God are more weaned from the world, and made to long more vehemently after heaven; being now convinced by experience that this is not their rest. When all things are tranquil and prosperous, God's own people are but too apt to fall asleep and dream of pleasure and rest on earth, to lay as *Job* in his prosperity, *I shall die in my nest, I shall multiply my days as the sand.* And then are their heads and hearts filled with many projects and designs; to promote their comforts, and make provision for their accommodations on earth: The multiplicity of earthly cares and comforts take up their time and thoughts, too much, and make them that they mind death and eternity too little. But faith God, this must not be so, things must not go on at this rate, the prosperous world must not thus enchant my people; I must imbitter the earth that I may thereby sweeten heaven the more to them; when they find no rest below, they will surely seek it above.

These and such like are the gracious designs and ends of God in shaking the world by his terrible judgments; but yet, though National troubles must necessarily come, the wisest of men cannot positively determine the precise time of those judgments; we may indeed by the signs of the times discern their near approach; yet our judgment can be but probable and conjectural, seeing there are tacite conditions in the dreadfullest threatenings, *Jer. 18. 7. 8. Jonah 3. 9. 10.* And such is the merciful nature of God, that he oft times turns away his anger from his people, when it seems ready to pour down upon them, *Psal. 78. 38.* The consideration whereof no way indulges security, but encourages to repentance, and greater fervency in Prayer.

CHAP. III.

Opening and confirming the second Proposition, viz. That God's own people are much concerned in, and ought to be suitably affected with, those Judgments that befall the Nation wherein they live.

SECT. I. IF God's people have no concernment in these things, why are they called upon in this Text, to turn into their chambers, hide themselves, and shut their doors, till the indignation be overpast? Certainly though God hath better provided for them than others, yet they are two ways concerned in these cases as much as others. *Viz.*

1. Upon a Political } Account.
2. Upon a Religious }

1. Upon a Political account, as they are members of the community, and so are equally concerned in the good or evil that befall the Nation in which they live, their Cabins must follow the fate of the Ship in which they Sail, their Lives, Liberties, Estates, and Interest sink and swim with the publick. The good figs were carried away with the bad, *Jer. 24. 5.* In these outward respects it often times bears as hard upon the righteous as upon the wicked. *Ezek. 21. 3. I will draw forth my sword out of his Sheath and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.* In these outward respects as it is with the good, so with the sinner, *Eccles. 9. 2.* The same fire that burns the dry tree, oftentimes burns the green tree too. *Ezek. 20. 47.* Grace is above all hazards, but creature enjoyments and comforts are not. The sins of the *Sodomites* involve not only their own houses and estates, but *Lar's* also, in the ruine and overthrow; wicked men often fare the better for the company of the godly and the godly often fare the worse for the company of the wicked.

And it is not to be wondered at, if we consider that even the Saints themselves have an hand in the provocation of these judgments, as well as others, *Deut. 32. 19. And when the Lord saw he is abhorred them because of the provoking of his sons and of his daughters.* We have contributed to the common heap guilt, and therefore must justify God if we partake with others in the common calamity.

2. They are greatly concerned in such judgments upon a Religious and Christian account, for it is usual for the flood of Gods judgments not only to sweep away our civil and natural, but our spiritual and best enjoyments and comforts. Thus the Ordinances of God ceased in *Babylon*, and there the faithful bewailed their misery upon that account, *Ff. 137. per totum; we wept when we remembered thee, O Zion.* Not only *Israel* flies, but the *Ark* is taken prisoner by the enemy, *1 Sam. 4. 11.* And you find the people of God more deeply concerned upon this account, than for all

all their outward losses and other sufferings, Zeph. 3. 18. *I will gather them of thee that are sorrowful for the solemn assemblies, to whom the reproach of it was a burden.* For by how much our souls are more excellent than our bodies, and the concerns of Eternity overbalance those of time; by so much more are we concerned in the loss of our spiritual, more than of our temporal mercies and enjoyments.

Grace indeed cannot be lost, but the means and instruments by which it is begotten may; the golden candlestick is one of the moveables in God's house, Rev. 2. 5.

Thus you see a twofold concernment that the people of God have in the effects of National Judgments.

SECT. II. This being so, how should all that fear God be affected with the appearances and signs of his indignation? So was David, Psal. 119. 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* He that feared not a Bear, a Lyon, a Goliath, yet trembleth at God's judgments. So did Habakkuk, chap. 3. v. 16. *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenness entered into my bones.* Expressions denoting the deepest seizures of fear and greatest consternations; not that I would persuade you to such slavish fear, or unchristian dejection, as it is not only sinful in it self, but the cause and inlet of many other sins: But to a due sense both of the evils of misery that will befall the Nation when God's indignation comes upon it; and the evils of sin that have incensed it; and to such a fear of both as may seasonably awaken us to the use of all preventing remedies. And first,

1. O that all would lay to heart the National miseries that God's indignation threatens upon us. It is said, Psal. 107. 34. *A fruitful land is turned into barrenness for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.* It was long since told England by one of its faithful watchmen. * The Nation and Church

Mr. Strong. 'in which we are, is the common Ship

'in which we are all embarked, and if this
'in judgment be cast away, whether dashed against
'the rocks of any Foreign power, or swallowed up
'in the quicksands of Domestic divisions, it must
'needs hazard all the Passengers: Or if you were sure,
'that for your parts you might be safe: would it not
'be a bitter thing, to stand upon the shore, and see
'such a glorious vessel as this Nation is, to be cast a-
'way? To see this glorious Land defaced, the blest-
'ed Gospel polluted, the golden candlestick removed,
'it cannot but affect men that have any bowels.

'Or if this move you not, yet to see a stranger to
'Lord it in thy habitation, and thy dwelling place
'to cast thee out; for your delight some dwellings,
'your fruitful pleasant and well tilled fields to be
'made a prey; for you to sow, and another to reap
'*Impius has segetes*; for the delicate woman upon
'whom the wind must not blow, to be exposed to
'the lust and cruelty of an enemy, and be glad to fly
'away naked to prolong a miserable life, which they
'would be glad to part with for death, were it not
'for fear of the exchange. For the tender mother
'to look upon the Child of her womb; and consider,
'must this Child in whom I have placed the hope of
'my age; for,

Omnis in Aferanio stat chari cura parentis;
'He that hath been so tenderly bred up, must he fall
'into the rough hands of a bloody Soldier, skillful to
'destroy? It had been well for me if God had given
'me dry breasts, or a miscarrying womb, rather
'than to bring forth children unto murderers; or
'if you might be safe, how could you endure to see
'the miseries that should come upon your people,

'and the destruction of your kindred. Thus far he.
But alas! What security have any of us as to our
earthly comforts from the common calamity? We
may please our selves as *Euruch* did, Jer. 45. 4. 5.
and dream of exemption, but by so much the greater
will our distress be, when it shall surprise us.

2. You that are the people of God ought to be
deeply affected with the spiritual miseries that threaten us in the day of God's indignation: do you consider what the removing the Candlestick out of its place is? A departing Gospel, the going down of the Sun upon the Prophets, the loss of your sweet Sabbaths, and Gospel Feasts, and the gross darkness of Popery to fill the earth: O it is hard parting with these things, it's said, 1 Sam. 7. 2. when the Ark was removed, *that all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.* Pity your own Souls, and be deeply affected with the misery of others, the poor Christless world, who are like to perish for want of Vision, Prov. 29. 18. In the Year 1072, faith *Matthew Paris*, Preaching was suppressed at Rome, and then Letters were framed by some as coming from hell; in which the Devil gives them thanks for the multitude of Souls sent to him that year.

3. But especially labour to affect your hearts with the sins that have incensed God's indignation: So did the Saints in Jerusalem, Ezek. 9. 4. they sighed and mourned for all the abominations committed in it. So did Lot, 2 Pet. 2. 7. *He vexed his righteous soul from day to day.* So did David, Psal. 119. 136. *Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because men keep not thy law.* O who that loves God can refrain tears, to see the God of pity, the God of tender mercies, a father full of bowels of compassion, so incensed and provoked to indignation! Oh it is an heartmelting consideration where there is any ingenuity. If our afflictions grieve God to the heart as it doth Judg. 10. 16. Our souls should be grieved for his dishonour.

4. To conclude, get upon your hearts such a sense of God's indignation as may quicken you to the use of preventing duties. So Amos 4. 12. *Because I will do this prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.* So the Prophet, Zeph. 2. 1, 2. *Gather your selves together before the decree bring forth. It was Moses his honour to stand in the breach, Psal. 106. 23. And Abraham's to plead so with God, though he did not prevail.*

CHAP. IV.

Confirming the third Proposition. viz. That God hath a special and peculiar care of his own in the days of his indignation.

SECT. I. Propriety and Relation engages Care and Solicitude in times of Danger; we see God hath put such a *Storge*, and inclination into the very creatures, that they will expose themselves to preserve their young; and it cannot be imagined that the fountain of Pity which dropt this tenderness into the bowels of the creatures, should not abound with it himself; is there such strong inclination in the very birds of the air, that they will hazard their own lives to save their young? much more is God solicitous for his people. Isa. 31. 5. *As birds flying, &c.* to their nests when their young are in danger: So will the Lord of Hosts defend Jerusalem. No mother is more solicitous for her dearest Child in danger and distress, than the Lord is for his people. Isa. 40. 13. *Can a Woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I*

not forget thee. A woman [the more affectionate Sex] forget her child, a piece of her self, her sucking child, which together with Milk from the breast, draws Love from the heart! This may rather be supposed, than that the Lord should forget his people.

Two things must here be cleared. 1. That it is so. 2. Why it is so.

1. That it is so, will appear from,
 1. Scripture Emblems.
 2. Scripture Promises.
 3. Scripture Instances.

1. *Scripture Emblems*; and among many, I will upon this occasion single out two or three principal ones. In Ezek. 5. 1, 2, 3. *And thou son of man take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barbers razor, and cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard, then take the balances to weigh and divide the hair; thou shalt burn with fire a third part in the midst of the City, when the days of the siege are fulfilled; and thou shalt take a third part, and smite about it with a knife; and a third part thou shalt scatter in the wind, and I will draw out a sword after thee: Thou shalt also take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts. You find this truth shadowed out in this excellent Emblem: Jerusalem, the capital City, is the head, the numerous Inhabitants are the hair, the King of Babylon the Razor, the weighing it in balances is the exactness of God's procedure in Judgment with them; the fire, knife, and wind, are the various Judgments to which the people were appointed; the hiding of a few in the Prophet's skirt, is the care of God for the preservation of his own remnant in the common Calamity. This is one Emblem clearing this point. And then in Ezek. 9. 3, 4. the same truth is prefigured to us in another Emblem, as lively and significant as the former. *And behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the North, and every man a slaughter-weapon in his hand, and one among them was clothed in linnen, with writers inkhorn by his side, and they went in and stood before the brazen Altar; and the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the Cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of his house, and he called to the man clothed with linnen, which had the writers inkhorn by his side; and the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the City, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. The men that had charge over the City are the Angels appointed for that service; some with slaughter-weapons, whose work it was to destroy; but one among them had a writers inkhorn by his side, and he was employ'd to take the names, and mark the persons of God's faithful ones among them, whom the Lord intended to preserve and hide in that common overthrow and desolation of the City, and these were to be all marked man by man before the destroying Angel was to begin his bloody work. Oh! see the tender care of God over his upright mourning servants! Once more, the same truth is represented in a third Emblem, Mal. 3. 17. *And they shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day that I make up my jewels, and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him: Where the World is compared to an house on fire, God to the Master and Father of the Family, the Wicked to the useless Lumber therein, the Saints to the Children and Jewels in the house; about these his first and principal care of preservation is exercised, these he will be sure to save, whatever become of the rest. Thus you have the chosen Emblems that illustrate this comfortable truth.***

2. As these Scripture Emblems illustrate it, so there are many excellent Scripture Promises to con-

firm it, Isa. 32. 2. *A man shall be for an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place.* This Man is the Man Christ Jesus, the tempest spoken of, are the miseries and calamities of War, which make the land on which it falls, an hot, dry, and weary land; in the midst and rage whereof, Christ shall be to his faithful ones a covert for protection, a river of water for supply, and a shadow for refreshment; that is to say, whatsoever shall be necessary either for their safety or comfort. Christ is not only a shadow to his people from the wrath of God, but also from the rage of Men. Again, Zech. 2. 5. *I will be a wall of fire round about; alluding to Travellers in the Desert, who to prevent danger from wild Beasts in the night, use to make a circular fire round about the place where they lie down to rest, and this fire was as a wall to secure them.* You have the like gracious promise made to the poor captivated Church in Ezek. 11. 16. *Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.*

Little sanctuary. The word is variously render'd and expounded; some *Adverbially*, and render it *paucis*, a Sanctuary for a little while, viz. during their danger, at the shortness of which this Adverb points. So *Junius*. Others *Adjectively*, as we translate it, *Templum paucorum*, as *Forabius*. There was but a handful of them, and God would be as a Sanctuary to secure and protect that remnant.

3. And all these Promises have in all ages been faithfully fulfilled to the Saints. You have an excellent Scripture for this, 2 Pet. 2. 4, 5, 6. when the flood was brought upon the old World, there was one *Noah* a righteous Man in it, and for him God provided an Ark. When *Sodom* was overthrown, there was one *Lot* in it, a just Man, and God secur'd him out of danger; upon which that comfortable conclusion is built, ver. 9. *The Lord knows how to deliver the godly.* When Jerusalem was destroyed, a *Pella* was provided as a refuge for the godly there. Remarkable is that place to this purpose, Isa. 25. 4. *Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible one is as a storm against the wall.* And this hath God been not only once or twice, but in all ages, Psal. 90. 1. *Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations; or, as the Hebrew in generations and generations. What he hath been in former generations to his distressed people, that he is, and will be without alteration in all generations.*

Self. II. Yet we must remember, that all who are preserved in common calamities are not the people of God; nor are all that are indeed his people preserved: he hath people enough to divide into two ranks, as the Husbandman his Corn, some for the Mill, and some to reserve for Seed. There be Stars enough in the Heaven to shine in both Hemispheres, and there are Saints enough in the World, some to shine in Heaven, and some to preserve the Church on Earth.

1. All that are preserv'd are not the people of God. In the Ark a wicked *Cham* was preserv'd, and those that were preserv'd in *Egypt*, many of them were afterwards destroy'd for their unbelief, Jud. 5. So in *Ezekiel's* vision, a part even of those hairs which were spared were afterwards cast into the fire, Ezek. 5. 4. Preservation from the dominion of sin, and the wrath to come, is peculiar to God's own people; but as for temporal deliverances we cannot infer that conclusion.

2. Nor

2. Nor yet can we say that all God's people shall be preserved; that Promise, *Zeph. 2. 3.* leaves it upon a *may be*; many a precious Christian hath fallen in the common calamity; they have been preserved in, but not from trouble.

But it is usual with God to preserve some in the sorest judgments: And the grounds of it are,

1. Because some must be left as a seed to propagate and preserve the Church, which is perpetual, and can never fail; he never so overthrows Nations as *Sodom* was overthrown, *Isa. 1. 9.* This was the ground of that promise, *Jer. 30. 17.* *For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee, though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee.* And of that Plea *Amos 7. 2.* O Lord God, forgive I beseech thee; by whom shall Jacob arise for he is small. Except the Lord had left a small remnant, we had been as *Sodom*. Remarkable to this purpose, is that Scripture *Isa. 6. 13.* But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a Tyl-tree, and as an Oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves; for the holy seed shall be the substance thereof. This preserved remnant is the holy seed, by which the Church is propagated and continued, *Pf. 102. 28.*

2. Because God will even in this world own and reward the fears and sorrows of his people for the sins of the times, and sufferings of the Church, with the joy and comfort of better times, and a participation of *Sion's* consolation; so *Isa. 66. 10.* Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, ye that have mourned for her. They that have sown in tears, do sometimes live to reap in joy, *Psal. 125. 6.* They shall say as *Isa. 25. 9.* Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he is come to save us. And those that live not to reap down in this world the harvest of their own prayers and tears, shall be no losers; a full and better reward shall be given them in Heaven, *Isa. 57. 22.*

3. Because the preserved remnant of Saints are they that must actually give unto God the glory of all his providential administrations in the world, both of judgments and mercies upon others, and towards themselves. They that go down to the pit do not celebrate his praise, the living, the living they praise him, *Isa. 38. 18, 19.* Thus when God turned back *Sion's* captivity, the remnant of Saints that were preserved, were they that recorded his praise, *Psal. 126. 1, 2.* Then was our mouth filled with laughter. And fully to this sense is that Scripture, *Psal. 102. 19, 20, 21.* He delivers those that are appointed to death, i. e. that men had doomed to death, that they may declare the name of the Lord in *Sion*, and his praise in Jerusalem.

4. The hiding of the Saints in evil days, is the greatest discovery of the hand of God in the world; when he hides them, he shows himself, and that both to the Saints and to their enemies.

It is one of the most glorious Mysteries of Providence that ever the world beheld, viz. the strange and wonderful protection of poor helpless Christians from the rage and fury of their mighty and malicious enemies; though they walk visibly among them, yet they are as it were hid from their hands, but not from their eyes. So *Jer. 1. 18.* You find God made that Prophet among the envious Princes, and against an enraged and mighty King, as a defended City, and as an iron pillar, and as a brazen wall. And indeed it was easier to him to conquer and take in the strongest Fort or Garison, than that single person, who yet walked day by day naked and open among them. So *Luther*, a poor Monk, was made invincible, all the Papal Power could not touch him, for God hid him. All the World against one *Athanasius*, and yet not able to destroy him, for God hid him. This is the

display of the glorious Power of God in the world, and he hath much honour by it.

Well then, if there be a God that takes care of his own in evil days, do not you be distractingly careful what shall become of you in such times; you cannot see how it is possible for you to escape, but 2 *Per. 2. 4, 5, 6.* the Lord knows how to deliver when you do not. Little did *Lot* know the way and manner of his preservation, till God opened it to him, nor *Noah* till God contrived it for him: there was no way to be contrived by them for escape. He that knew how to deliver Them, can deliver You also.

Leave your selves to God's dispose, it shall certainly be to your advantage; the Church is his peculiar care, *Isa. 27. 3.* I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.

The more you commit your selves to his care, the more you engage it, *Isa. 26. 3.* Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusts in thee. He will certainly find a place of Safety for his people under or in Heaven.

Neither be too much dejected when the number of visible Professors seems but small; think not the Church will perish when it is brought so low. This was *Elijah's* case, he thought he had been left alone, that Religion had been preserved in his single person, as the *Phoenix* of the world: but see 1 *King. 19. 18.* God hath enough left, if we were in our graves, to continue Religion in the World; it concerns Him more than You to look to that.

CHAP. V.

Evincing the fourth Proposition, viz. That God usually premonisheth the World, especially his own, of his judgments, before they befall them.

SECT. I. GOD first warns, and then smites; He delights not to surprize men; when Indignation was coming, he tells his people of it in the Text, and admonisheth them to hide themselves. Surely the Lord will do nothing but he revealeth his secrets to his servants the Prophets, *Amos 3. 7.* Thus when the flood was to come upon the old World, he gave them 120 years warning of it, *Gen. 6. 3.* compared with 1 *Per. 3. 19.* So when *Sodom* was to be destroyed, God would not hide it from *Abraham*; *Gen. 18. 17.* Shall I hide from *Abraham* the thing that I do? The like discovery was made unto *Lot*, *Gen. 19. 12, 13, 14.* So when the Captivity was at hand, *Ezekiel* was commanded to give the Jews solemn warning of it from God, *Ezek. 3. 17.* *Flatter the world at my mouth, and give them warning from me.*

And when their City and Temple was to be destroyed by the Romans, how plainly did Christ foretell them of it by his own mouth! *Luke 19. 43, 44.* *Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.* *Josaphat* also tells us that a little before the execution of this judgement upon them, a Voice was heard in the Temple, *Migremus* hinc, Let us go hence; which voice *Tartarus* also in his Annals, mentions, *Audita major humana vox, excedere Deos, simul ingens motus excedentium.* It was more than an humane voice, telling them God was departing from them, and withal there was heard the rushing noise as of some that were going out of the Temple.

*Josaphat de bet
Jud. 1. 7. c. 2.
Tac. lib. 21.*

And

And as there were extraordinary premonitions of approaching judgments by revelation to the Prophets of old, and ligus from heaven; so there still are standing and ordinary rules by which the world may be admonished of God's judgments before they come upon them.

And the general rule, by which men may discern the indignation of God before it comes, is this;

When the same provocations, and evils are found in one Nation, which have brought down the wrath of God upon another nation; this is an evident sign of God's Judgment at the door. For God is unchangeably holy and just, and will not favour that in one people, which he hath punished in another; nor bless that in one age, which he hath cursed in another. And therefore that which hath been a sign of Judgment to one, must be so to all.

Here it is that the carcases of those sinners whose sins had cast them away, are as it were cast up upon the Scripture shore, for a warning to all others that they steer not the same ill course they did. 1 Cor. 10. 6. *Now these things were our examples. The Israelites are made examples to us, plainly intimating that if we tread the same path, we must expect the same punishment.* Let us therefore consider what were the evils that provoked Gods judgments against his ancient people, whom he was so loth to give up, *Hof. 11. 8.* and so long ere he did give up, *Jer. 15. 6.* and we shall find by the concurrent accounts that the Prophets give.

1. That God's worship among them was generally mixed and corrupted with their own inventions, for so it is said, *Psal. 106. 40, 41. they went a whoring with their own inventions.* And this so inflamed the wrath of God, who is a jealous God, and tender over his own honour, that he abhorred his own inheritance; yea, he expresses himself as a man doth whose heart is broken by the unfaithfulness of his wife, *Ezek. 6. 9.* Upon this account his professing people became the generation of his wrath, *Jer. 7. 29, 30.*

2. Incurrible obstinacy under gentler correction, *Amos 4. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.* Scarcity, Mildews, Pestilence, and Sword had been upon them; and still these that remained, though saved as a brand out of the fire, in which their fellow sinners perished, would not return to God; and this hastened on the general ruin, *ver. 12.* This prefigures the ruine of Nations indeed.

3. Stupidity and senselessness of God's hand was a sad Omen, and cause of that peoples ruin; So *Isa. 26. 10, 11. Lord when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see. No nor yet when his hand is laid on, Isa. 42. 24, 25.* It is not some small drop of God's anger that passes without observation, but the fury of his anger, not some light skirmish of his judgments with them, but the strength of battle: Not in a corner upon some particular person, or family, but that which set him on fire round about: yet all this could not awaken them. *He hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle, and is hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew it not, and is burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.* Prodigious stupidity! to be in the midst of flames, yea, to be seized by them, and destroyed sooner than awakened. So you find again in *Hof. 7. 9. Gray hairs were here, and there upon Ephraim, yet he knew it not.* Youth and Age are easily distinguished, and gray hairs do plainly distinguish them, being the plain tokens of a declining State, yet they took no notice of them. Such stupidity is ever more the forerunner of misery.

4. Persecution of God's faithful Ministers and people, was another forerunning sign of their ruine, 2 Vol. I.

Chron. 36. 16. They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy. There were also a number of upright Souls among them, that desired to worship God according to his own prescription, but a snare was laid for them in Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor; and therefore was judgment towards that people, *Hof. 5. 1. Mizpah, and Tabor* were places in the way lying betwixt Samaria and Jerusalem, where the true worship of God was, and there were Informers or Spies set by the Priests to intercept such as would venture to serve God at Jerusalem according to his own prescription, this also foreboded the judgments of God upon that nation.

5. The decay of the life and power of Godliness among them plainly foretold their ruine at hand, *Hof. 4. 18. Their drink is sour,* where under the Metaphor of dead and sour drink which hath lost its spirit and is become flat; their formal, heartless, and perfunctory duties are severely taxed and condemned.

6. To conclude, the mutual animosities, and feuds among that professing people, evidently shewed judgment to be at the door. *Hof. 9. 7. The days of visitation are come, the days of recompense are come, Israel shall know it: the Prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is made, for the multitude of thine iniquity; and the great hatred.* This great hatred was one of the greatest sins, and saddest signs upon them. This Spirit of enmity sowed by the Devil among them hastened their calamity. If Ephraim will envy Judah, and Judah vex Ephraim the common enemy shall part the fray: when the whole Nation was under water, and the Roman Armies under the very walls of Jerusalem their own Historians tell us, what bitter contentions and sharp conflicts continued among them to the very last. These things must be looked upon by all Wise and considerate men, no otherwise than we look upon Glazing Meteors, and Blazing Comets, portending judgment and ruine at the door. We have had indeed terrible Signs in Heaven, a dreadful rod of God shaken over us of late, which all men ought to behold with trembling; Yet, I must say those Moral Signs of judgment forementioned, are much more terrible and portentous. According therefore to the evidence of these signs among us; let all upright hearts be affected and awakened with expectations of God's righteous judgments. It is indeed below faith to expect evil days with despondency and distraction; but surely it is a noble exercise of Faith, so to expect them, as to make due preparation for them.

Sect. II. And if we enquire for what End God gives such warnings to the world, and premonishes them from Heaven, of the judgments that are coming on the earth, know that he doth it upon a three-fold account.

1. To prevent their Execution.
2. To leave the Careless inexcusable.
3. To make them more tolerable and easie to his own people.

1. Warning is given with design to prevent the execution of judgments; this is plain from *Amos 4. 12. Therefore will I do this unto thee;* there is warning given; and because I will do this, prepare to meet thy God O Israel: There is the gracious design of preventing it, by bringing them seasonably upon their knees at the foot of an angry God: You see the Lord expects it from all his Children, that they fall at his feet in deep humiliation, and fervent intercession whenever he goes forth in the way of judgment. What else was the design of God in sending

Jonah to Nineveh with that dreadful message but to excite them to repentance, and prevent their ruine? *They* *Jonah* grieved at, and therefore declined the message to secure his credit, well knowing, that if they took warning and repented, the gracious nature of God would soon melt into compassion over them: Free grace would make him appear as a liar among the people; for to that sense his own words found, *Jonah* 4. 2. *Was not this my saying when I was yet in my Country, Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish, for I knew that thou art a gracious God. q. d. I thought before hand it would come to this; I knew how willing thou art to be prevented by repentance, therefore to secure my credit, I fled to Tarshish.*

2. He forwarns of judgments to leave the Incurrigible wholly inexcusable, that those who have neither sense of Sin, nor fear of Judgment before, might have no cloak for their folly, nor plea for themselves afterwards; *What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?* *Jer.* 13. 21, 22. *q. d. What Plea or Apology is left thee after so many fair warnings? You cannot say you were surprized, before you were admonished, or ruined before you were warned.*

3. God warns of judgments before they come to make them the more easy to his people when they come indeed; thus in *John* 16. 4. Christ foretold his Disciples of their approaching sufferings, that when they came, they should not be found amazed at them, or unprovided for them; for unexpected miseries are astonishing to the best men, and destructive to wicked men, *Luke* 17. 26, 27, 28.

Well then if it be so, let all that are wise in heart consider the Signs of the times, and seasonably hearken to God's warnings. *The Lord's voice crieth to the City, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name; hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it. Micah* 6. 9. 'Tis our wisdom to way-lay our troubles, and provide for the worst estate, whilst we enjoy the best: happiness is that is at once believing and praying for good days, and preparing for the worst. *Noah's* example is our advantage. *Heb.* 11. 7. *Who by faith being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark.* Preventing mercies are the most ravishing mercies, *Psal.* 59. 10. And preventing calamities are the forest calamities, *Amos* 9. 10.

And let us heartily bewail the supineness and carelessness of the world in which we live, who take no notice of Gods warnings, but put the evil day far from them, *Amos* 6. 3. who will admit no fear, till they are past all hope; they see God housing his Saints apace, yet will not see the evil to come from which God takes them, *Isa.* 57. 1, 2. *The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come? he shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds each one walking in his uprightness.* They hear the cry of sin which is gone up to heaven, but cry not for the abominations that are committed, nor tremble at the judgments that they will procure.

O careless Sinners drowned in Stupidity, and sleeping like *Jonah* under the Hatches, when others are upon their knees and at their wits end! do Saints tremble, and are you secure? Have not you more reason to be afraid than they; If judgments come, the greatest harm it can do them, is but to hasten them to Heaven; but as for you, it may hurry you away to Hell: They only fear tribulation in the way; but you will not fear damnation in the end. Believe it Reader, in days of common calamity both Heaven and Hell will fill apace.

C H A P. VI.

Demonstrating the fifth Proposition. viz. That God's Attributes, Promises, and Providences, are prepared for the security of his people in the greatest distresses that befall them in the World.

Sect. I. **H**AVING more briefly dispatched the foregoing preliminary Propositions it remains that we now more fully open this fifth Proposition, which contains the main subject matter of this Discourse; here therefore our meditations must fix and abide, and truly such is the deliciousness of the subject to spiritual hearts, that I judge it wholly needless to offer any other motive besides it self to engage your affections. Let us therefore view our Chambers, and see how well God hath provided for his Children in all their distresses that befall them in this world; it is our Fathers voice that calls to us, *Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers.* And the

1. *Cham.* Which comes to be opened as a Refuge to distressed Believers in a stormy day, is that most secure and safe Attribute of Divine Power: in to this let us first enter by serious and believing meditation, and see how safe they are whom God hides under the protection thereof in the worst and most dangerous days. In opening this Attribute we shall consider it,

1. In its own Nature and Property.
2. With respect to the Promises.
3. As it is actuated by Providence on the behalf of distressed Saints.

And then give you a comfortable prospect of their safe and happy condition, who take up their lodgings by Faith in this Attribute of God.

1. Let us consider the Power of God in it self, and we shall find it represented to us in the Scriptures in these three lovely Properties, viz.

1. Omnipotent
2. Supreme
3. Everlasting

} Power.

1. As an Omnipotent and All-sufficient Power, which hath no bounds or limits, but the pleasure and will of God, *Dan.* 4. 34, 35. *He doth according to his will in the armies of Heaven; and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?* So *Psal.* 135. 6. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he, in Heaven, and in Earth, in the Seas, and all deep places.* You see Divine pleasure is the only rule according to which Divine Power exerts it self in the world; we are not therefore to limit and restrain it in our narrow and shallow thoughts, and to think in this or in that the Power of God may help or secure us; but to believe that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. Thus those Worthies, *Dan.* 3. 17. by Faith exalted the power of God above the order and common rule of second causes. *Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King.* Their faith rest ing it self upon the Omnipotent power of God, expected deliverance from it in an extraordinary way; 'tis true, this is no standing rule for our faith ordinarily to work by; nor have we ground to expect such miraculous Salvations, but yet when extraordinary difficulties press us, and the common ways, and means of deliverance are shut up, we ought by faith to exalt the Omnipotency of God, by ascribing the glory thereof to him, and leave our selves to his good pleasure, without straitning or narrowing

rowing his Almighty power, according to the mould of our poor low thoughts and apprehensions of it: For so the Lord himself directeth our faith in difficult cases. *Iſa. 55. 8, 9. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, faith the Lord; for as the Heavens are higher than the earth; So are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* He speaks there of his pardoning mercy which he will not have his people to contract, and limit according to the model, and platform of their own, desponding, misgiving and unbelieving thoughts; but to exalt and glorify it, according to its unbounded fulness; as it is in the thoughts of God, the fountain of that mercy; so it ought to be with respect to his power, about which his thoughts and ours do vastly differ; the power of God as we cast it in the mould of our thoughts, is as vastly different and disproportionate from what it is in the thoughts of God the fountain thereof; as the earth is to the heavens, which is but a small inconsiderable point compared with ~~them~~.

2. The power of God is a Supreme and Sovereign power, from which all creature power is derived, and by which it is over-ruled, restrained, and limited at his pleasure. *Nebuchadnezzar* was a great Monarch, he ruled over other Kings, yet he held his Kingdom from God; it was God that placed not only the Crown upon his head, but his head upon his shoulders. *Dan. 2. 37. Thou O King art a King of Kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a Kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.* Hence it follows, that no creature can move tongue or hand against any of God's people, but by virtue of a Commission or permission from their God, albeit they think not so. *Knowest thou not, faith Pilate unto Christ, that I have power to crucify thee, and power to release thee? Proud worm! what an ignorant, and insolent boast was this of his own power! and how doth Christ spoil and shame it in his answer? John 19. 10. Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.*

Wicked men like wild horses would run over and trample under foot all the people of God in the world, were it not that the bridle of divine providence had a strong curb to restrain them: *Ezek. 22. 6. The Princes of Israel every one were in thee, to their power to shed blood.* And it was well for God's *Israel* that their power was not as large as their wills were; this world is a raging and boisterous Sea, which forcibly tosses the passengers for heaven that fall upon it, but this is their comfort and security: *The Lord stilleth the noise of the sea, the noise of the waves, and the tumult of the people, Ps. 65. 7. Moral as well as natural waves, are checked and bounded by Divine power. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain, Psal. 76. 10. As a man turns so much water into the channel as will drive the mill, and turns away the rest in another sluice.*

Yea, not only the power of man, but the power of Devils also is under the restraint and limitation of this power. *Rev. 3. 10. Satan shall cast some of you into prison, and ye shall have tribulation ten days. He would have cast them into their graves, yea, into hell if he could, but it must be only into a Prison: He would have kept them in prison, till they had died and rotted there, but it must be only for ten days. Oh glorious Sovereign power! which thus keeps the reins of Government in its own hand!*

3. The power of God is an everlasting power; time doth not weaken or diminish it, as it doth all creature powers, *Iſa. 40. 28. The Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary, Iſa. 59. 1. The Lord's hand is not shortened (i. e.) He hath*

as much power now as ever he had, and can do for his people as much as ever he did; time will decay the power of the strongest creature, and make him faint and feeble; but the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not. *Then, faith the Psalmist, abidest for ever, thy years flee not, Psal. 102. 27.* In God's working there is no expence of his strength. he is able to do as much as ever he did, to all over again all the glorious deliverances that ever he wrought for his people from the beginning of the World; to do as much for his Church now as he did at the Red sea; and upon this ground the Church builds its Plea, *Iſa. 51. 9, 10. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient days in the generations of old, art thou not it that hast cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon? q. d. Lord why should not thy people at this day expect as glorious productions of thy power as any of them found in former ages?*

Seet. II. Let us view the power of God in the vast extent of its operation, and then you will find it working beyond the line,

1. Of Creature power. 2. Of Creature expectation.
3. Of Humane probability.

1. Beyond the line of all created power, even upon the hearts, thoughts and minds of men, where no creature hath any Jurisdiction. *So Gen. 31. 29. God bound up the Spirit of Laban, and became it towards Jacob. So Psal. 106. 46. He made them also to be pitied of all them that carried them captives.* Thus the Lord promised *Jeremy, Jer. 15. 11. I will cause the enemies to encirc thee well, in the time of evil.* This power of God softens the hearts of the most fierce and cruel enemies, and sweetens the spirits of the most bitter and enraged foes of his people.

2. Beyond the line of all Creature expectations, *Eph. 3. 20. God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think. He doth so in Spirituals; as appears by those two famous parables, Luk. 15. 19. 22. And am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. But the Father said to his servants, bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.* The Prodigal desired to be but as an hired servant, and lo, the fatted Calf is killed for him, and musick to his meat, and the gold ring upon his finger. And in *Math. 18. 26, 27.* The debtor did but desire patience and the Creditor forgave the Debt. O, thinks a poor humbled Sinner, If I might have but the least glimpse of hope, how sweet would it be! But God brings him to more than he expects, even the clear shining of assurance. It is so in Temporals, the Church confesses the Lord did things they looked not for, *Iſa. 64. 3.* And in both Spirituals and Temporals this power moves in an higher Orb than our thoughts, *Iſa. 55. 8, 9. My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor my ways your ways; but as far as the heavens are above the earth, so are my thoughts above your thoughts.* The earth is but a *punctum* to the Heavens; all its tallest Cedars, Mountains, and Pyramids cannot reach it: He speaks, as was said before, of God's pitying, pardoning, and merciful thoughts, and shews that no Creature can think of God, as he doth of the creature under sin, or under misery. Our thoughts are not his; either First by way of simple cognition we cannot think such thoughts towards others in misery, by way of pity; or under sin against us by way of pardon, as God doth: Nor Secondly, are our thoughts as God's in respect of reflexive comprehension; i. e. We cannot conceive or comprehend what those thoughts are of towards us, when we fall into sin or misery; just as he thinks them, they are altered, debased, and

strained as soon as ever they come into our thoughts. See an excellent instance in *Gen. 48. 11. I had not thought to see thy face, and lo God hath blessed me all thy seed.* A surprizing providence; and thus the Divine power works in a Sphere above all the thoughts, prayers and expectations of men.

3. It works beyond all probabilities, and rational conjectures of men; this Almighty power hath created deliverances for the people of God when things have been brought to the lowest ebb, and all the means of salvation have been hid from their eyes. We have diverse famous instances of this in Scripture, wherein we may observe a remarkable *gradation* in the working of this almighty power: It is said in the *2 Kings 15. 26, 27. The Lord saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter, for there was not any shut up, nor any left; nor any helper for Israel.* A deplorable state: how inevitable was their ruine to the eye of sense? Well might it be called a bitter affliction; Yet from this immediate power arose for them a sweet and unexpected Salvation; and if we look into *2 Cor. 1. 9, 10. we shall find the Apostles and choicest Christians of those times, giving up themselves as lost men, all ways of escape being quite out of sight; for so much those words signifie, We had the sentence of death in our selves; i. e. We yielded our selves for dead men. But though they were sentenced to death, yea, though they sentenced themselves, this power which wrought above all their thoughts, and rational conjectures, relieved them. And yet one step farther in *Ezek. 37. 4, 5, 6, 7. The people of God are there represented as actually dead, yea as in their graves, yea as rotted in their graves, and their very bones dry, like those that are dead of old; so utterly improbable was their recovery: Yet by the working of this Almighty power which subdueth all things to it self, their graves in Babylon were opened, the breath of life came into them, bone came to bone, and there stood up a very great Army; it was the working of this power above the thoughts of man's heart, which gave the ground of that famous Proverb, *Gen. 22. 14. In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen.* And the ground of that famous Promise, *Zech. 14. 7. At evening time it shall be light; i. e. Light shall unexpectedly spring up, when all men according to the course and order of Nature, expect nothing but encreasing darkness. How extensive is the power of God in its glorious operations!***

Se^ct. III. Let us view the power of God in its relation to the promises, for so it becomes our Sanctuary in the day of trouble; if the Power of God be the Chamber, 'tis the Promise of God which is that Golden Key that opens it. And if we well consult the Scriptures in this matter, we shall find the Almighty power of God made over to his people by promise, for many excellent ends and uses in the day of their trouble. As,

1. To uphold and support them, when their own strength fails, *Isa. 41. 10. Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.* And which of the Saints have not sensibly felt these everlasting arms, underneath their spirits, when afflictions have pressed them above their own strength? So runs the promise to Paul in *2 Cor. 12. 9. My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness; i. e. It is made known in thy weakness. Our weakness adds nothing to God's power, it doth not make his power perfect, but it hath the better advantage of its discovery, and puts forth it self more signally and conspicuously in our weakness; as the stars which never shine so gloriously, as in the darkest night.*

2. To preserve them in all their dangers, to which they lie exposed in Soul and Body. *1 Pet. 1. 5. You are kept (saith the Apostle) by the mighty power of God. Kept as in a Garison; this is their arm every morning, as it is *Isa. 33. 2. O Lord beggarings unto us, we have waited for thee, be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.* The Arm is that member which is fitted for the defence of the body, and for that end so placed by the God of Nature, that it may guard every part above and below it; but as good they were bound behind our backs, for any help they can give as in some cases: It is God's Arm that defends us, and not our own. This invincible power of God makes the Saints the world's wonder. *Psal. 71. 7. I am as a wonder to many, but thou art my strong refuge.* To see poor defenceless Creatures preserved, in the midst of furious enemies, that is just matter of wonder; but God being their invincible refuge, that solves the wonder; to this end the Power of God is by promise engaged to his people, *Isa. 27. 3. I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* And thus they subsist in the midst of dangers and troubles; as the burning Bush (the Emblem of the Church) did amidst the devouring flames, *Exod. 3. 3.**

3. To deliver them out of their distresses, so runs the Promise, *Psal. 91. 14, 15. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he hath known my name; he shall call upon me and I will answer him, I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and honour him.* And *Jer. 30. 7. Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it: It is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but ye shall be saved out of it. And surely there can be no distress so great, no case of Believers so forlorn; but,*

1. It's easie with God to save them out of it. Are they to the eye of Sense lost, as hopeless as men in the grave? Yet see *Ezek. 37. 12. O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.* And he doth whatever he doth easily, with a word, *Psal. 44. 4. Thou art my king, O God, command deliverances for Jacob. And it requireth no more violent motion to do it, than he that swimeth in the water uses, *Isa. 25. 11. A gentle easie motion of the hand doth it.**

2. And as the power of God can deliver them easily, so speedily. Their deliverance is often wrought by way of surprisal, *Isa. 17. 14. Behold, at evening tide trouble, and in the morning it is not.* So the Church prays, in *Pf. 126. 4. turn again our captivity, as the streams in the South.* The Southern Countreys are dry, the streams there come not in a gentle and slow current, but being occasioned by violent suddea spouts of Rain, they presently overflow the Countrey, and as soon retire: So speedily can the power of God free his people from their dangers and fears.

3. Yea, such is the excellency of his delivering power, that he can save alone without any contribution of Creature aids. So *Isa. 59. 16. He wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his hand brought salvation unto him, and his righteousness sustained him.* We read indeed *Judg. 5. 23. Of helping the Lord, but that is not to express his need, but their duty; we have continual need of God, but he hath no need of us; he uses instruments, but not out of necessity, his arm alone can save us, be the danger never so great, or the visible means of deliverance never so remote.*

4. Once more, let us view this Chamber of Divine power, as it is continually opened by the hand of providence, to receive and secure the people of God

God in all their dangers. 'Tis said, *2 Chron. 16. 9. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in behalf of them, whose heart is perfect towards him.* Where you have an excellent account of the immediacy, universality, and efficacy of Divine Providence, as it uses and applies this Divine power for the guard and defence of that people, who are its charge; he doth not only set Angels to watch for them, but his own eyes keep *Sentinel*, even those seven eyes of Providence mentioned *Zech. 3. 9. which never sleep nor slumber*; for they are said to run continually to and fro, and that not in this or that particular place only, for the service of some more eminent and excellent persons; but through the whole earth. 'Tis an encompassing and surrounding providence which hath its eye upon all, whose hearts are upright; all the Saints are within the line of its care and protection; the eye of Providence discovereth all their dangers, and its arm defends them, for he shews himself strong in their behalf.

The secret, but Almighty efficacy of Providence is also excellently described to us in *Ezek. 1. 8.* where the Angels are said to have their hands under their wings, working secretly and undiscernibly, but very effectually for the Saints committed to their charge. Like unto which is that in *Hab. 3. 4.* Where it is said of God, that *He had horns coming out of his hands, and there was the hiding of his power.* The hand is the instrument of action, denoting God's active power, and the horns coming out of them are the glorious raies and beams of that power shining forth in the salvation of his people: O that we could sun our selves in those cheerful and reviving beams of Divine power, by considering how gloriously they have broken forth, and shone out for the salvation of his people in all Ages. So it did for *Israel* at the Red Sea, *Exod. 15. 6.* So for *Jehaphath* in that great streight, *2 Chron. 20. 12, 15.* And so in the time of *Hezekiah*, *2 Kings 19. 3. 7.* *Yea* in all ages from the beginning of the World the Saints have been sheltered under these wings of Divine Power, *Isr. 51. 9. 10.* Thus Providence hath hanged and adorned this Chamber of Divine power with the delightful Histories of the Churches manifold preservations by it.

SECT. IV. Having taken a short view of this glorious Chamber of God's power absolutely in it self, and also in relation to his promises and providences, it remains now, that I press and persuade all the people of God under their fears and dangers according to God's gracious invitation to enter into it, shut their doors, and to behold with delight this glorious Attribute working for them in all their exigencies and distresses.

1. Enter into this Chamber of Divine power, all ye that fear the Lord, and hide your selves there in these dangerous and distressful days; let me lay to you as the Prophet did to the poor distressed *Jews*, *Zech. 9. 12. Turn ye to your strong hold, ye prisoners of hope. Strong holds might they say; Why, where are they? The walls of Jerusalem are in the dust, the Temple burnt with fire, Zion an heap, what meanest thou then in telling us of our strong holds? Why admit all this, yet there is *Satis profus in uno Deo*, Refuge enough for you in God alone, as *Calvin* excellently notes upon that place. Christian, art not thou able to fetch a good subsistence for thy Son by Faith, out of the Almighty power of God? The renowned Saints of old did so. *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* met with as many difficulties and plunges of trouble in their time, as ever you did or shall meet with; yet by the exercise of their faith upon this*

Attribute, they lived comfortably, and why cannot you? *Exod. 6. 3. I appeared (saith God) unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by the name of God Almighty.* They keep house and feasted by Faith upon this name of mine; O that we could do as *Abraham* did, *Rom. 4. 21.* We have the same Attribute, but alas, we have not such a Faith as his was to improve it. It is easie to believe the Almighty power of God in a calm, but not so easie to resign our selves to it, and securely rest upon it in a Storm of adversity; But oh what peace and rest would our Faith procure us by the free use and exercise of it this way, to assist your faith in this difficulty wherein we find the faith of a *Moses* sometimes staggered. Let me briefly offer you these four following encouragements.

1. Consider how your gracious God hath engaged this his Almighty power by Promise and Covenant for the security of his people, God pawned it as it were to *Abraham* in that famous promise, *Gen. 17. 1. I am the Almighty God, walk thou before me, and be perfect.* And *Gen. 15. 1. Fear not Abraham, I am thy shield.* Say not, this was *Abraham's* peculiar privilege, for if you consult *Hos. 12. 4.* and *Heb. 13. 5, 6.* you will find that Believers in these days, have as good a title to the promises made in those days, as those worthies had to whom they were immediately made.

2. If you be Believers, your relation to God strongly engageth his power for you, as well as his own promises, Surely (saith God) they are my people, children that will not lie; so he became their Saviour, *Isa. 63. 8.* We say Relations have the least of Efficacy, but the greatest of efficacy; you find it so in your own experience, let a wife, child, or friend be in imminent danger, and it shall engage all the power you have to succour and deliver them.

3. This glorious power of God is engaged for you by the very malice and wickedness of your enemies, who will be apt to impute the ruine of the Saints to the defects of power in their God; from whence those excellent arguments are drawn, *Numb. 14. 15. 16. Now if you shall kill all his people as one man then the nations which have heard the fame of thee, will speak, saying, because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land, which he swore unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness.* And again, *Deut. 32. 26, 27.* you shall find the Lord improving this argument for them himself; if they do not plead it for themselves, he will. *I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men, were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely and lest they should say, our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this.* O see how much you are beholding to the very rage of your enemies for your deliverances from them!

4. To conclude, the very reliance of your Soul's by faith upon the power of God, your very leaning upon his arm engages it for your protection *Isa. 26. 3. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee.* Puzzle not your selves therefore any longer about qualifications; but know that the very acting of your faith on God, the recumbency of your Souls upon him, is that which will engage him for your defence, how weak and defective soever thou art in other respects.

2. Having thus entered by Faith in this Chamber of Divine power, the next counsel the Text gives you is, to shut the door behind you, i. e. after the acting of your faith, and the quiet repose of your Souls upon God's Almighty power, then take heed lest unbelieving fears and jealousies creep in again and

and disturb the rest of your Souls in God, you find a sad instance of this in *Moses*, *Numb* 11. 21, 23. After so many glorious acts and triumphs of his Faith, how were his heels tripped up by diffidence which crept in afterwards! Good men may be pofed with difficult Providences, and made to stagger. The *Israelites* had lived upon Miracles many years, yet *Pfal* 78. 20. *Can he give bread also?* Good *Martha* objects difficulty to Christ, *Joh* 11. 39. *By this time he stinketh.* Oh! tis a glorious thing to give God the glory of his Almighty Power in difficult cases that we cannot comprehend. See *Zech* 8. 6. *Is it be marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it be also marvelous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts.* Difficulties are for Men, but not for God: because it is marvelous in your eyes, must it be so in God's? Various Objections will be apt to arise in your hearts to drive you out of this your refuge. As,

1. *Object.* Oh! but the long continuance of our troubles and distresses will sink our very hearts, *Isa* 40. 27. *Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?*

Sol. But, oh! wait upon God without fainting, *Heb* 2. 3. *The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end of it shall speak and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.*

2. *Object.* Oh but our former hopes and expectations of deliverance are frustrated, *Jer* 8. 15. *We looked for peace, but no good came: and for a time of health, and behold trouble.*

Sol. Oh, but yet be not discouraged; see how the *Psalmist* begins the 69th *Psal*m with trembling, and ends it with triumph; the husbandman waiteth, and so must you.

3. *Object.* But there is no sign or appearance of our deliverance.

Sol. What then? this is no new thing, *Psal* 74. 9. *We see not our signs, there is no more any Prophet, neither is there any among us that knoweth how long.*

4. *Object.* But all things work contrary to our hope.

Sol. Why, so did things with *Abraham*; yet see, *Rom* 4. 18. *against hope, he believed in hope.*

3. Observe further with delight the outgoings and glorious workings of Divine Power for you, and for the Church in times of trouble; this is sweet entertainment for your Souls, 'tis food for faith, *Psal* 74. 14. *Thou breakest the heads of Leviathan in pieces, and givest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.* And here I beseech you behold and admire,

1. Its mysterious and admirable protection of the Saints in all their dangers. They feed as Sheep in the midst of Wolves, *Luke* 10. 3. They lie among them that are set on fire, *Psal* 57. 4. *Their habitation is in the midst of deceit.* *Jer* 9. 6. Yet they are kept in safety by the mighty Power of God.

2. Behold and admire it in casting the bonds of restraint upon your enemies, that tho' they would, yet they cannot hurt you; our dangers are visible, and our fears great, but our security and safety admirable, *Isa* 51. 13. *Thou hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy; and where is the fury of the oppressor?*

3. Behold its opening unexpected and unlikely refuges and securities for the Saints in their distresses; *Isa* 16. 4. *Let mine out-casts dwell with thee, Moab, be thou a covert to them from the face of the Spoiler; for the Extortioner is at an end, the Spoiler ceaseth, the Oppressors are consumed out of the Land.* *Rev* 12. 16. *The earth helped the Woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the Dragon cast out of his mouth.*

4. Behold it frustrating all the designs of our enemies against us, *Isa* 54. 17. *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. Behold, I have created the Smith, Isa* 54. 16. *g. d.* He that created the Smith, can order as he pleaseth the Weapon made by him; hence our enemies are not masters of their own designs.

Oh then depend upon this Power of God, for it is your security; there is a twofold dependence, the one natural and necessary, the other elective.

1. Natural dependence, so all do and must depend upon him.

2. Elective and voluntary, and so we all ought to depend upon him; and for your encouragement take this Scripture, *Psal* 9. 9, 10. *The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble, and they that know thy name will put their trust in thee, for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.* And thus of the first Attribute of God, prepared for the safety of his people in times of trouble.

C H A P. VII.

Opening that glorious Attribute of Divine Wisdom as a second Chamber of security to the Saints in difficult times

SECT. I. **T**He next Chamber of Divine Protection into which I shall lead you, is the Infinite Wisdom of God; I call it the next, because I so find it placed in Scripture, *Job* 36. 5. *He is mighty in power and wisdom.* *Dan* 2. 20. *Wisdom and might are his.*

This Attribute may be fitly called the Council Chamber of Heaven, where all things are contrived in deepest wisdom, which are afterwards wrought in the world by power, *Eph* 1. 11. *He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.* Counsel in the Creature implies weakness and defect; we are not able at one thought to fathom the depth of a business, and therefore must deliberate and spend many thoughts about it, and when we have spent all our own thoughts we are oft times at a loss, and must borrow help, and ask counsel of others; but in God it notes the perfection of his understanding. for as those acts of the creature which are the results of deliberation and counsel, are the height and top of all rational contrivement; so in its accommodation to God, it notes the excellent results of his infinite and most perfect understanding.

Now this wisdom of God is to be considered either.

Absolutely, or, Relatively.

1. Absolutely in it self, and so it is, *That, whereby he most perfectly and exactly knows himself, and all things without himself, ordering and disposing them in the most convenient manner to the glory of his own name.*

Wisdom comprehends two things, 1. Knowledge of the natures of things, which in the creature is called Science: 2. Knowledge how to govern, order and dispose them, which in the Creature is called Prudence; these things in Man are but faint shadows of that which is in God in the most absolute perfection; he fully knows himself, for his Understanding is infinite, *Psal* 147. 5. and the thoughts he thinks towards us, *Jer* 29. 11. And as he perfectly understands himself, so likewise all things that are without himself, *Acts* 15. 18. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* Together with all the secret designs, thoughts, and purposes which lie hid from all others in the inmost recesses of mens hearts, *Psal* 139. 2.

And

And as he perfectly knows all things, so he fully understands how to govern and direct them to the best end, even the exalting of his own praise, *Psal.* 104. 24. *Rom.* 11. 36. *for of him, and through him, and to him are all things: of him, as the efficient cause; thro' him, as the conserving cause; and to him, as the final cause.* And in this wise disposition of all things, he hath a gracious respect to the good of his chosen, *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things shall work together for good to them that love God.* More particularly, the Wisdom of God is to be considered by us in its excellent Properties, amongst which these four following are eminently conspicuous, as it is the

1. Original, 3. Perfect, and
2. Essential, 4. Only Wisdom.

1. The Wisdom of God is the Original Wisdom, from which all the Wisdom found in Angels or Men is derived, and unto that fountain we are directed to go, *for Supplies of Wisdom, Ja.* 1. 5. *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.* There is indeed a Spirit in Man, but it is the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth understanding, *Job.* 32. 8. The natural faculty is ours, but the illumination thereof is God's; the understanding of the Creature is as the Dial, which signifies nothing till the Sun shine upon it.

2. God's Wisdom is essential Wisdom. Wisdom in the Creature is but a quality separable from the subject; but in God it is his Nature, his very Essence, he can as soon cease to be God, as to be most wise.

3. The Wisdom of God is perfect Wisdom, full of it self, and exclusive of its contrary; the wisest of men are not wise at all times, the greatest Wits are not without some mixture of madness; it is an high attainment in human Wisdom to understand our own weakness and folly; the deepest heads are but shallow, but the Wisdom of God is an unsearchable depth, *Rom.* 11. 33. *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways pass finding out?*

4. To conclude, The Wisdom of God is the only Wisdom; there is no Wisdom without him, none against him, he is the only wise God, *Jude* v. 25.

2. The Wisdom of God must be considered Relatively, and that in a double respect:

1. To his Promises. 2. To his Providences.

Sett. II. Let us view it in its relation to the Promises, where you shall find it made over by God to his people for divers excellent uses and purposes in times of distress and danger. As,

1. It is made over to them in Promises for their direction and guidance when they know not what to do, or which way to take. So *Psal.* 25. 9. *The meek will be guide in judgment, and the meek will be teach his way;* and *Isa.* 58. 11. *The Lord shall guide thee continually;* and *Psal.* 32. 8. *I will guide thee with mine eye.* And with this the Psalmist encourages himself, *Psal.* 73. 24. *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.* Oh what an invaluable Mercy is this! we should make shipwreck both of our temporal and eternal Mercies quickly, were it not for the guidance of Divine Wisdom.

2. To extricate them when involved in difficulties. So *2 Pet.* 2. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.* They know not how, but their God doth; they are often at a loss, but He is never. So *1 Cor.* 10. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

3. To over-rule and order all their troubles to their good, and real advantage. So runs that most

comprehensive promise, *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things shall work together for good to them that love God.* In the Faith whereof Paul concludes, *Phil.* 1. 19. *Even this shall work for his Salvation.* Thus the people of God were sent into captivity for their good, *Jer.* 24. 8-5 and Joseph into Egypt, *Gen.* 50. 20. *Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive.*

2. Let us view the Wisdom of God in its relation to his Providences, for there it shines forth eminently, *Ezek.* 1. 18. The wheels were full of eyes, i. e. the motions and providential revolutions in this lower World are very judicious and advised motions; *Non caeco impetu volumur rote;* It hath a fetch and design which no man understands till it open it self in the event.

The enemies of the Church are oft-times men of the finest brains, and deepest policies: Herod a Fox for subtilty, *Luke* 13. 32. Julian and A isopbel, with many others, who have digged as deep as Hell in their Counsels, and laid their designs so sure, that they doubted not to be masters of it; yet their hands could not perform their enterprise.

The Wisdom of Providence hath still befooled them, and baffled the cunningest headpieces that ever undertook any design against the Church, as fast as ever they arose; and here the Wisdom of Providence is remarkable in three things especially.

1. In revealing and discovering the secret conspiracies and counsels of the Churches enemies, and thereby frustrating their designs, *Gen.* 27. 41, 42. Providence (as one calls it) is the Bird of the Air that carries tidings, and whistles deeds of darkness; *Job* 12. 22. *He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.* And this God hath done both immediately and mediately. 1. Immediately, *2 Kings* 6. 11. What counsel soever the King of Syria took in his Bedchamber was still discovered by the Lord to the Prophet. So true is that *Job* 34. 22. *There is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.* Thus the design of Herod is revealed to Joseph in a dream.

But commonly he doth it by means; as,

1. By giving knowledge of it to some that are under obligations of duty or affection, to reveal it to these that are concerned in the danger. So Paul's Sister's Son, *Acts* 23. 16. revealed the conspiracy against his life, and so the Plot miscarried by revealing it before it was ripe for execution.

2. By the failure of some circumstance, the whole is brought to light; there be many fine threads upon which the designs of Politicians hang; if one break, the whole design is unravell'd. Thus the Wisdom of God sometimes prevents his peoples ruin, by taking away the speech of the trusty from him, and making their own tongues to fall upon themselves.

3. By their own confession; so *Psal.* 64. 5, 6, 7, 8. where you have the Plot laid, ver. 5. *They encourage themselves in an evil matter, they commune of laying snares privily, they say, who shall see them?* The deep Contrivance of it, ver. 6. *They search out iniquity, they accomplish a diligent search, both the inward thoughts of every one of them, and the heart is deep.* Their Plot destroy'd, v. 7. *But God shall shoot at them with an arrow, suddenly shall they be wounded.* The method or way of Providence in destroying it, v. 8. *So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves, all that see them shall flee away.* Thus hath the Wisdom of our God wrought for us this day beyond all the thoughts of our hearts; and oh that it might make such Impressions upon all our Hearts, as follow
in

in the 9, and 10. *verses*, *All men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God, for they shall wisely consider his doing. The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him, and all the upright in heart shall glory.*

2. The Wisdom of God discovers it self in behalf of that people who are his own, in diverting the danger from them, and putting by the deadly thrusts their enemies make at them; thus it spoils their game by an unforeseen rub in the green, and that especially three ways.

1. By making their counsels to jar among themselves, in which jars is the sweetest harmony of providence; thus the counsel of *Ambephele* jars with the counsel of *Hushai*, 2 Sam. 17. 5. 7. by which means *David* escaped: the *Pharisees* clashed with the *Sadducees*, *Matt* 23. 7. and by that means *Paul* escaped.

2. By cutting out other work, and starting some new design which like a fresh scent puts the dogs to a loss. Thus the people of God in *Jerusalem* were delivered by a diversion, 2 Kings 19. 7. *Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour and shall return to his own land, and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land, so Rabshakeh returned.* By this means also was *David* delivered from the hand of *Saul*, 1 Sam. 23. 27. And in this method of Providence, that Scripture is often fulfilled, *Prov.* 21. 18. *The wicked shall be a ransom for the Righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.*

3. By cutting off the capital enemies of his Church, by whose seasonable destruction they are delivered. Thus fell *Julian*, that bitter enemy of the Christians, when he was preparing to put his last and most bloudy design against them in execution. And thus fell *Haman*, *Nero*, and many more in the very height and heat of their designs against the Church.

3. The Wisdom of God gloriously displays it self in causing the designs of the wicked, like a surcharged gun to recoil upon and destroy themselves: It often falls out with the undermining enemies of the Church, as it sometimes doth with them that dig deep *Mines* in the Earth, who are destroyed and buried in their own work; *Psal.* 9. 15, 16. *The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made, in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth, the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion, Selah.* There is a double mercy in this providence, one in delivering the Saints from the danger, the other in causing it to fall upon the contrivers, and is therefore celebrated with a double note of attention: in these observable strokes, the righteousness of God shines forth, in repaying his peoples enemies in their own coin.

—*nec lex est justior illa,*

Quam necis Artifices arte perire sua.

Thus *Haman* did eat the first-fruits of that tree which his own hands planted, and thus *Jerusalem* becomes a burthen some stone to all that burthen themselves with it, *Zech.* 12. 3.

4. Admire and adore the Wisdom of your God in those great and unexpected advantages, which arise to you out of those very dangers and designs of your enemies that threatened your ruine; the very hands of your very enemies are sometimes made the instruments of your advancement and enlargement; your persecutions become your privileges, the Motto of the *Palm tree* fitly becomes yours, *Suppressa Refurgo.* In three things the Wisdom of God makes advantage out of your troubles.

1. In fortifying your Souls and Bodies with suitable strength, when any eminent trial is intended for you: So it was with the *Apollites*, 2 Cor. 1. 5. *As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation by*

Christ. God lays in suitably to what men lay on themselves: *Christ* would not draw the poor tender disciples out of *Jerusalem* unto hard encounters, until first he had endued them with power from on high, *Luke* 24. 49.

2. The Wisdom of your God can and often doth make your very troubles and sufferings instead of so many ordinances to strengthen your Faith and fortify your Patience. So the heads of *Leviathan* became meat to his people inhabiting the Wilderness, *Psal.* 74. 14. And so the Plots of *Balak* and *Balaam* were designed by God to be as a standing instructing ordinance for the encouragement of his peoples Faith in future difficulties, *Micah* 6. 5. *O my people remember now what Balak King of Moab conjured, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord. q. d.* You cannot but remember how those your enemies courted me with multitudes of Offerings to deliver you up into their hands, and how faithfully I stood by you in all those dangers; that Plot discovered at once the policy of your enemies, and the righteousness of your God.

3. His Wisdom is discovered to your advantage in permitting your dangers to grow to an extremity, on purpose to magnify his goodness, and increase your comfort in your deliverance from it. *Psal.* 126. 1. *When the Lord turned our captivity we were as them that dreamed.* Proportionable to the greatness of your dangers will your joys be.

SECT. III. Well then, if the Wisdom of God shines forth so gloriously in the times of his peoples trouble; be persuaded by Faith to enter into this Chamber also; it is a Chamber where a believing Soul may enjoy the sweetest rest, and quietness in the most hurrying and distracting times; shut the door behind you, and improve this Attribute to your best advantage.

1. Enter into this Chamber by Faith, believe firmly that the management of all the affairs of this world, whether publick or personal, is in the hands of your All wise God; more particularly, exercise your faith about the Wisdom of God in these things.

1. Believe that the Wisdom of God can contrive and order the way of your escape and deliverance, when all doors of hope are shut up to sense and reason; we know not what to do, said good *Jehoshaphat*; but our eyes are unto thee. *q. d.* Lord though I am at a loss and see no way of escape, thou art never at a loss. The Lord (*saith Peter*) knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptation: Divine wisdom hath infinite methods and ways of deliverance unknown to man, till they are opened in the event.

2. Believe that the Wisdom of God can turn your greatest troubles and fears into the choicest blessings and mercies to you: I know (*saith Paul*) that this shall turn to my Salvation, *Phil.* 1. 19. meaning his bonds and sufferings for *Christ*. Divine wisdom can give you honey out of the carcase of the Lyon, canse you to part with those afflictions, admiring and blessing God for them, which you met with fear and trembling, as suspecting your destruction was imported in them.

3. In consideration of both these, resign up your selves to the wisdom of God, and lean not to your own understandings; *Commit thy way unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established, Prov.* 16. 3. When *Adamsithou* was oppressed with cares and doubts about the distracting affairs of the Church in his time, *Luther* thus chides him out of his despondency, *Desinet Philippus esse rector mundi*, do not thou presume to be the Governour of the world; but leave the reins

reins of Government in his hand that made it; and best knows how to rule it: Let God alone to chuse thy lot and portion, to order thy condition, and manage all thy affairs, and let thy Soul take its rest in this quiet Chamber of Divine wisdom. But then,

2. Be sure to shut thy door behind thee, and beware lest unbelief, anxieties, fears and doubts creep unto thee to disturb thy rest, and shake thy faith in this point; we are apt in two cases to be stumbled in this matter.

1. When subtle and cunning Enemies are engaged against us; this was David's case, 2 Sam. 15. 31. One told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom; and David said, O Lord, I pray thee turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. When he heard Ahithophel was with the Conspirators, it greatly puzzled him. Though a whole Conclave of Politicians be against us, yet if God be with us let us not fear.

2. When our own Reason intrudes too far, and offers its dictates too boldly in the Case, we are apt to say in the arrogance of our own Reason, we cannot be delivered; but oh that we would learn to resign it up to the Wisdom of God. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly. When the question was asked the Prophet, Ezek. 37. 3. Can these dry bones live? He answers, Lord thou knowest. That's excellent counsel, Prov. 3. 5. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not to thine own understanding.

3. Improve the Wisdom of God for your selves in all difficult and distressful cases.

1. Beg of God to exercise his Wisdom for you when Enemies conspire against you: So did David, 2 Sam. 15. 31. Lord turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness! O 'tis the noblest and surest way to vanquish an Enemy: it was but asked and done.

2. Comfort your selves with this when ever you are at a loss in your own thoughts, and know not what to do, then commit all to divine Conduct; let God steer for you in a Storm; he loves to be trusted, Psal. 37. 5. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.

3. Encourage your selves from this when the Church is in the greatest danger, and most sorely shaken; O that is a blessed promise, Zech. 3. 9. Upon one stone shall be seven eyes. Meaning Christ, and the Church built on him as the chief corner Stone; the seven Eyes are the seven Eyes of Providence, which are never all asleep.

CHAP. VIII.

Opening that glorious Attribute of divine Faithfulness as a third Chamber of Security to the People of God in times of Distress and Danger.

SECT. I. **H**AVING viewed the Saints Refuge in the Power and Wisdom of God, we next proceed to a third Chamber of Safety for the Saints refuge, viz. The faithfulness of God.

In this attribute is our safety and rest amidst the confusions of the World and daily Disappointments we are vexed withal through the vanity and falseness of the Creature: As to Creatures, the very best of them are but vanity, yea, vanity of vanity, the vainest vanity, Eccles. 1. 2. Every Man in his best estate is altogether vanity, Psal. 39. 5. Yea, those that we expect most from, give us most of trouble, Micah 7. 5. Nearest Relations bring up the rear of sorrows, Job 6. 15. My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook. Especially their deceit appears most when we have most need of their help, Psal. 142. 4. How great a mercy is it then to have a refuge in the faith-

fulness of God, as David had, I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me, no man cared for my soul. And likewise the Church, Micah. 7. 7. I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will hear me. A time may come when you shall not know where to trust in all this World: Let me therefore open to you this Chamber of rest in the faithfulness of God, against such a day, and this I shall do in a two fold consideration of it, viz.

1. Absolutely in its own Nature.
2. Relatively in the Promises and Providences of God.

1. Absolutely, and so the faithfulness of God is his sincerity, firmness, and constancy in performing his word to his People in all times and cases. So Moses describes him to Israel, Deut. 7. 9. Know therefore that the Lord thy God he is God, the faithful God. And Joshua appeals to their experience for the vindication of it, Josh. 23. 14. Ye know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass, and not one thing hath failed thereof. And it is also fully asserted, Jer. 31. 35, 36, 37. and greatly admired even in the darkest day, Lam. 3. 23. Great is thy faithfulness. And it is well for us that his faithfulness is great, for great is that weight that leans upon it, even all our hopes for both worlds, for this world, and for that to come, Tit. 1. 2. In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began.

It was a very dishonourable character that Suidas gave of Tiberius, Eorum qua appetebat ne quicquam prae se ferebat, & eorum qua dicebat, ne quicquam facere volebat, i. e. He never made shew of having what he desired to have, nor ever minded to do what he promised to do: But God is faithful, and that will appear by these following Evidences of it.

1. Evid. By his exact fulfilling of his Promises of the longest date. So Acts 7. 6. four hundred and thirty Years were run out before the Promise of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt was accomplished, yet Acts 7. 17. when the time of the Promise was come, God was punctual to a day: Seventy Years in Babylon, and at the expiration of that time they returned, 2 Chron. 36. 21. Men may forget, but God cannot, Isa. 49. 15. 16.

2. Evid. By making way for his Promises through the greatest difficulties, and seeming impossibilities. So to Abraham when old, Gen. 18. 13, 14. Is there any thing too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time will I return unto thee, according to the time of life; and Sarah shall have a son. And likewise to the Israelites, Can these dry bones live? Ezek. 37. 3. Difficulties are for Men, not God, Gen. 18. 14. What art thou O great Mountain, Zech. 8. 6. If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts.

3. Evid. By fulfilling promises to his People, when their hopes and expectations have been given up. So Ezek. 37. 11. Our bones are dry, our Hopes lost, we are cut off for our part. And Isa. 49. 14. Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. There may be much unbelief in good Men, their faith may be sorely staggered, yet God is faithful, Men may question his promises, yet God cannot deny himself, 2 Tim. 2. 13.

4. Evid. By God's appealing to his People, and referring the matter to their own judgment, Micah 6. 3, 4, 5. O my People, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? Testify against me, for I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed

ed thee out of the house of servants, and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my People, remember now what Balak King of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal, that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord. q. d. If I have sinned in a Punctilio of my promise, shew it; did not Balak and Balaam court me, and try all ways to win me over to them by multitudes of Sacrifices, yet I did not desert you. So Jer. 2. 31. O generation, see ye the word of the Lord, have I been a wilderness unto Israel, a land of darkness? wherefore say my People, we are Lords, we will come no more unto thee? Isa. 44. 8.

5. Evid. The faithfulness of God is abundantly cleared by the constant Testimonies given unto it in all Ages by them that have tried it, they have all witnessed for God, and attested his unsupported faithfulness to the generations that were to come. So did Joshua 23. 14. All is come to pass; and so did Daniel, Chap. 9. 4. O Lord the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him: With which David's Testimony concurs, Psal. 146. 6. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made the heaven and earth, the sea and all that therein is, which keepeth truth for ever. Thus his People have been witnesses in all generations, unto the faithfulness of God in his promises; the consideration whereof leaves no doubt or objection behind it.

SECT. II. And if we enquire into the grounds and reasons why God is, and ever must be most faithful in performing his Promises, we shall find it is built upon Stable and unshaken Pillars: viz.

1. The Holiness of his Nature.
2. The All-sufficiency of his Power.
3. The Honour of his Name.
4. The Unchangeableness of his Nature.

1. The Faithfulness of God is built upon the perfect Holiness of his Nature, by reason whereof it is impossible for God to lie, Tit. 1. 2. Heb. 6. 18. The deceitfulness of man flows from the corruption of the Humane Nature, but God is not as man that he should lie, neither as the son of man that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Numb. 23. 19. If there be no defect in his Being, there can be none in his working; if his Nature be pure Holiness, all his ways must be perfect Faithfulness.

2. It is built upon the All-sufficiency of his Power, whatsoever he hath promised to his People, he is able to perform it; Men sometimes falsify their promises through the defects of ability to perform them; but God never out-promised himself; if he will work none can let, Isa. 43. 13. He can do whatsoever he pleaseth to do, Isal. 135. 6. The Holiness of his Nature engageth, and the Almighty of his Power enables him to be faithful.

3. The glory and honour of his Name may assure us of his faithfulness in making good the Promises, and all that good which is in the promises to a title; for wherever you find a promise of God, you also find the Name and Honour of God given as a security for the performance of it; and so his Name hath ever been pleaded with him by his People, as a mighty Argument to work for them, Joshua 7. 9. What wilt thou do to thy great name? q. d. Lord thine Honour is a thousand times more than our lives, it is no such great matter what becomes of us; but ah, Lord, it is of infinite concernment that the glory of thy Name be secured, and thy faithfulness kept pure and unsupported in the World. So again, Exod. 32. 11, 12. And Moses besought the Lord his God, and

said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak and say, for mischief did he bring them out to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people, q. d. It will be sad enough for the hands of the Egyptians to fall upon thy people, but infinitely worse for the Tongues of the Egyptians to fall upon thy Name.

4. The unchangeableness of his Nature gives us the fullest assurance of his faithfulness in the Promises, Mal. 3. 6. I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. God's unchangeableness is his Peoples indemnity, and best security in the midst of dangers; whilst there is not yea and nay with God, there should be no ups and downs, offs and ons in our faith; that which gives steadiness to the Promises, should give steadiness also to our expectations for the performance of them; and so much briefly of the faithfulness of God absolutely considered in the nature and grounds of it.

2. Next let us view the Faithfulness of God, as it relates to the many great and precious Promises made unto his people for their security both in their

1. Temporal } Concernments.
2. Spiritual }

1. We find the Faithfulness of God pawned and pledged for the security of his people in their Spiritual and eternal concerns, against all their dangers and fears, threatening them on that account, and that more especially in these three respects.

1. It is given them as their great and best security for the Pardon of their sins. 1 John 1. 9. If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Our greatest danger comes from sin; Guilt is a fountain of Fears, a pardoned Soul only can look other troubles in the face boldly: As Guilt breeds fear, so Pardon breeds Courage, and Gods Faithfulness in the Covenant is as it were that Pardon-office from whence we fetch our discharges and acquittances, Isa. 43. 23. I, even I am he, that blot out thy iniquities for mine own sake. The promises of remission are made for Christ's sake, and when made, they must be fulfilled for his own, that is his faithfulness sake.

2. It is engaged for the perseverance of the Saints, and their continuance in the ways of God in the most hazardous and difficult times; this was the encouragement given them, 1 Cor. 1. 8, 9. Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ; God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Ah Lord! might those Corinthians say, the powers of the World are against us, suffering and Death before us, a treacherous and fearful Heart within us. Ay, but yet fear not, Christ shall confirm you, whosoever opposes you; though the World and your own Hearts be deceitful, yet comfort your selves with this, your God is faithful.

3. The faithfulness of God is given by promise for his Peoples security in, and encouragement against all their sufferings and afflictions in this World, 2 Thes. 3. 2, 3. That we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, for all men have not faith; but the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil. He prays they may be delivered from absurd, treacherous and unfaithful men, who would trapan and betray them to ruin; but this is proposed as their Relief that when the

treach-

treachery of men shall bring them into trouble, the Faithfulness of God shall support them under, and deliver them out of those troubles; they shall have Spiritual supports from God, under their deepest sufferings from men, 1 Pet. 4. 19.

2. God's Faithfulness is engaged for his peoples indemnity and security amidst the Temporal and outward evils whereunto they are liable in this world; and that either to preserve them from troubles, *Psal.* 91. 1, 2, 3, 4. or to open a seasonable door of deliverance out of trouble, 1 Cor. 10. 13. In both or either of which the hearts of Christians may be at rest in this troublesome world; for what need those troubles fright us, which either shall never touch us, or if they do, shall never hurt, much less ruine us.

SECT. III. Having taken a short view of God's Faithfulness in the Promises, it will be a lovely sight to take one view of it more as it is actuated, and exerted in his Providences over his people; believe it Christians, the Faithfulness of God runs through all his works of providence, whenever he goes forth to work in the World, *Faithfulness is the girdle of his loins, Isa.* 11. 5. It is an allusion to workmen who going forth in the morning to their labour, gird their loins or reins with a girdle, now there is no work wrought by God in this world, but his faithfulness is as the Girdle of his Loins. The consideration whereof should make the most despondent believer, *gird up the Loins of his mind*, that is, encourage and strengthen his drooping and discouraged heart. Those works of God which are wrought in Faithfulness and in pursuit of his eternal purposes and gracious promises, should rather delight, than affright us, in beholding of them. It pluckt out the Sting of David's affliction when he considered it was in very faithfulness, that God had afflicted him, *Psal.* 119. 89, 90. But more particularly, let us behold with delight the faithfulness of God, making good six sorts of Promises to his People, in the days of their affliction and trouble, viz.

1. The Promises of Preservation.
2. The Promises of Support.
3. The Promises of Direction.
4. The Promises of Provision.
5. The Promises of Deliverance.
6. The Promises of Ordering and Directing the Event to their Advantage.

1. There are promises in the word for your preservation from ruine, and what you read in those promises you daily see the same fulfilled in your own experiences. You have a promise in *Psal.* 57. 3. *He shall send from Heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up.* Selah. *God shall send forth his mercy and his truth.* Say now, have you not found it so, when Hell hath sent forth its Temptations to defile you? The Word its persecutions to destroy your own heart, its unbelieving fears to distract and link you, hath not your God sent forth also his mercy and his truth to save you? Hath not his truth been your shield and buckler? *Psal.* 91. 4. May you not say with the Church it is of his mercy you are not consumed, his mercies are new every morning, and great is his faithfulness, *Lam.* 3. 23.

2. As you have seen it actually fulfilling the promises for your preservation, so you may see it making good all the promises in his word for your support in troubles. That is a sweet promise, *Psal.* 91. 15. *I will be with him in trouble: I will deliver him, you have also a very supporting promise in Isa.* 41. 10. *Fear not thou, for I am with thee: be not dismayed for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea,*

I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with thy right hand of my righteousness. O, how evidently hath the faithfulness of God shone forth in the performance of his word to you in this respect! you are his witnesses, you would have sunk in the deep waters of trouble if it had not been so. So speaks David, *Psal.* 73. 26. *My heart and my flesh faileth, but God is the strength of my heart: and my portion for ever.* Have you not found it so with you as it is in 2 Cor. 12. 10. *Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.* God's strength hath been made perfect in your weakness, by this you have been carried through all your troubles; hitherto hath he helped you.

3. As you have seen it faithfully fulfilling the promises for your preservation, and support; So you have seen it in the direction of your ways. So runs that promise, *Psal.* 32. 8. *I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.* Certain it is *That the way of man is not in himself,* Jer. 10. 23. O how faithfully hath your God guided you, and stood by you in all the difficult cases of your Life! Is not that promise, *Heb.* 13. 5. *faithfully fulfilled to a tittle, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee?* Surely you can set your seal to that in *Job.* 17. 17. *The word is truth: had you been left to your own counsels you had certainly perished; as it is said of them, in Psal.* 81. 12. *I gave them up unto their own hearts lusts: and they walked in their own counsels.*

4. As there are promises in the word for your preservation, support, and direction; So in the fourth place there are promises for your provisions, as in *Psal.* 34. 9. the Lord hath promised that *They that fear him shall not want.* When they are driven to extremity, he will provide, *Isa.* 41. 17. *When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will bear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.* And is not this faithfully performed? *He hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will ever be mindful of his Covenant,* *Psal.* 111. 5. In all the exigencies of your lives, you have found him faithful to this day; you are his witnesses that his Providences never failed you, his care hath been renewed every morning for you; how great is his faithfulness?

5. You also find in the word some reviving promises for your deliverances. You have a very sweet promise in *Psal.* 91. 14. *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: and again, Psal.* 50. 15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee; you have done so, and he hath made a way to escape.* Our lives are so many monuments of mercy, we have lived among Lyons, yet preserved, *Psal.* 57. 4. The burning Bush was an emblem of the Church miraculously preserved.

6. There are promises in the word for the ordering and directing all the occurrences of providence to your great advantages; so it is promised, *Rom.* 8. 28. *That all things shall work together for good, to them that love God.* Fear not Christians, however you find it now, whilst you are toiling to and fro upon the unstable waves of this world; you shall find to be sure when you come to heaven, that all the troubles of your lives were guided as steadily by this promise, as ever any Ship at Sea was directed to its Port, by the Compass or North-Star.

And now what remains, but that I press you as before,

1. To enter into this Chamber of Divine Faithfulness

2. To shut the door behind you.

3. And then to live comfortably on it in evil days.

1. Enter into this Chamber of God's Faithfulness by Faith, and hide your selves there. Every man is a lye, but God is true, eternally and unchangeably faithful. Oh! exercise your Faith upon it, be at rest in it.

Now there are two great and weighty Arguments to persue you to enter into this Chamber of Divine Faithfulness.

1. *Arg.* is fetch'd from the Nature of God, who cannot lye, *Tir.* 1. 2. *He is not as man, that he should lye*, Numb. 23. 19. *Neither the Son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* Remember upon what everlasting steady grounds the faithfulness of God is built. These are immutable things, *Heb.* 6. 18. This *Abraham* built upon, *Rom.* 4. 21. *being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform.* He accounted him faithful that promised. What would you expect or require in the person that you are to trust? You would,

1. Expect a clear promise; and lo! you have a thousand all the Scripture over, fitted to all the cases of your Souls and Bodies. This you may plead with God, as *David*, *Psal.* 119. 49. *Remember the word unto thy Servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.* So *Jacob* pleaded, *Gen.* 32. 12. *Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good.* These are God's Bonds and Obligations.

2. You would expect sufficient power to make good what he promiseth. This is in God as a fair foundation of Faith, *Isa.* 26. 4. *Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength; Because of thy strength we will wait on thee. Creatures cannot, but God can do what he will.*

3. You would expect infinite goodness and mercy inclining him to help and save you. Why, so it is here, *Psal.* 130. 7. *Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.* So *Moses*, *Exod.* 33. 18. *I beseech thee shew me thy glory.* The request was, a view of God's glory: the answer is, *My goodness shall pass before thee;* which hints to us, that tho' all God's Attributes be glorious, yet that he most glories in his *Goodness*. And then,

4. You would expect that none of his Promises were ever blotted or stained by his unfaithfulness at any time; and so it is here, *Josh.* 23. 14. *not one thing hath failed;* all are come to pass, all ages have seal'd this conclusion, *Thy word is truth, thy word is truth.*

2. *Arg.* Besides all this, you have the encouragement of all former experiences, both others and your own, as a second Argument to persue you to enter into this Chamber of Safety, the faithfulness of God.

1. You have the experiences of others. Saints have reckon'd the experiences of others that lived a thousand years before them, as excellent Arguments to quicken their Faith. So *Hos.* 12. 4. he had power over the Angel, and prevailed; he found him in *Be-ethel*, and there he spake, Remember there was a *Joseph* with us in Prison, a *Jeremy* in the Dungeon, a *Daniel* in the Den, a *Peter* in Chains, an *Heczekiah* upon the brink of the grave; and they all found the help of God most faithfully protecting them and saving them in all their troubles. Suitable to this is that in *Psal.* 22. 4, 5. *Our fathers trusted in thee; they trusted, and thou deliverest them; they cried unto thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.*

2. Your own experiences may encourage your Faith: So *David's* did, *1 Sam.* 17. 37. *The Lord ther*

delivered me out of the paw of the Lion, and out of the paw of the Bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. So did *Paul's* experience encourage his Faith, in *2 Cor.* 1. 10. *Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.* Thus enter into the Faithfulness of God by Faith.

2. Let me beg you to be sure to shut the doors behind you, against all unbelieving doubts, jealousies, and suspicions of the Faithfulness of God; the best men may find temptations of that nature; so did good *Asaph*, tho' an eminent Saint, *Psal.* 77. 7-8. *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for ever more?* These jealousies are apt to creep in upon the minds of men, especially when,

1. God delays to answer our Prayers as soon as we expect the return of them; we are all in haste for a speedy answer, forgetting that seasons of Prayer are our feed-times; and when we have sown that precious seed, we must wait for the Harvest, as the Husbandman doth: Even a precious *Heman* may find a faint quail of unbelief and despondency seizing him by the long suspension of God's answers, *Psal.* 88: 9, 10, 11.

2. 'Twill be hard to shut the door upon unbelief, when all things in the eye of our sense and reason seem to work against the Promise. It will require *Abraham's* Faith at such a time to glorify God by believing in hope against hope, *Rom.* 4. 18. *If ever thou hop't to enjoy the sweet repose and rest of a Christian in evil times, thou must resolve, whatever thine eyes do see, or thy senses report, to hold fast this as a most sure conclusion; God is faithful, and his word is sure; and that altho' Clouds and darkness be round about him, yet righteousness and judgement are the habitation of his throne,* *Psal.* 97. 2.

Oh that you would once learn to keep house upon God's Faithfulness, and fetch your daily reliefs and supports thence, whensoever you are pressed and assaulted, either,

1. By spiritual troubles. When you walk in darkness, and have no light, then you are to live by acts of trust and recumbency upon the most faithful one, *Isa.* 50. 10. Or,

2. By temporal distresses; so did the people of God of old, *Hab.* 3. 17, 18. He lived by Faith on this Attribute, when all visible comforts and supplies were out of sight.

But especially let me warn and caution you against five principal enemies to your repose upon the Faithfulness of God, viz.

1. Distracting cares, which divide the mind, and eat out the peace and comfort of the heart, and which is worst of all, they reflect very dishonourably upon God, who hath pledged his Faithfulness and Truth for our security; against which I pray you bar the door by those two Scriptures, *Phil.* 4. 6. *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.* And that in *1 Pet.* 5. 7. *Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.*

2. Bar the door against unchristian despondency, another enemy to the sweet repose of your Souls in this comfortable and quiet Chamber of Divine Faithfulness; you will find this unbecoming and uncomfortable distemper of mind insinuating and creeping in upon you, except you believe and reason it out, as *David* did, *Psal.* 42. 11. *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him.*

3. Bar the door of your heart against carnal poli-

cies

cies and sinful shifts, which war against your own Faith, and God's Faithfulness, as much as any other enemy whatsoever. This was the fault of good *David* in a day of trouble, 1 Sam. 27. 1. And *David* said in his heart, *I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul; there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines.* Alas, poor *David*! nothing better than this? Time was when thou couldst think on a better way, when thou couldst say at what time I am afraid I will trust in thee. How dost thou forget thy self in this strait! doth thy old refuge in God fail thee now? can the *Philistines* secure thee better than the *Promises*? wilt thou fly from thy best friend to thy worst enemies? But what need we wonder at *David*, who find the same distemper almost unavoidable to our selves in like cases?

4. Shut the door against discontents at, and murmurings against the dispositions of Providence, whatever you feel or fear: I persuade you not to a *Soical Apathy*, and senselessness of the evils of the times, that would preclude the exercise of patience: If the Martyrs had all had the dead *Passie* before they came to the fire, their Faith and Patience had not triumphed so gloriously as they did; but on the contrary, beware of grudgings against the ways and will of God, than which nothing militates more against your Faith and the peace and quietness of your hearts.

5. To conclude, shut the door against all suspicions and jealousies of the firmness and stability of the *Promises*, when you find all sensible comforts shaking and trembling under your feet; have a care of such dangerous questions as that, *Psal.* 77. 8. *Doth his promise fail?* These are the things which undermine the foundation both of your faith and comfort.

3. In a word, having shelter'd your Souls in this Chamber of rest, and thus shut the doors behind you, all that you have to do is to take your rest in God, and enjoy the pleasure of a resigned Soul into the bands of a faithful Creator, by opposing the Faithfulness of God to all the fickleness and unfaithfulness you will daily find in men, *Mica* 7. 6, 7. yea, to the weakness and fading of your own natural strength and ability, *Psal.* 73. 26. *My flesh and my heart fail-eth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.* And so much of the Third Chamber prepared for Believers in the Name of their God.

CHAP. IX.

Opening to Believers the unchangeableness of God, as a fourth Chamber of Refuge and Rest in times of trouble.

SECT. I. IT is said, *Prov.* 9. 1. *Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath bewen out her seven pillars, (i. e.)* She hath raised her whole building upon solid and stable foundations; for indeed the strength of every building is according to the ground-work upon which it is erected, *Debite fundamentum fallit opus*; The Wisdom and Love of God have built an house for a Refuge and Sanctuary to Believers in tempestuous and evil times, containing many pleasant and comfortable Chambers prepared for their lodgings, till the calamities be over-past; three of them have been already opened, viz. The Power, Wisdom, and Faithfulness of God.

The last of which leads into a fourth much like unto it, namely the unchangeableness of God; wherein his people may find as much rest and comfort amidst the vicissitudes of this unstable World, as in any of the former. This World is compared, *Rev.* 15. 2. to a Sea of glass mingled with fire. A Sea for its turbulence and instability; a Sea of glass for the brittle-

ness and frailty of every thing in it; and a Sea of glass mingled with fire, to represent the sharp sufferings and fiery trials, with which the Saints are exercised here below. The only support and comfort we have against the fickleness and instability of the Creature, is the Unchangeableness of God. There is a twofold changeableness in the Creature:

1. Natural, the effect of Sin.

2. Sinful in its own Nature.

1. Natural, let in by the Fall upon all the Creation; by reason whereof the sweetest Creature is but a fading flower, *Psal.* 102. 26. Time, like a Moth, frets out the best-wrought garment with which we cloath and deck our selves in this World, *temporalia rapit tempus*. Our most pleasant enjoyments, Wives, Children, Estates, like the Gourd in which *Jonas* so delighted himself, may wither in a night; Sin rings these changes all the World over.

2. Sinful, from the falleness, inconstancy, deceitfulness of the Creature; *Solomon* puts a hard question which may pose the whole World to answer it, *Prov.* 20. 6. *A faithful man who can find?* The meaning is, a man of perfect and universal Faithfulness is a *Phoenix* seldom or never to be found in this world; for when a question in Scripture is moved and let fall again without any answer, then the sense is Negative; but tho' the believer despair of finding an unchangeable man, it is his happiness and comfort to find an unchangeable God.

The unchangeableness of God will appear three ways.

1. By Scripture Emblems.

2. By Scripture Assertions.

3. By convincing Arguments.

1. By Scripture Emblems. Remarkable to this purpose is that place, *Jam.* 1. 17. where God is called the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning; no variableness. The word is, *ἀμεταβάτος*, an Astronomical Term, commonly applied to the heavenly Bodies, which have their Parallaxes, i. e. their Declinations, Revolutions, Vicissitudes, Eclipses, Increases and Decreases: but God is a Sun that never rises nor sets, but is everlastingly and unchangeably one and the same; with him is no variableness nor shadow of turning, *ἡμεῖς ἀμεταβάτος*. The Sun in its Zenith casts no shadow, it is the Tropick, or turning of its course, that causes the shadow; the very substance of turning is with Man; but not the least shadow of turning with God. And in *Deut.* 32. 4. *Moses* tells us, *God is a rock, and his work is perfect.* And indeed perfect working necessarily follows a perfect Being. Now there is nothing found in Nature more solid, fixed, and immutable, than a rock; the firmest buildings will decay, a few ages will make them a ruinous heap; but though one age pass away, and another comes, the rocks abide where and what they were; Our God is the rock of ages; and yet one step higher, in *Zech.* 6. 1. his decrees and purposes are called Mountains of Brass, that is, most firm, durable, and unchangeable purposes. Thus the immutability of God is shadowed forth to us in Scripture Emblems.

2. The same also you will find in plain, positive Scripture-assertions; such are these that follow, *Mal.* 3. 6. *I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.* And *Job* 23. 13. *He is in one mind, and who can turn him?* Men are in one mind to day, and another to morrow; the winds are not more variable than the minds of Men: but God is in one mind, the purposes of his heart never change. *Thou art the same*, or, as some translate, *Thou art thyself for ever*, *Isa.* 102. 27. Thus when *Moses* desired to know his name,

name that he might tell *Pharaoh* from whom he came; the Answer is, *I am that I am*, *Exod. 3. 14.* not I was, or I will be, but *I am that I am*, noting the Absolute unchangeableness of his Nature.

3. The Unchangeableness of God is fully proved by convincing arguments which Divines commonly draw from such *Topics* as these, *viz.*

1. The Perfection of his Goodness.
2. The Purity of his Nature.
3. The Glory of his Name.

1. *Arg.* From the Perfection of his Goodness and Blessedness, God is *Optimus, maximus*, the best and chiefest good, and in that sense, *There is none good but one, which is God*, *Mark 10. 18.* From whence it is thus argued, If there be any change in God, that change must either be for the better, or for the worse, or into a State equal with that he possessed before.

But not for the better, for then he could not be the chief good; nor for the worse, for then he must cease to be God, the perfection of whose Nature is perfectly exclusive of all defects; nor into an equal state of goodness with that he possessed before; that notion would involve *Polytheism*, and suppose two First and equal Beings, besides the vanity of such a change would be absolutely repugnant to the Wisdom of God.

Therefore with the Father of lights can be no variableness nor shadow of turning.

2. *Arg.* The Unchangeableness of God may be evinced from the Purity, sincerity, and uncompoundedness of his Being, in which there neither is, nor can be the least mixture, he being a pure act. From whence it is thus argued;

If there be any change in God, that change must be made either by something without himself; for by something within himself, or by both together.

But it cannot be by any thing without himself; for in him all created dependent Beings live and move, and enjoy the Beings they have; and all the changes that are among them, are from the pleasure of this unchangeable Being, he changeth them, but it is not possible for him, upon whose pleasure they so intirely and absolutely depend, both as to their Beings, and workings, to suffer any change himself from, or by them.

Nor can any such change be made upon God by any thing within himself; for that would suppose action and passion, *motus & motum* mixture and composition in his Nature, which is absolutely rejected and excluded by the simplicity and purity thereof; seeing therefore it can neither be from any power without him, nor any mixture within him, there can be no change at all made on him.

3. *Arg.* That is by no mans to be ascribed to God, which at once eclipses the glory of his name, and overthrows the hopes and comforts of all his people.

But so would the supposition of mutability in God do, this would level him with the vain changeable creature; whereas it is a principal part of his glory, that *He is not as man that he should lie, neither the Son of man that he should repent*, *Numb. 23. 19.* This also would overthrow the hopes and comforts of all his people, which are built upon this Attribute as upon their stable and solid foundation: Among divers other we find three principal privileges of the people of God, built upon his Immutability, *viz.*

1. Their Perseverance in Grace.
2. Their Comfort in the Promises.
3. Their Hopes of Eternal life.

1. Their Perseverance in Grace is built upon the

foundation of God's unchangeableness; one main reason why Christians never repent of their choice of Christ and the ways of Godliness, is because the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, *Rom. 11. 29.* Should God but once repent of the gifts of grace he hath bestowed on us, and alter in his love towards us, how soon would our love to God, and delight in God vanish, as the image in the glass doth when the man that looked upon it hath once turned away his face?

2. All their comfort in the Promises is built upon Gods unchangeableness. The promises are the springs of consolation; should they fail and dry up, the whole world could not afford them one drop of Spiritual comfort to refresh their thirsty Souls; the strength of our consolation immediately results from the stability and firmness of the Scripture promises, *Heb. 6. 18.*

3. Their hopes of eternal life depends upon the unchangeableness of God that hath promised, *Tir. 1.*

2. *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began.* Take away then the Immutability of God, and you at once darken and eclipse his Glory, and overturn the perseverance, consolations, and hopes of all his people; but blessed be God these things are built upon firm foundations.

1. His Nature is unchangeable, *Thou art the same for ever*, *Psa. 102. 27.* The Heavens though they be the purest, and therefore the most durable and unchangeable part of the creation; yet they shall perish and wax old, and be changed as a vesture, but our God is the same for ever.

2. His Power is unchangeable, *Isa. 59. 1.* *The Lords hand is not shortened.* Time will enfeeble the strongest creature, and cut short the Power of the hands of the mighty, they cannot do in their decrepit age as they were wont to do in their youthful and vigorous age; but the Lords hand never is, nor can be shortened.

3. The counsels and purposes of his heart are unchangeable, *Psal. 33. 11.* *The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.*

4. The goodness, truth, and mercy of God are Unchangeable, *Psal. 100. 5.* *The Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting, and his truth endureth to all generations.*

5. The word of God is Unchangeable. Though all flesh be as grass, and the goodlikeness thereof as the flower of the field, yet the word of our God shall stand for ever; all the Promises contained therein are sure, and steadfast: Not yea and nay, but yea and Ameen for ever, *2 Cor. 1. 20.*

6. The love of God is an Unchangeable love, *Jer. 31. 3.* *Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love*

7. In a word, all the gracious Pardons of God are unchangeable, as they are full without exceptions, so they are final Pardons without any revocation. *I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their iniquities and sins will I remember no more*, *Heb. 8. 12.* And thus much briefly of God's unchangeableness absolutely considered in it self.

SECT. II. Let us next consider, and believingly view the Unchangeableness of God in its respect and relation,

1. To his Promises.
2. To his Providences.

1. The Immutability of God gives down its comforts to Believers through the Promises, there is no other way by which they can have a comfortable admission into this Chamber or Attribute of God; and there are six sorts of promises in the word, by which it is highly improveable to their support and comfort in an evil day. For,

1. The

1. The unchangeable God hath engaged himself by promise to be with his people in all times and in all straits, *Heb. 13. 5. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* The life, joy, and comfort of a Believer lies in the bosom of that Promise, the conclusion of Faith from thence is sweet and sure: If I shall never be forsaken of my God, let Hell and Earth do their worst, I can never be miserable.

2. The unchangeable God hath promised to maintain their graces, and thereby his interest in them for ever, *Jer. 32. 40. And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* Where the Lord undertakes for both parts in the Covenant, his own and theirs: *I will not turn away from them; Oh unexpressible mercy! Yea, but Lord, may the poor believer say, that is not so much my fear, as that my treacherous heart will turn away from thee. No, saith God, I will take care for that also; I will put my fear into thy heart, and thou shalt never depart from me.*

3. The unchangeable God hath promised to establish the Covenant with them for ever; so that those who are once taken into that gracious Covenant shall never be turned out of it again, *Isa. 54. 10. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.*

4. The unchangeable God hath secured his loving kindness to his people by promise under all the trials, and smarting rods of affliction, with which he chastens them in this World: he hath reserved to himself the liberty of afflicting them, but bound himself by promise never to remove his favour from them, *Psal. 89. 33, 34. I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes, nevertheless my loving kindness will I not take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.*

5. The promises of a joyful Resurrection from the dead are grounded upon the immutability of God, *Matth. 22. 32. I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living.* Death hath made a great change upon them, but none upon their God; tho' they be not, He is still the same: therefore they are not lost in death, but shall assuredly be found again in the resurrection.

6. To conclude, the promises of the Saints eternal happiness with God in Heaven are founded in his immutability, *1 Cor. 1. 8, 9. Tit. 1. 2.* By all which you see what a pleasant lodging is prepared for the Saints in the unchangeable promises of God, amidst all the changes and alterations here below.

2. Once more, let us view the unchangeableness of God in his Providences towards his people, whatever changes it makes upon us, or whatever changes we seem to discern in it, nothing is more certain than this, that it holds one and the same tenor, pursues one and the same design in all that it doth upon us, or about us. Providences indeed are very variable, but the designs and ends of God in them all are invariable, and the same for ever. It is noted in *Ezek.*

1. 12. *that the wheels went straight forward; whither the spirit was to go, they went, and they turned not when they went.* As it is in Nature, so in Providence, you have one day fair, halcyon, and bright, another dark and full of storm; one season hot, another cold; but all these serve to one and the same end and design to make the Earth fruitful; and the aim of all Providences is to make you holy and happy. That is a sweet Promise, *Rom. 8. 28. All things shall work together*

for good to them that love God. This is the Compass by which all Providences steer their course, as a Ship at Sea doth by the Chard: but more particularly, let us note the unchangeableness of God in his Providences of all kinds, *effective and permissive*, and see in them all his unchangeable righteousness and goodness.

1. It must needs be so, considering the unchangeableness of his Decree, *2 Tim. 2. 19. The foundation of God standeth sure.* Providences serve, but never frustrate, execute, but cannot make void the Decree; so that you may say of the most afflicting Providences, as David doth of the stormy Winds, *Psal. 148. 8. they all fulfil his word.*

2. The Wisdom of God proves it; he will not suffer his works or permissions to clash with his designs and purposes: Divine Wisdom shews it self in the steady direction of all things to the ultimate end. To open this in some particulars, consider,

1. Doth the Lord permit wicked men to rage and insult, persecute and vex his People? Yet all this while Providence is in its right way, it walks in as direct a line to your good, as when it is in a more pleasant path of Peace, *Jer. 24. 5. Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good. Israel was sent to Babylon for their good. This improves your Faith and Patience, Rev. 13. 10. Here is the Patience and Faith of the Saints. So Rom. 5. 2, 3, By whom also we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God; and not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience. By this you are weaned from, and mortified to this world.*

2. Doth the Lord in his Providence order many and frequent, close and smarting afflictions for you? Why, lo! here is the same design managing as effectually, as if all the peace and prosperity in the World were ordered for you: The face of Providence indeed is not the same, but the love of God is still the same; he loves you as much when he smites, as when he smiles on you: for what are his ends in afflicting you, and what the sanctified fruits of your afflictions? Is it not,

1. To purge your iniquities? *Isa. 27. 9. By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin.*

2. To reduce your hearts to God? *Psal. 119. 67. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word.*

3. To quicken you to your duties: Let the best man be without afflictions, and he will quickly grow dull in the way of his duty.

3. Doth God let loose the chain of Satan to tempt and buffet you? Yet is he still the same God to you as before; for do but observe his ends in that permission, and you will find, that by these things the Lord is leading you towards that desired assurance of his love which your Souls long after. Few Christians attain to any considerable settlement of Soul, but by such shakings and combats; the end of these permissions is to put you to your knees, and blow up a greater flame and fervour of Spirit in Prayer, *2 Cor. 12. 8.* So that eventually these permissions of Providence prove singular advantages and blessings to you.

Self. III. What remains then, seeing God is unchangeable in his love to his people, pursuing the great ends of all his gracious Promises in a steady course of Providence, wherein he will never desert, or

or permit any thing that is really repugnant to his own glory or their good; but that we enter also into this Chamber of Rest, shut the doors about us, and comfortably improve the unchangeableness of God, while we see nothing but changes and troubles here below.

1. Enter into God's unchangeableness by Faith, take up your lodgings in this sweet Attribute also; and to encourage your Faith thereunto, seriously consider a few particulars.

1. Consider how constant, firm, and unchangeable God hath been to his people in all times and streights; not one among the many thousands of his people that are passed on before you, but by frequent and certain experience have found him so. What a singular encouragement should this be to our Faith in the case before us? *Psal. 9. 10. They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee, for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee. So Isa. 25. 4. Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as the storm against the wall. Neither is there any thing in your experience contradictory to the encouraging reports others have made of God; you must acknowledge, that notwithstanding your own changeableness, who have hardly been able to maintain your hearts in any spiritual frame towards God for one day together, yet his mercies towards you have been new every morning, and great hath been his Faithfulness. You have often turned aside from the way of your duty, and have not followed God in a steady course of Obedience; and yet for all that, his goodness and mercy have followed you all the days of your life, as it is *Psal. 23. 6.**

2. Consider how often you have doubted and mistrusted the unchangeableness of God, and been forced with shame and sorrow to retract your folly therein; God hath many times convinced you that his love to you is an unchangeable love, how many changes forever in the course of his Providence have passed over you; consult *Isa. 49. 14. and Psal. 77. 78.* and see how the cases parallel both in respect of God's constancy to them and you, and the inconstancy of his peoples Faith then, and yours now; your fears and doubts are the same with theirs; though his goodness and love have been as unchangeable to you as ever it was to them.

3. Consider the Advocateship and Intercession of Jesus Christ in Heaven for you, by virtue whereof the favour and love of God becomes unalterable towards his people. If any thing can be supposed to cool or quench the love of God towards you, nothing in the world is more like to do it than your sin; and this indeed is that which you fear will estrange and alienate the heart of your God from you. But, Reader, if thou be one that sincerely mournest for all the grief and dishonour of God by thy sin, appliest the blood of sprinkling to thy Soul by Faith, and makest mortification and watchfulness thy daily business; comfort thyself against that fear from that singular encouragement given thee in this case, *1 John. 2. 1, 2. My little Children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not; and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. Look as the death of Christ healed the great breach betwixt God and thy Soul, by thy reconciliation at first; so the powerful Intercession of Christ in Heaven effectually prevents all new breaches betwixt God and thy Soul afterwards, so that he will never totally and finally cast thee off again.*

2. Shut the door behind you against all objections, scruples, and questionings of God's immutability, and by a resolved and steady Faith maintain the honour of God in this point, by thy constant adherence to it, and dependence upon it; and especially see that thou give him the glory of his unchangeableness.

1. When thou shalt see the greatest alterations and changes made by his Providence in the World. What though thou shouldest live to see all things turned upside down, the foundations out of course, all things drawing into a Sea of confusion and trouble? Yet in the midst of those publick distractions and distresses of Nations, encourage thou thyself in this: thy God, and his love to his people, is the same for ever. *Psal. 46. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved.*

2. Live by Faith upon God's unchangeableness under the greatest changes of your own condition in this world. Providence may make great alterations upon all your outward comforts, it may cast you down, how dear soever you be to God, from riches into poverty, from health into sickness, from honour into reproach, from liberty into bondage; thou mayest overlive thy comfortable relations, and of a Naomi become a *Marah. Thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down, said as good a man as you, Psal. 102. 10.* Yet still it is your duty, and will be your great privilege in the midst of all these changes, to act your faith upon the never-changing God, as that holy man did, *Hab. 3. 17. Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither fruit be in the vine; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation; q. d. Suppose a thousand disappointments of my earthly hopes, yet will I maintain my hope in God. Oh Christian! with how many Yets, Notwithstanding, and Nevertheless, must thy Faith bear up in Times of Trouble, or thou'lt sink?*

3. See thou live upon God's unchangeableness, when Age and Sickness shall inform thee, that thy great change is at hand; though thy heart and thy flesh fail, comfort thyself with this: thy God will never fail thee. *Psal. 73. 16. O God (saith David) thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works, now also when I am old and gray-headed, forsake me not, Psal. 71. 17, 18.*

4. Live upon the unchangeableness of God under the greatest and saddest changes of your spiritual condition; God may cloud the light of his countenance over thy Soul, he may fill thee with fears and troubles, and the Comforter that should relieve thee, may seem to be far off; yet still maintain thy Faith in the unchangeableness of his loves; trust in the Name of the Lord, stay thyself upon thy God when thou walkest in darkness, and hast no light, *Isa. 50. 10. Thus shut thy door.*

3. Improve the unchangeableness of God to thy best advantage in the worst times, by drawing thence such comfortable conclusions as these.

1. If God be an unchangeable God in his promises, and in his love to his people, what should hinder but the people of God may live happily and comfortably in the saddest times, and greatest troubles upon earth. *As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, as poor,*

ought to quench a Christian's Mirth that is not able to separate him from the love of Christ, *Rom. 8. 35.*

2. If God be an unchangeable God in his love to his people; then it becomes all that have special interest in this God, to be unchangeable and immovable in the ways of their obedience towards him: God will not cast you off, see that you cast not off your duties, no not when they are surrounded with difficulties; he loves you, though you often grieve him by sin; see that you still love him, though he often grieve and burden you by affliction: he will own you for his people under the greatest contempts and reproaches of the World; see that you own and honour his ways and truths when you are under most reproach from a vile World.

CHAPTER X.

Opening the Care of God for his People in times of trouble, as the fifth Chamber of Rest to Believers.

Self. 1. **C**ARE in the general Notion of it, as it is applied to the Creature, imports the studiousness, and solicitousness of our Thoughts, for the safety and welfare of our selves, or those we love, and highly value. Now though there be no such thing properly in God, at whose dispose and pleasure all events are, and to whose counsels and appointments all difficulties must give way, yet he is pleased to accommodate himself to our weakness, and express his regard and love to his People, by such things, as our creature doth to another to which it is endeared by relation or affection. To this purpose we find many significant, synonymous Expressions in Scripture. All importing the care of God over his People in a pleasant variety of notion and expression, as *Nab. 1. 7. The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him.*

He knoweth them, i. e. he hath a special, tender, and careful eye upon them, to see their wants supplied, and to protect them in all their dangers; for in the common and general sense, he knoweth them that trust not in him, as well as those that do; and farther to clear this sense of the place, it is said, *Psal. 40. 17. The Lord thinketh on them.* Importing not only simple cogitation, but the importation or abiding of his thoughts upon them, as our thoughts are wont to do, upon that which we highly esteem, especially when any danger is near it. And yet farther to clear this sense, it is said, *Job 36. 7. He withdraweth not his eye from the righteous.* As when *Moses* was exposed in the Ark of Bulrushes, where his life was in imminent hazards by the waters of *Nilus* upon one side, and the *Egyptian* Cut-throats on the other; his Sister *Miriam* kept watch at a distance, to see what would be done to him. Her eye was never off that Ark wherein her dear Brother lay; fear and care engaged her eye to keep a true watch for him. Thus the Lord withdraweth not his eye from the righteous. To the same purpose is that expression, *Deut. 33. 3. Tea he loved the people; all his Saints are in thy hand.* That which we dearly love and prize above ordinary, we keep in our own hands for its security, as not thinking it safe enough in any other hand or place. And once more, *Isa. 49. 16. God is said to engrave them upon the Palms of his Hands,* alluding to what is customary among Men, who when they would charge their Memories with something of special concern-

ment, use to change a Ring, or bind a Thred about the Finger, to put them in mind of it. Thus is the care of our God expressed to us in Scripture Notions. The amount of all which, is given us in that one proper and full Expression of the Apostle, *1 Pet. 5. 7. He careth for you.* To open this Chamber of Divine care, as a place of sweetest rest, to our anxious and perplexed minds, in times of difficulty and hazard, it will be necessary that you seriously ponder.

1. The Grounds and Reasons } Of the care
2. The Extent and Compass } of God.
3. The Lovely Properties }

1. The grounds and reasons of God's care for his people; which are,

1. The strict and dear Relations in which he is pleased to own them. Believers are his children, and you know how naturally children engage and draw forth the Fathers care for them. This is the argument Christ uses, *Matth. 6. 31, 32. Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or wherewithal shall we be clothed? For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.* Children, especially when young, disquiet not themselves about provisions for back or belly, but leave that to the care of their parents, from whom by the tie and Bonds of Nature and Love, they expect provision for all those wants: Every one takes care for his own; much more doth God for his own Children, and indeed he expects his children should live upon his care; as our children in their minority, do upon ours.

2. Gods precious estimation and value of them, engages his constant care for them. Believers are his Jewels, *Mal. 3. 17.* his peculiar people, *1 Pet. 2. 6.* his special portion or treasure in this world, *Deut. 32. 9.* and as such he prizes and esteems them above all the people of the earth, and accordingly exerciseth his special care in all the dangers they are here exposed to. Special love engageth peculiar care.

3. The dangers and fears of the people of God, in this world, are many and great, and were it not for the Lord's assiduous and tender care over them, they must necessarily be ruined, both in soul and body, by them. The Church is God's Vineyard, its Enemies as so many wild Boars to root it up: Upon this account, he saith, *Isa. 27. 3 I the Lord do keep it, lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* And indeed it is well for *Israel*, that he that keepeth it, never slumbereth nor sleepeth, *Psal. 121. 4.* that our houses are in peace, that we and our dear relations fall not as a prey, into cruel and bloody hands, skillful to destroy, that we find any rest, or comfort in so evil and dangerous a world, it is wholly and only to be ascribed to the care of God over us, and ours.

4. Jesus Christ hath solemnly recommended all the people of God, to his particular care. It was one of the last expressions of Christ's love to them at the parting hour, *Joh. 17. 11. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world; and I come to thee: Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, &c.* While I have been personally present with them, I took the same care of them, as a Shepherd doth of his Flock, or a tender Father of his Children: But now I must leave them in the world, and in the midst of a world of dangers, fears and troubles, against which they can make no provision or defence themselves. Father remember them, look after

Uppu

ter

ter them, when I shall be removed from them, they are thine, as well as mine; and I recommend them with my last breath to thy care and protection. This is a special ground also of Gods care for them.

5. Believers daily cast themselves upon the care of God, and resign themselves unto it in their daily Prayers. And by their often renewed acts of Faith, than which no act is found more engaging from the creature upon its God; though there be nothing of merit, yet there is much of engaging efficacy in it, *Ilsa. 26. 3. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.* We find it so among our selves, the more firmly and entirely any one trusteth to us, and dependeth upon us, the more he engageth us to protect or relieve him. Now this is the daily work of Christians to trust God over all, and put all their concernments into his hand, which very trust and dependance draws forth the care of God for them.

6. In a word, the many promises God hath made to his people to preserve, support and supply them in all the times of need, engageth the care of God for them, as often as such wants, or dangers befall them; for indeed herein, he at once takes care for their necessity, and for his own honour and glory. They trust to his word, and rely upon his promises, which therefore he will be careful to make good. This was the argument, which the Church pleaded in the time of imminent danger, to engage the care of God for them. *Psal. 74. 20. Have respect unto the Covenant: for the dark places of the Earth are full of the habitations of cruelty. g. d. O Lord, thy People are in the midst of cruel Enemies, take care for their Protection, and though there be no worth in them, to which thou shouldest have respect, yet have respect unto thine own Covenant: let the glory of thy Name draw forth thy care to thy People.*

Señ. 11. We have seen the grounds and reasons of God's care over his People, let us next view the extent and compass of this divine Care; and here methinks the Lord saith to his People as he said to *Abraham, Gen. 13. 14, 15. Lift up now thine eyes from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, for all the land which thou see'st so thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.* So here, poor timorous, dejected Believer, lift up thine eyes wherethou art, and take a view of all the promises in the Scriptures of truth; promises of supports under all burthens, supplies of all wants, deliverances out of all dangers, assistances in all distresses; to thee have I given them all as a portion for ever. This care of God walks the round, and encompasseth the Souls and bodies of them that fear him, day and night. There is no interest or concern of either found without the line of his all surrounding Care, and every one of his children are enfolded in his fatherly arms, *Dent. 33. 3. All his Saints are in thy hand.* And all every one of their wants and streights are observed by this Care, in order to their supply, *Phil. 4. 19. My God shall supply all your wants.*

1. Great is the care of God over the Bodies of his people, and all the dangers and necessities of them as they daily grow; your meat and drink are daily provided for you by your Fathers care, *Psal. 111. 5. He hath given meat unto them that fear him; he will ever be mindful of his Covenant.* It is from this Care of thy Heavenly Father, that necessary provisions have been made for thee, of which it may be thou hast had no foresight: This is the God that hath fed thee all thy life long, *Gen. 28. 15. It is from the same care thy Body hath been clothed, Mat. 6. 28. How much more shall he cloath you, O ye of little faith?* It is through this Care, you sleep in peace, and your rest is made sweet unto

you, *Prov. 3. 24. When thou liest down thou shalt not be afraid; yea thou shalt lie down and thy sleep shall be sweet.* In a word; thou owest all thy recoveries from dangerous diseases, and narrow escapes from the grave to this Care of thy God over thee, *He is the Lord that healeth, thee Exod. 15. 26.* That the incensed humours of thy body had not overflowed their banks, like an inundation of the Sea, when they ragged in thy dangerous diseases, it only because thy God took the care of thee, and set them their bounds.

2. Divine Care extends it self to the Souls of all that fear God, and to all the concernments of their Souls; and manifestly discovers it self in all the gracious provisions it hath made for them. More particularly, it is from this tender Fatherly care that,

1. A Saviour was provided to redeem them when they were ruined and lost by sin, *Job. 3. 16. Rom. 8. 32.*

2. That Spiritual cordials are provided to refresh them in all their sinking sorrows, and inward distresses, *Psal. 94. 19.*

3. That a door of deliverance is opened to them, when they are sorely pressed upon by temptations, and ready to be overwhelmed, *1 Cor. 10. 13.*

4. That a strength above their own comes in seasonably to support them, when they are almost overweighed with inward troubles, when great weights are upon them, the everlasting arms are underneath them, *Psal. 138. 3. Ilsa. 57. 16.*

5. That their ruine is prevented when they are upon the dangerous and slippery brink of temptations, and their feet almost gone, *Psal. 73. 12. Hos. 12. 6. 2 Cor. 12. 7.*

6. That they are recovered again after dangerous falls by sin, and not left as a prey and Trophy to their enemy, *Hos. 14. 4.*

7. That they are guided and directed in the right way, when they are at a loss, and know not what course to take, *Psal. 16. 11. Psal. 73. 24.*

8. That they are established and confirmed in Christ in the most shaking and overturning times of trouble and persecution; so that neither their heart turneth back, nor their steps decline from his ways, *Jer. 32. 40. Job. 4. 14.*

9. That they are upheld under Spiritual desertions, and recovered again out of that dismal darkness into the cheerful light of God's countenance, *Ilsa. 57. 16.*

10. That they are at last brought safe to Heaven through the innumerable hazards and dangers all along their way thither, *Heb. 11. 16.* In all these things the care of their God eminently discovers it self for their Souls.

3. Once more let us consider the Care of God for his people in the lovely properties thereof. As,

1. It is a Fatherly care, than which none is more great or tender, *Matth. 6. 8. Your father knoweth that you have need of all these things.* And indeed the greatest and tenderest care of an earthly Father is but a faint shadow of that tender care which is in the heart of God over his Children; for to that end we find them compared, *Matth. 7. 11. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your father which is in heaven, give good things to them which ask him.* The care of Parents is carelessness it self compared with that care which God takes of his.

2. The care of God is a universal care, watching over all his people in all ages, places and dangers, *2 Chron. 16. 9. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth, to shew himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him.* This was applied by way of reproof to *Aha*, who out of a sinful distrust of the care of God, relied upon the help

of Syria, as if there had not been a God in Heaven to take care of him and the people.

3. God's care over his, is assiduous and continual; his mercies are new every morning, great is his faithfulness, *Lam. 3. 22, 23. He keeps his people night and day, Isa. 27. 3.* Could Satan, or his instruments find such an hour wherein the seven eyes of Providence should be all asleep, that would be the fatal hour to our Souls and Bodies; but he that keepeth Israel numbereth not.

4. God's care over his, is exceeding tender, far beyond the tenderness that the most affectionate mother ever felt in her heart towards the child that hanged on her breast, *Isa. 49. 15. Can a mother forget her sucking child, &c. they may, yet will not I forget thee.* The birds of the air are not so tender of their young in the nest, as God is of his people in the world, *Isa. 31. 5.* Mercy fills the heart of God, yea, tender mercy, yea, multitudes of tender mercies, *Psal. 51. 1.*

5. The care of God is a seasonable care, which is always sure to nick the opportunity and proper season of relieving his people; in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen: The beauty of Providence is much seen in this thing, wherever you feel a want; this care finds a supply; and thus much briefly of the care of God absolutely considered in it self.

SECT. III. It remains that we also consider the care of God in its twofold respect, viz.

1. To his Promises.

2. To his Providences.

1. There are multitudes of Promises found in the Scriptures, exactly fitted as so many keys to open the door of this comfortable Chamber to receive, and secure all that fear God, whatever their wants, fears, or distresses are. These are reducible into two Classes, or ranks, viz.

1. More general and comprehensive.

2. More particular Promises.

The general and more comprehensive Promises are found in the general expressions of the Covenant, as that to Abraham, *Gen. 17. 1. I am God Almighty, walk thou before me and be perfect. q. d.* Let it be thy care to walk exactly in the paths of obedience before me, and I will take care to supply all thy wants from the never failing fountain of my al-fufficiency; and of the same tenour is that, *2 Cor. 6. 18. I will be to them a Father, and they shall be my sons and daughters, i. e.* Expect your provisions and protections from my care, as children do from their father. More particularly, there are six sorts of Promises, wherein the care of God is particularly made over to his people in the greatest hazards and difficulties in this life. viz.

1. It is assigned and made over to them to supply all their needs, so far as the Glory of God and advancement of their Spiritual and eternal good shall require it, *Pf. 34. 9. They that fear the Lord shall not want any good thing.* All your livelihood is in that Promise; thence comes your daily bread; your own and your families meat is in that cupboard.

2. It is made over to the Church and people of God for their defence against all dangers, *Isa. 54. 17. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.* This promise wards off all the deadly blows, and puts by all the mortal threats that are made at you; here the care of God forms it self into a shield for your defence.

3. The care of God is engaged by promise for the moderation and mitigation of your afflictions, that they may not exceed your abilities to bear them, *Isa. 27. 8, 9. in measure when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it; he stayeth the rough wind in the day of*

the east-wind, If the wind blow from a cold corner, this Promise moderates it, that it blow not a storm; all the sparing mercies and sweetening circumstances, which gracious Souls thankfully note in the sharpest trials come from this promise, wherein the care of God is engaged for that purpose.

4. Divine care is put under the bond of a promise, for the direction and guidance of all their troubles and trials to an happy issue. *Rom. 8. 28. All things shall work together for good.* From what quarter soever the wind bloweth, God will take care that it shall be useful: to drive you to your Port; the very Providences that cast you down, by vertue of this promise prove as serviceable and beneficial as those that lift you up.

5. The care of God stands engaged in the promise for the help and aid of his people in all the extremities and exigencies of their lives, *Pfal. 46. 1. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in troubles.* Never is the care of God more visible and conspicuous, than in such times of need.

6. Lastly, the care of God is engaged to carry his people safe through all the dangers of the way, and bring them all home to glory at last, *Joh. 10. 28. I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.* This care of God thus engaged for you is your convey to accompany and secure you till it see you safe into your harbour of eternal rest.

2. You have heard how the care of God is engaged for you by promise; now see how it actuates, and exerts it self for the people of God in the various methods of Providence; and here, oh here is the sweetest pleasure of the Christians life, a delight far transcending all the delights of this life. Sit down Christian in this Chamber also, and make but such observations upon the care of thy God as follow, and then tell me whether the world with all its pleasures and delights can give thee such an other entertainment.

1. Reflect upon the constant, sweet, and suitable provisions that from time to time have been prepared for thee and thine, by this care of thy God; From whence soever thy wants did come, I am sure from hence came thy supplies, it hath enabled thee to return the same answer the disciples did to that question, *Luke 22. 35. Lacked ye any thing, and they said nothing.*

2. Reflect with admiration upon the various difficulties of your lives, wherein your thoughts have been entangled, and out of which you have been extricated and delivered by the care of God over you: How oft have your thoughts been like a ravelled skeyn of silk, so entangled and perplexed with the difficulties and fears before you, that you could find no end, but the longer you thought, the more you were puzzled, till you have left thinking, and fell to praying; and there you have found the right end to wind up all your thoughts upon the bottom of peace and sweet contentment, according to that direction, *Pfal. 37. 5. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.*

3. Observe with a melting heart how the care of thy God hath disposed and erected thy way to unforeseen advantages: had he not ordered thy steps when, and as he did, thou hadst not been in possession of those Temporal and Spiritual mercies that sweeten thy life at this day. Surely the steps of good men are ordered by the Lord; and as for thee Christian, what reason hast thou with an heart overflowing with love and thankfulness to look up and say, *My father thou art the guide of my youth?* It is sweet to live by faith

upon Divine care. Oh what a Serene life might we live, careful for nothing, but making known our request unto God in every thing, *Phil. 4. 6.* casting all our care on him that careth for us, *1 Pet. 5. 7.* perplexing our thoughts about nothing, but rolling every burthen upon godly Faith. Thus lived holy *Masculus* when reduced to extreme poverty, and danger at the same time; then it was that he solaced his Soul with that comfortable *Distich*, a good lesson for others,

*Est Deus in celis, qui providus omnia curat,
Credentes nusquam deseruisse posse.*

The Provident care of his heavenly father, made his heart as quiet as the child at the breast. Christian, thou knowest not what distressful days are coming upon the earth, nor what perfonal trials shall befall thee in this world; but I advise thee as thou valuest the tranquillity and comfort of thy life: Shut up thy self by Faith in this Chamber of Divine Care, it is thy best security in this world: Reflect frequently and thankfully upon the manifold supports, supplies, and salvations thou hast already had from this fountain of mercies, and be not discouraged at new difficulties. When an eminent Christian was told of some that way-laid him to destroy him: his answer was, *Si Deus mei curam non habet, quid vivo?* In like manner thou mayest say, if God had not taken care for thee, how couldst thou have lived till now? How couldst thou have overlived so many troubles, fears and dangers as thou hast done?

C H A P. XI.

Opening the sixth and last Chamber, viz. The Love of God, as a resting place to believing Souls in evil times.

Sect. I. **T**Hough all the Attributes in the name or Chambers of this house of God are glorious, and excellent; yet this of love is transcendently glorious: Of this room it may be said as it was of *Solomon's* royal Chariot, *Cant. 3. 10.* *The midst thereof is paved with love.* In this Attribute the glory of God is signally and eminently manifested, *1 John 4. 9, 10.* And upon this foundation the hopes and comforts of all Believers are built and founded, *Rom. 8. 35.* *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* He defies and despises them all, because neither of them alone, nor all together by their united strength, can unclasp the arms of Divine Love, in which Believers are safely enclosed. In this Attribute God's people by Faith entrench themselves, and of it a Believer saith, *Hic murus abneus esto*, this shall be my strong hold and fortress in the day of trouble, and well may we so esteem and reckon it, if we consider,

1. That wherever the special love of God goes, there the special presence of God goes also, *John 14. 23.* *He shall be loved of my father, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* And O how secure and safe must those be (however times govern) with whom God himself maketh his abode! For as the Psalmist speaks, *Psal. 91. 1.* *He that dwells in the secret place of the most high, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.* And he that is overshadowed by an Almighty power, needs not fear how many mighty enemies combine against him.

2. Wherever the special love of God is placed, that person becomes precious and highly valuable in the

eyes of God; he appretiates and estimates such a man as his peculiar treasure, which naturally and necessarily draws and spreads the wing of Divine care over him for his protection, *Demeron. 33. 12.* *The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him, and the Lord shall cover him all the day long.* Things of greatest value are always kept in safest custody.

3. Upon whosoever the special love of God is set, there all events and issues of troubles are sure to be over ruled to the eternal advantage of that Soul, *Rom. 8. 28.* Which consideration alone is sufficient to unting all the troubles in the world, and make the beloved of the Lord shout and triumph in the midst of tribulations.

But let us enter yet farther into this glorious Chamber of Divine love, and more particularly view the admirable properties thereof, though when all is done, it will be found a love passing knowledge; our thoughts may admire, but can never measure it.

1. And first you will find it an ancient love, whose spring is in eternity it self. Believer, God is thine ancient friend, who forefaw and loved thee, before thou, yea, before this world was in being; the fruits and effects thereof thou gatherest in time, but the root that produces them was before all times, *Prov. 8. 22, 23.* *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or over the earth was.* Thus was the love of God contriving, and providing the best of mercies in Christ for us; while as yet there were no such creatures in the world, nor a world prepared to receive us.

2. The love of God to his people is a free, and altogether undeserved love; it must needs be so, seeing it prevented our very being, which had it not done, yet no motives had been found in us, to allure it to us more than others, *Deut. 7. 7.* *The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor chose you, because ye were more in number than any people, (for ye were the fewest of all people) but because the Lord loved you.* So that we cannot find one stone of our own merit in the foundation of this love; for those whom it embraceth in its arms are, *Immerentes, & male merentes*, ill deserving as well as undeserving, we were loved of God, before we were lovely in our selves; it is freely pitched upon us, not purchased by us, *Isa. 43. 24.*

3. The love of God to Believers is a bountiful love, streaming forth continually mercies both innumerable and invaluable to the Souls and Bodies, *2 Pet. 1. 3.* Christian, it would quickly weary thine arm, yea, let me say the arm of an Angel; but to write down the thousandth part of the mercies which have already flowed out of this precious fountain to thee; though all thou hast received, or shalt receive in this world, are but the beginnings of mercy, and first-fruits of the love of God to thee; 'tis the love of God which daily loads thee with benefits, as the expression is, *Psal. 68. 19.* And if thou art daily loaded with mercies, what an heap of mercies will the mercies of thy whole life be.

4. The love of God to believers is a distinguishing love, not the portion of all, no, nor yet of many besides thee, *1 Cor. 1. 26.* The generality of the world dwell in the Room of common Providence, not in the Chamber of special love into which God hath admitted thee; this consideration should make the break out in admiration, as it is, *John 19. 22.* Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thy self to me, and not to the world.

5. The

5. The love of God to Believers is a love transcendent to all creature love, it moves in an higher Sphere than the love of any creature doth, *Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8.* We read of *Jacob's* love to *Rachel*, which is so celebrated in the sacred Story for the fervour of it, and yet all that it enabled him to suffer was but the Summers heat and the Winters cold; a trifle to what the love of Christ engaged, and enabled him to suffer for thy sake. We read also of the love of *David* to *Abshalom* which made him wish, would God I had died for thee, O *Abshalom*, my Son, my Son. This love was only manifested in a wish, which happily might have been retracted too, had there been an exchange to be made indeed; but the life of Christ, worth Millions of his life, was actually and willingly staked down for thy Soul. We read of the love of one Disciple manifested to another Disciple in a Cup of cold Water; but Christ hath manifested his love to thee in pouring out his warmest Heart Blood for thy redemption. Oh what a transcendent love is the divine love!

6. To conclude, (though, alas, little is said of the love of God,) it is an everlasting and unchangeable love. Hills and Mountains shall sooner start from their Bases, than his loving kindness depart from his People, *Isa. 54. 10.* Though he afflict us, still he loves us *Psal. 89. 32, 33.* Nay, though we grieve him, yet still he loves us, *Mark 16. 7.* Tell the Disciples, and tell Peter. Peter had grieved Christ, denied Christ, yet will he not renounce nor cast off Peter.

SECT. II. Well then, if God have opened to your Souls such a Chamber of love, where your Souls may be ravished with daily Delights, as well as secured from danger and ruin: O that you would enter into it by Faith, and dwell for ever in the love of God! I mean, clear up your interest in it, and then solace your Souls in the delights of it. Need I to use an Argument, or spend one Motive to press you to enter into such an Heaven upon Earth? If the deadness of thy Heart doth need it, take into consideration, Reader, these few that follow.

1. Motive. Ponder with thy self how sad and miserable the case will be with thee in the days of calamity and distress, if the love of God shall then be clouded to thy Soul; in those days such as love thee will either be absent from thee, or impotent to help thee, all thy friends and familiars may be removed far off, and whither then wilt thou turn, should God be far off too? This was that evil which *Jeremiah* so vehemently deprecated, *Chap. 17. v. 17.* Be not a terror unto me, thou art my hope in the day of evil. g. d. O Lord my Soul depends upon refreshment, and comfort from thee, when all the springs of earthly comfort are dried up. Shouldest thou be a terror to me in the day of evil, it will be the most terrible disappointment that ever befall my Soul; if thou be kind, I care not who be cruel if I have the love of God, I value not the hatred of Men; but if God be a terror, who or what can be a comforter? The love of God is the alone refuge to which the gracious Soul retreats upon all creature disappointments, and failings. This therefore is the main thing to be feared against the evil day.

2. Mot. The knowledge and assurance of the love of God is a Mercy attainable by a gracious Soul, notwithstanding the imperfections of Grace. Peter had his falls and failings as well as other Christians, yet when Christ puts the question home to him, *Joh. 21. 15.* Simon son of Jonas lovest thou me more than these, he was able to return a clear positive answer; Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. Study thy

heart Christian, and study the Scriptures; if thou canst find the sincere love of God in thy heart, that Scripture will clear the love of God to thy Soul, *1 John 4. 19.* We love him because he first loved us. If thou lay thine hand upon a stone wall, and feel it warm, thou mayest conclude the Sun-beams have shone upon it; for warmth is not naturally in dead Stones. Our love to God is but the reflex Beam of his love to us, and we know there can be no reflex without a direct Beam. Thousands of Christians do at this day actually possess the ravishing sense of divine Love, whose fears and complaints have been the same that thine now are; that God who indulged this favour to them, can do as much for thee.

3. Mot. Think how well thou wilt be provided for the worst and difficultest times, when the love of God shall be well secured to thy Soul; when the love of God, i. e. the sense of his love is once shed abroad in the Heart by the Holy Ghost, which for that end, among others, is given unto us, shall then be able to glory in tribulation, *Rom. 5. 3, 5.* We may then bid defiance to all the adverse powers of Hell, and Earth, and say, Now do your worst: we are out of your reach, and above all your terrors and affrights. Be advised then to sit close to this work: clear but this point once, and the worst is past. O lye at the feet of God night and day, give him no rest, take no denial from him, fill thy mouth with pleas and arguments? tell him, Lord, it is neither for Corn nor Wine that I seek thee, but only for thy love; bestow thy other gifts upon whom thou wilt, only seal up thy love to my Soul.

And Lastly, I advise thee, Reader, to be exceedingly careful, when God admits thee into the sense of his love, to shut the door behind thee, lest thy Soul be soon expelled thence, by the subtlety of Satan, who envies nothing more, than such an happiness as this: that envious Spirit totally despairs of the least drop of such a Mercy, and therefore swells with envy at thine enjoyment of it; but if ever thou fasten thy hand of faith upon this mercy, loose not thy hold by every objection with which he will rap thy fingers.

1. If he object the many sharp Afflictions, and manifold rods of God upon thee, call not the love of God in question for that; but remember what he saith, *Heb. 12. 6.* Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. Fatherly Corrections are so far from being inconsistent with the love of God, that his love is rather questionable without them, than for them; they are love tokens, not marks of hatred.

2. Yield not up thy claim and title to the love of God, because he sometimes hides away his face from thee; thou knowest the Sun is up, and going on in its regular course, in the darkest and closest day. My God, my God, saith Christ himself, *Why hast thou forsaken me?* believe he is still thy God, and his love immutable, when the sense and manifestations thereof do fail.

3. Call not the love of God into question, because of thy great vileness and unworthiness; say not when thou most loathest thy self, God must needs loath thee too; he can love where thou loathest. Return, return, O Shulamite, return, return, that me may look upon thee: what will ye see in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two Armies. The Spouse was exceeding beautiful in the Eyes of others, when most base and vile in her own: What would you see in the Shulamite? alas, there is nothing in me, at the best, but Conflicts and Wars, betwixt Grace and Corruption, as it were betwixt two Armies, *Can. 6. 13.* Uuuu 3 4. Quit

4. Quit not thy claim to the Love of God, because he seems to shut out thy Prayers, and delays to answer the long continued desires and importunities of thy soul in some cases. *David* would neither censure his God, nor call in question his interest in him, because of such a delay and silence, *Psal.* 22. 1, 2. *My God, My God.* The claim is doubled, *ver.* 1. and yet in the next breath he saith, *I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not, and in the night season, and am not silent.*

Thus I have offered you some advice and assistance, how to secure your selves in these Divine Attributes, *viz.* The Power, Wisdom, Faithfulness, Unchangeableness, Care and Love of God, as in so many Sanctuaries, and comfortable Refuges in the days of Common Calamity. It is noted even of the *Egyptians*, when the storm of Hail was coming upon the Land, *Exod.* 9. 20. *He that feared the Word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh, made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses.* Let not an *Egyptian* take more care of his Beasts, than Christians of their Souls. Stormy days are coming, God hath provided you a Refuge, and given you seasonable Premonitions, and Calls from Heaven, to hasten into them before Desolations come. The Lord help us to hear his Calls, and comply with them, which will be as much our Privilege, as it is our Duty. And so much of the *Fifth Proposition*, *viz.* That God's Attributes, Promises, and Providences, are prepared for the security of his people in the greatest distresses that befall them in the world.

PROPOSITION VI.

That none but God's own People are taken into these Chambers of Security, or can expect his special Protection in Evil Times.

SECT. I. **T**His Proposition describes and clears the qualified subject of this Privilege. God's own People, and none but such can warrantably claim special protection in evil times, and this is consonant to the current account of Scripture, *Isa.* 3. 10, 11. *Say ye unto the righteous, it shall be well with him. Wo to the wicked, it shall be ill with him.* He speaks concerning the day of Jerusalem's ruin, and Judah's fall, as appears, *ver.* 8. So great a difference will God make even in this world, betwixt the righteous, and the wicked. In *Nab.* 1. you have also a terrible day described, wherein *Babylon, Carmel, and Lebanon*, the most pleasant and fruitful places of the land shall languish. *ver.* 4. The mountains shall quake, the hills melt, the earth, and those that dwell therein burnt up. *ver.* 5. The indignation and fury of God poured out like fire. *ver.* 6. The privileged people in this terrible day are God's own people, they only are taken into security. *ver.* 7. The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble, and he knoweth them that trust in him, *i.e.* he so knoweth them, as to care and provide for them in that evil day, and so throughout the whole Scripture, you shall find the Promises of protection still made to the people of God. When the *Chaldean Army*, like a devouring fire, was ready to seize upon the Land, the sinners in *Sion* were afraid, fearfulness surprised the hypocrites, for who among us (say they) shall dwell with devouring fire, and everlasting burning. Yes, saith God, some there are that shall abide that day, *viz.* *He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he shall dwell*

on high, his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks. i.e. God will be a sanctuary to them, when others shall be as stubble before the flames, *Isa.* 33. 14, 15, 16.

But for the right stating of this Proposition, three things must be heedfully adverted.

1. That all good men are not always exempted from the stroke of outward Calamities; in that sense the righteous may perish, and merciful men be taken away, yea, they may perish in love, and be taken away in mercy from the evil to come, *Isa.* 57. 1, 2. *Mica.* 7. 1, 2.

2. That all wicked men are not all always exposed to external miseries, but a just man may perish in his righteousness, and a wicked man prolong his life in his wickedness, *Eccles.* 7. 15.

3. But in this sense, we are to understand the Proposition, That none, but the people of God, have right, by promise, to his special protections in evil days, and that all such shall either be preserved from the stroke of calamities, or from the deadly sting, namely Eternal Ruin, by them; though they should fall by the hands of enemies, yet they die, as *Josiah* did, in Peace, *2 Kings* 22. 19, 20. If they be taken away, it is but out of the way of greater mischiefs: death doth but lay the Saints in their beds of rest, when it hurries away others into everlasting miseries: if they be not excused from troubles, yet their troubles are sure to be sanctified to their eternal good, *Rom.* 8. 28. And the Lord will be with them in their troubles, *Psal.* 91. 15. *Isa.* 41. 10.

Two things remain to be considered, before we finish this last Proposition: *viz.*

- { 1. Who the People of God are?
2. Why this Privilege is peculiar to them?

1. Who are the People of God? The Scripture describes them two ways; Negatively, and Positively; Negatively, in opposition to those who are not the People of God, but are (1.) the servants of sin, obeying it in the lust of it, which the People of God neither are, nor dare to do, *Rom.* 6. 11, 12. *&c.* (2.) The men of this world, who have the portion in this life, favouring, and minding the things of the world only, whereas the People of God are called out of the world, *Joh.* 17. 16. and Principally study, and labour after the higher concerns of the world to come, *Rom.* 8. 5. (3) The vassals of Satan doing his lust, and in subjection to his power, *Act.* 26. 18. *Ephes.* 2. 2. from which bondage the People of God are made free. (4.) Nor yet are they their own, living wholly to themselves, and seeking only their own ends, as others do, *1 Cor.* 6. 19, 20. These, all these are not the People of God, God will not own them for such; they but deceive themselves in thinking, and calling themselves so: but then *Positively*. They are (1.) a people regenerated, and born again, *Joh.* 1. 13. Their regeneration gives them both the essence and denomination of the people of God: it is as impossible to be the children of God, without regeneration, as it is to be the children of men without generation. (2.) They are a people in covenant with God, *Ezek.* 16. 8. *I entered into a covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine.* For in this Covenant they give themselves to the Lord, *2 Cor.* 8. 5. They avouch the Lord to be their God, and make over themselves to him to be his people, *Jer.* 31. 33. devoting unto God all that they are, their souls, and bodies, with every faculty and member inclusively *Rom.* 12. 1. *Luke.* 10. 27. All that they have, *Rom.* 11. 36. all is dedicated and

and devoted to the Lord's use and service, and these only are the people of God.

2. The last thing to be cleared is, Why the people of God, and none beside them, have this peculiar privilege of an hiding place in the day of trouble? And the grounds of it are,

1. Because they only have special Interest in God, and propriety is the ground on which they claim and expect protection: I am thine, save me, *Psal.* 119. 94. Upon this very ground it was, that David encouraged himself in one of his greatest plunges and distresses of his whole life, *1 Sam.* 30. 6. But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

2. The people of God only are at peace with God; and where there is no Peace, there can be no Protection: The harbours and garisons of one Kingdom never receive into their Protection the Subjects of another Kingdom that are in open hostility against them. Now there is open War betwixt God and the Wicked, *Psal.* 7. 11. *Zech.* 11. 8. Till they have Peace with God, they can claim no Protection from God.

3. The promises of Protection are made only to God's people; and where there is no Promise, there can be no warrantable claim to Protection, *2 Cor.* 1. 20. *2 Pet.* 1. 4. Common Providence may shelter them for a time, but the Saints only have the Keys of the Promises which open the Chambers or Attributes of God to them.

4. None but the people of God walk in the ways of God, and none but those that walk in his way can groundedly expect his Protection; for so runs the promise, *2 Chron.* 15. 2. *I am with you, whilst you are with me*, i. e. I am with you; by way of Protection, Direction, Supportation, and Salvation, whilst you are with me in the duties of Obedience, and exercises of your graces; see that you love, fear and obey me, and then depend upon it I will look after, and take care of you.

5. To conclude: The People of God only flee to God for Sanctuary, and cast themselves upon him for Protection, *Psal.* 56. 3. *At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.* *Psal.* 18. 2. *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust, my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.* This their confidence in God and reliance upon him, engages him to protect them in their dangers, *Isa.* 26. 3. All others put themselves out of God's Protection, by making flesh their Arm, and so giving the honour of God to the Creature, *Jer.* 17. 5. And thus much for clearing this last Proposition also. All that remains will be dispatched in brief and close Application of the point thus opened and confirmed.

C H A P. XII.

Containing the first Use of the Point, in several informing Consecrations, and Deductions of Truth from it.

SECT. I.

Consecr. 1. **F**ROM the whole of this Discourse, we may be informed what a miserable and shiftless People all those will be in times of trouble, who have no special Interest in God or the Promises. Sad and lamentable was the case of *Saul*, as it is by himself expressed, *1 Sam.* 28. 15. *I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is*

departed from me, and answereth me no more. It is a wonderful and unaccountable thing, how carnal Men and Women subtilise, and bear up, when their earthly props and hopes sink under and fail them; so long as any creature-comfort is left, thither they will retreat for relief and succour: but if all fail, as quickly they may, whither will they turn for comfort, having not a God, nor a Promise to flee to? which the people of God can do, when all things else fail them, *Heb.* 3. 17. Their different conditions in the day of trouble, is clearly expressed in *Zeph.* 2. 3, 4. *Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment, seek righteousness, seek meekness; &c. maybe ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.* There is God's *maybe*, which is better security than Man's *shall be*, for their temporal deliverance: but what shall become of others, that have no refuge but in the Creature? Why, the misery and shiftlessness of their condition follows in the next words: *Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation; they shall drive out Ashdod at noon-day, and Ekron shall be rooted up; &c.* All their earthly securities shall fail them; their strong hold shall not secure them; they shall find no shelter in the scorching heat of the day of trouble. *Moab, Ashdod, and Ekron, have no more benefit by the Promises made to Zion, than the Inhabitants of Rome can claim by the Charter of London.* If a wicked or hypocritical person cry to God in his distress, he will not hear him, *Prov.* 1. 25, 26. *Job.* 27. 9. but will bid him go to his earthly Refuges which he hath chosen; if he go to the Promises, knock at those doors of hope, they cannot relieve him, being all made in Christ to Believers; if to the Name and Attributes of God, all the doors are shut against them, *Psal.* 34. 16. There are seven dreadful Aggravations of a wicked man's Troubles; (1.) When troubles come upon him, the Curse of God follows him into his carnal Refuges; *Jer.* 17. 5. *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. Trouble is the Arrow;* and this Curse the Venom of the Arrow, which makes the Wound incurable.

2. When troubles fall upon him from without, a guilty Conscience will terrifie him from within; so that the Mind can give no relief to the Body, but both sink under their own weights; it is not so with the people of God, they have inward relief under outward pressures, *2 Cor.* 4. 16.

3. The Gusts and Storms of wicked mens troubles may blow them into Hell, and hurry them into eternal Destruction; if Death march towards them upon the pale Horse, Hell always follows him, *Rev.* 6. 8.

4. If troubles and distresses overwhelm their hearts, they can give them no vent or ease by Prayer, Faith, and Renignation to God, as his people use to do, *1 Sam.* 1. 18.

5. When their troubles and distresses come, then comes the hour and power of their temptation, and to shun sorrow they will fall into sin, having no promise to be kept in the hour of temptation, as the Saints have, *Rev.* 3. 10.

6. When their troubles come, they will be left alone in the midst of them; these are their burthens, and they alone must bear them. God's gracious, comfortable, supporting presence is only with his own people.

7. If Trouble or Death come upon them as a storm, they have no Anchor of Hope to drop in the storm; *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death,* *Prov.* 14. 32.

By all which it appears that a Christless person is a most helpless and helpless Creature in the day of trouble.

2 *Confess.* Secondly, Hence it follows, *That Christians ought not to droop like other men in the day of trouble.* A wicked man's boldness, and a Christian's cowardliness in times of affliction, are alike ungrounded and uncomely. Why should thy heart, Christian, despond and sink at this rate, upon the prospect of approaching troubles? Are there not safe and comfortable Chambers taken up, and provided for thee against that day? Is not the Name of the Lord a strong Tower, into which thou may'st run and be safe? The heart of a good man, saith *Chrysostom*, should at all times be like the higher Heavens, serene, tranquil and clear, whatever Thunder and Lightnings, Storms and Tempests, trouble and terrify the lower world. If a Man have a good Roof over his head, where he can sit dry and warm, what need he trouble himself to hear the Winds roar, the Lightnings flash, and the Rains pour down without doors? Why, this is thy privilege, Christian; *A man (to wit, the Man Christ Jesus) shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, Isa. 32. 2.* Art thou in Christ and in the Covenant? give me then one good reason for thy dejections in a day of trouble; or if thou hast none to give, hearken to these Reasons against it.

1. If thou be in Christ, thy Sins are forgiven thee; and why should not a pardoned Soul be a cheerful Soul in adversity? Afflictions may buz and hum about thee, like Bees that have lost their sting, but they can never hurt thee.

2. If thou be in Christ, thy God is with thee in all thy troubles; and how can thy heart sink or faint in such a presence? Let them that are alone in troubles fail under them: but don't thou do so, that art surrounded with Almighty Power, Grace and Love, *Isa. 43. 1, 2.*

3. If thou be in Christ, thy greatest afflictions shall prove thy best Friends and Benefactors, *Rom. 8. 28.* Sure then thou art more afraid than hurt, thou mistakest thy best Friends for thy worst Enemies, thou and thy afflictions shall part more comfortably than you met.

4. If thou be in Christ, thy Treasure is safe, thy eternal happiness is out of the reach of all thine Enemies, *Luke 12. 4. Luke 10. 42.* And if that be safe, thou hast no cause to be sad; to droop and tremble at the hazard of earthly comforts, whilst heavenly and eternal things are safe, is as if a man that had gotten his Pardon from the King, and had it safe in his Bosom, should be found weeping upon the way home, because he hath lost his Staff or Glove. These Reasons are strong against the dejections of God's people under outward troubles; but yet I am sensible that all the reasoning in the world will not prevent their dejections, except they will take pains to clear up their Interest in God against such a day, *Psal. 18. 2.* and will act their Faith by way of adherence and dependance upon God in the want of former light and evidence, *Isa. 50. 10.* And lastly, that they keep their consciences pure and inviolate, which will be a spring of comfort in the midst of troubles, *2 Cor. 1. 12.*

3 *Confess.* Thirdly, *It hence appears to be the greatest folly and vanity in the world, to make any thing but God our refuge in the day of trouble.* This practice,

as you heard but now, is under God's Curse, and that which is cursed of God, can never be comfortable to us. It is an honour peculiar to God, the Right of Heaven, and therefore cursed Sacrilege to bestow it on the Creature. We read of some that make Lyes their refuge, and hide themselves under Falshood, thinking when the overflowing Scourge comes it shall not come nigh unto them, *Isa. 28. 15.* They will trust to their Wits and Policies, they will fawn and flatter, lye and dissemble, cast themselves into a thousand shapes and forms to save themselves, but all in vain, the Flood shall sweep away their refuge of lyes. Others make Riches their trust and confidence, *Prov. 10. 15. The rich man's wealth is his strong city.* If Enemies come, their Money shall be their ransom: but, oh! what a poor refuge will this be! It may betray, but cannot secure them. *Behold, saith God, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it, Isa. 13. 17.* Riches profit not in the day of wrath, *Prov. 11. 4.* Job blessed God in the day of his adversity, that he had not made gold his hope, or the fine gold his confidence, *Job 31. 24.* Bless not thou thy self that thou hast such things to bestow thy hope and trust upon. Others make Men their refuge, especially great and powerful Men: but to how little purpose is it! *Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help, Psal. 145. 3, 4.* They cannot keep their Crowns upon their Heads, no, nor their Heads upon their Shoulders; the greatest Men are but Dust, and what can Dust do to Dust? Three things aggravate their misery, who misplace their confidence by bestowing it on any Creature. 1. That Creature will certainly deceive them; Men are deceitful men, *Psal. 62. 9.* Riches are deceitful riches, *1 Tim. 6. 17.* Every thing you lean on beside God will start aside, like a deceitful Bowe, *Psal. 78. 57. (2.)* The disappointment of your hopes from the Creature will enflame your affliction, and greatly aggravate your sorrow, *2 Kings 18. 21.* The broken Reeds of Egypt will not only fail, but pierce you. (3.) In a word, God will take none into his protection, who make any thing besides himself their hope and confidence; if we fly from God to the Creature, God will fly to the Creature, Thou shalt go; except I have thy dependance, thou shalt never have my protection; where I have no honour, thou shalt have no comfort.

4 *Confess.* Fourthly, The former Discourse yields us also this comfortable conclusion, *That whatever confusions, desolations, and troubles be in the earth, the Church and People of God can never be wholly exterminated and destroyed, seeing such a secure refuge is prepared for them of God, Psal. 102. 28.* The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee. Which is assigned as the true reason of its perpetuity and safety, *Psal. 48. 3.* God is known in her palaces for a refuge. The Church's Enemies have tried the utmost of their Policies and Powers in all Ages against it, but to no purpose: whilst they have been plotting and persecuting, the preserved Remnant have been singing their Song upon *Alamah*, even Praises to their great Preserver; tho' they have no external visible defence, yet are they as safe as Salvation it self can make them, *for salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks, Isa. 26. 1, 2.* Four things are exceeding remarkable in the Church's Preservation: (1.) No people were ever so fiercely opposed by the Powers of this World, *The Kings of the earth have set themselves, and the Rulers have taken counsel together, Psal. 2. 2.* All methods and artifices have been

been tried, sometimes to jeer and scoff them out of the Religion, so did the *Apostate Julian*: and sometimes by cruel tortures to fright them from their Religion; the variety and more than barbarous inhumanity whereof the Church-histories give us a sad and amazing account. (2.) Under these cruel Persecutions they have seemed to be utterly lost, to the eye of sense and reason; *I am left alone*, said *Elijah*, and they seek my life, *1 Kings 19. 10.* By whom, *Lord*, shall *Jacob arise*, said *Amos*, for he is very small? *Am. 7. 2.* (3.) Notwithstanding all which, the Church hath over-lived all its dangers; it is the true *Phoenix* which hath out-lived the Deluge. (4.) Such deliverances are proper and peculiar to the Church alone; no people, besides the people of God, have such Salvations upon Record. The great and famous Monarchies of the World have dash'd one another to pieces, like earthen Potshards.

— *Sic Medus ademit
Assyrio, syroque tulit moderamina Perse.*

And all this by virtue of the promise, *Jer. 30. 11.* For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee; though I make a full end of all Nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee.

5 *Conselt.* Fifthly, to conclude: If this be so, then it is a deep and dangerous policy of Satan to shut up our refuge in God against us, as much as may be in times of trouble. Satan, like a cunning Fowler, despairs of getting the Birds in his Net, except he can beat them out of their coverts; it is therefore his great design, to estrange and alienate the Saints from their God, as much as he can, thereby to cut off their retreat to him in times of trouble; a mischief which the people of God have always vehemently deprecated, *Psal. 102. 2.* *Jer. 17. 17.* and oh that we would beware of it, and shun this mischief, by our seasonable preventing watchfulness. There are, among others, three special Projects of Satan, whereby he manages this mischievous design against the people of God.

1. By drawing their Consciences under guilt, on purpose to destroy the liberty, freedom, and child-like confidence of their Souls, in their addresses to God. This, if any thing in the World, will do it, *Job 11. 14, 15.* What a loss will that poor Soul beat, in times of trouble, whose grumbling and condemning conscience will not suffer him to look up cheerfully and believingly in the face of its God and Father, having lost its ancient Freedom at the Throne of Grace?

2. By prevailing with them to neglect and intermit the course of their daily duties, and thereby to let down their Communion with God, and in a great measure lose their acquaintance with him. This is a dangerous Policy of the Devil, and an unpeepable prejudice to the Soul. Oh Christian! take heed of a lazy slothful spirit, or a vain and earthly heart, which will easily suffer the Duties of Religion to be jostled aside, and put by for every trivial occasion; especially beware of slight, formal, superficial, and dead-hearted performances of duty, which is little better than the intermission of them, it may indeed prevent the scandal, but can never give thee the comfort of Religion.

3. By beclouding their Interest in God, and darkening their titles and evidences, by thick clouds of doubts and fears. This is the sad case of many a poor Christian in a day of trouble with out-fightings, with in-fears. Brethren, I beseech you, think often what those things are, which usually put men

into such frights and streights, when eminent dangers stare them in the face, what it is that daunts and damps the hearts of Christians at such times; and as you value the peace and freedom of your Souls with God, give not matter for your consciences to reproach you with mis-spent time, indulged sins, neglected duties, formality or hypocrisy in Duties, sinister, and by-ends in your transactions with God or Man: preserve the purity and peace of your consciences, as you would preserve your two eyes; if by such wiles the Devil cannot bar you from your God, or shut up your refuge in him, your outward troubles can do you no hurt.

The Second Use, of Direction and Advice.

Secl. II. The Providence of God in these days, giving us such loud warnings of approaching judgment; how are all that are wise in heart, and of understanding of the times, now more especially concerned to clear their Interest in these blessed Attributes of God, which have here been opened, as their only refuge in the evil day. Let me therefore persuade and press you to betake your selves to God, your Refuge and strong Hold in Trouble, and that more especially in these two great Duties, viz.

1. Of fervent Supplication.
2. Of universal Resignation.

1. Betake your selves to God by fervent Prayer and Supplication. Let me say of these Times, as holy Mr. Perkins did of his, *Non sunt ista litigandi, sed orandi tempora*; These are no times for Christians to contend and strive one with another, but with their united cries to strive with God, and, among other requests, strongly to enforce and follow home that of David, *Psal. 71. 2, 3.* Deliver me in thy righteousness, and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto me, and save me; be thou my strong habitation, wherunto I may continually resort. That's a true and weighty Observation of Austin, *Non facile invenimus presidia in adversitate, quæ non fuerint in pace quaesita*; A refuge is not to be found in trouble, except it be provided before-hand in peace. For this, saith the Psalmist, shall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou shalt be found, surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him, *Psal. 32. 6.* Had not Noah prepared and secured himself in the Ark, before the floods of great water came, he had not fate, as he did, *mediis tranquillis in undis*; sleeping quietly, when others were perishing in the waters. Gather your selves therefore together, before the Decree bring forth; seek the Lord, all ye meek of the Earth, be more frequent, and more fervent in Prayer, now than ever; you have all the encouragements in the world to incite you to this Duty: the nature of your God is exceeding pitiful, tender, and compassionate, *Jam. 5. 11.* The endeared relations betwixt God and you give singular encouragement of success: Shall not God hear his own Elect, which cry unto him day and night? *Luke 18. 7.* The sweet returns and answers of former Prayers are so many motives and encouragements to follow close that thriving Trade, *Psal. 52. 1, 2, 3.* And above all, your prevalent Advocate in the Heavens should encourage you to come frequently and boldly to the Throne of Grace, that you may obtain Mercy, and find Grace, to help in the time of need, *Heb. 4. 16.* In two things I shall briefly offer a little direction here, viz:

1. As to the matter } of Prayer.
2. As to the manner }

1. As to the matter of Prayer, I mean such as the state and condition of the times, now more especially suggests.

(1.) Unite your Prayers, and cry mightily to the Lord, that if it be his good pleasure, this cup of wrath which seems to be mingled and prepared, may pass from his People. Now cry to God, as they are directed to do, *Joel 2. 17. Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? O pray, That England may not be delivered into the hands of blood-thirsty Papists, that the golden Candlestick may not be removed, that Idolatry may not return into those places where God hath been so sweetly worshipped; that a Land so peculiarly blessed with Gospel-light, wherein so many thousand Sons, and Daughters, have been born to God, may not at last become an Aeldama, a great Shambles, to quarter out the Limbs of his dear Saints; that the pleasant Plant of Reformation, planted with his own right hand, and watered with so many Tears, yea with so much blood, may not at last be rooted up by the wild Boar out of the Forest!*

(2.) Pray indefinitely, That you may be kept from the sins and temptations of the times. O watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation; if you cannot prevail with God, to turn away his Anger, yet be importunate with him, that you may be kept from Sin, that if you lose your outward Peace, you may be able to keep inward Peace, that you may never sacrifice your Consciences, to save your Flesh, that you may never fall under the displeasure of God, to avoid the rage of Men. Ah Friends, we little think what a fearful havock an hour of temptation will make in such a professing Nation as this is; then shall many be offended, *Math. 24. 10.* O pray, that you may never give offence to others by scandal, or take offence your selves at the ways of God, whatever sufferings and sharp Tryals shall come.

(3.) Pray earnestly for the sanctification of all your troubles, to your eternal good; an un sanctified comfort never did any Man good, and a sanctified trouble never did any Man hurt; be more earnest therefore with God, rather to have your troubles sanctified, than prevented; to get the blessing, than to avoid the smart of them: if they cannot be turned away from you, pray they may be turned to your salvation.

2. Betake your selves to God your refuge by Faith, resigning and committing all into his Hands, *Now the just shall live by faith, Heb 10. 38.* The more you can trust God, the more you secure your selves from danger; he that can live by Faith, shall never die by Fear, and be sure to inform your selves well in two things, viz.

1. What it is to trust God over all.
2. What grounds you have so to do.

1. Be well instructed in the Nature of this Duty, there are six things imported in such Acts of Resignation.

1. An awakened sense of our dangers and hazards. *At what time I am afraid I will trust in thee, Psal. 56.*
3. Suffering times are resigning times, *1 Pet. 4. 19. Let them that suffer according to the will of God, com-*

mit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing; a unto a faithful creator. And the greater and nearer our dangers are, the more frequent and vigorous should the actings of our faith this way be; Be not far from me, for trouble is near.

2. Resignation to God necessarily implies our renunciation, and disclaiming of all other refuges. *Ashur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, ye are our Gods, for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy, Hos 14. 3.* He that relies upon God, must cease from Man; resignation to God excludes not the use of lawful Means, but it doth exclude dependence upon them.

3. Resignation to God is always grounded upon an interest in God, we have no warrant, nor encouragement to expect protection from him in trouble, except we can come to him as Children to a Father: It is the filial relation that gives encouragement to this fiducial resignation, and the clearer that relation and interest is, the more bold and confident those acts of Faith will be, *Psal. 86. 2. Preserve my soul, for I am holy. Thou my God save thy servant that trusteth in thee.* And again, *Psal. 119. 94. I am thine, save me.* I speak not here of the first act of Faith, which flows not from an interest; but gives the Soul an interest in God. Nor do I say that poor doubting and timorous Believers whose interest in him is dark and dubious, have no warrant to resign themselves and their concerns into his hands, for it is both their Right and duty to do it: But certainly the clearer our interest is, the more facile and comfortable will those Acts be.

4. The committing Acts of Faith imply a full acknowledgment and owning of God's Power to protect us, be the danger never so imminent, *Psal. 31. 15. My times are in thy hand, deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me. q. d. O Lord I am fully satisfied, my life is not at the dispose of mine Enemies, 'tis not in their hands, but in thine; all the traps and snares they lay for it shall not shorten one minute of my time, I know thine hand is fully able to protect me, and therefore into thine hands I resign my self, and all I have.*

5. Resignation involves in it an expectation of help and safety from God, when we see no way of security from Men. *O Lord, saith Jehoshaphat, We have no might nor no strength, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are unto thee, 2 Chron. 20. 12.* So David, *Psal. 62. 5, 6. My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him, he only is my rock and my salvation, he is my defence I shall not be moved.*

6. Resignation to God implies the leaving of our selves and our concerns with him to be disposed of according to his good pleasure; the resigning Soul desires the Lord to do with him what he will, and is content to take what lot Divine pleasure shall cast for him, *2 Sam. 15. 25. And the King said unto Zadok, carry back the Ark of God into the city, if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again and shew me both it and his habitation; but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.* And so much of the Nature of this Duty, that we may understand what to do.

2. Next let me shew you what encouragements you that are the People of God, have to this duty, and they will appear to be great and many.

The Sovereignty and absolute Dominion of God over all Creatures, is a singular encouragement

ver all, *Psal.* 59. 9. *Because of his strength will I wait upon thee, for God is my defence.* If a man were in danger amidst a great Army of rude and insolent Souldiers, and were to put himself under the protection of any one, it should be the General of that Army, to chuse in such a hand he cannot but be safe, all the Souldiers being at his beck. Christian, thy God into whose hands thou committest thyself, is Lord General of all the Hosts and Armies in Heaven and Earth; how safe must thou then be in his hands?

2. The unsearchable and perfect Wisdom of God is a mighty encouragement to commit our selves into his hands, *with him is plenteous redemption, Psal.* 130. *mt. i. e.* Choice and variety of ways and methods to save his people; we are, but God never is at a loss to find a door for our escape, *2 Pet.* 2. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.*

3. The infinite tenderness and compassionateness of our God is a sweet encouragement to resign and commit our selves and all we have into his hands, his mercy is incomparably tender towards his people, infinitely beyond whatever any creature felt stirring in its own bowels towards another that came out of its bowels, *Isa.* 49. 15. This compassion of God engageth the two forementioned Attributes. *viz.* his Power and Wisdom, for the preservation and relief of his people, as often as distresses befall them. *Yea,*

4. The very distresses his people are in, do, as it were, awake the Almighty power of God for their defence and rescue, our distresses are not only proper seasons, but powerful motives to his saving power, *Dent.* 36. *For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left.* God makes it an argument to himself and his people, *Plead as is an argument with him, be not far from me, for trouble is near, for there is none to help.*

5. We have already committed greater and weightier concerns into his hand than the dearest interest we have in this World, we have intrusted our souls with him, *1 Pet.* 4. 19. *2 Tim.* 1. 12. Well therefore may we commit the lesser, who have intrusted the greater with him; what are our lives, liberties, estates, and relations, compared with our Souls, and the eternal safety and happiness of them?

6. The committing act of Faith is the great and only expedient to procure and secure the peace and tranquillity of our minds, amidst the distractions and troubles of the present World; the greatest part of our affliction and trouble in such days, is from the working of our own thoughts; these torments from within are worse than any from without; and the resignation of all to God by Faith is their best and only cure, *Proverbs* 16. 3. *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.* A blessed calmness of mind, a sweet tranquillity and settlement of thoughts follows immediately hereupon, *Psal.* 94. 19. *Oh then, leave all with God, and quietly expect a comfortable issue; and for the better settlement, and security of thy peace in times of distraction and trouble, I beseech thee, Reader, carefully to watch and guard against these two evils.*

1. *Caution.* Beware of Infidelity and distrustfulness of God and his Promises, which secretly lurks in thy heart, and is hugely apt to bewray it self; when great distresses and troubles befall thee, thou wilt know it by such Symptoms as these. 1. In an overhasty and eager desire after present deliverance, *Isa.*

51. 14. *The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.* The less Faith, always the more impatience, and the more ability to believe, the more patience to wait. 2. It will discover it self in our readiness to clofe with and catch at sinful mediums and methods of deliverance, *Isa.* 30. 15, 16. And this is the handle of temptation and occasion of Apostacy. *But he that believeth will not make haste, Isa.* 26. 18. No more haste than good speed. 3. It will shew it self in distracting cares and fears about events, which will rack the mind with various and endless tortures.

2. *Caution.* Beware of dejection and despondency of mind in evil times, take heed of a poor low spirit, that will presently sink and give up its hopes upon every appearance and face of trouble; it is a promise made unto the righteous, *Psal.* 112. 7. *He shall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed trusting in the Lord.* The trusting of God fixes the heart, and the fixing of the heart, fortifies it against Fear: but I know what many poor Christians will say in this case, their timorousness and despondency arises not so much from the greatness of outward evils, as from the darkness and doubtfulness of their Spiritual and inward condition, which doubtless is the very truth of the case, which brings me to the last use of this point.

Use the Third

Search and examine your hearts, Christians, whether those graces and qualifications to which God hath promised protection in evil times may not be found upon an impartial search in your hearts amongst which I will single out three principal ones as the proper matters of your self examination, *viz.*

1. Uprightness of Heart and Way.
2. Humiliation for your own and others sins.
3. Righteousness in doing and meekness in suffering the Will of God

1. Uprightness and Integrity of heart and way. To this qualification belong many sweet promises of protection, such is that *Prov.* 2. 7. *He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly, Psal.* 7. 10. *My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart.* If your hearts be true to God, these promises shall be truly performed to you, but beware you deceive not your selves in so great a point as this is; thy heart cannot be an upright heart, except, 1. It be a renewed heart; the Natural heart is always a false heart, 'tis only regeneration that gives the heart a right temper and frame; all the duties and labours in the world can never keep that heart right in its course, which is not first set right for God by a principle of renovation. (2.) We cannot judge our selves upright, except uprightness be the settled frame and standing bent of our hearts, *Psal.* 119. 112, 117. It is not our integrity in one or two single actions, but in the general course, and complex frame of our lives and ways, that will prove our integrity to God. (3.) Then may we reckon our selves upright, when the dread and awe of God's all-seeing eye keeps our hearts and steps from turning aside to iniquity, *Gen.* 39. 9. *2 Cor.* 2. 17. That's a sincere and upright heart indeed, that finds it self at all times, and in all places overawed from sin, by the eye of God upon him. (4.) That man's heart also is upright with God, who purely aims at and designs the glory of God, as the scope and end of his life and actions, who

who lives not to himself, neither acts ultimately and principally for himself, but lives to God as a person dedicated and devoted to him, *Rom. 14. 7.* (5.) That heart also is upright with God, which governs it self and its ways by the directions and rules of the Word, *Psal. 119. 11, 24, 133.* Happy is that Soul that finds such evidences of Integrity in it self, when it is brought to the trial of it at the Bar of the Word, *Heb. 4. 12.* at the Bar of Conscience, *2 Cor. 1. 12.* at the Bar of Afflictions, *Psal. 119. 87.* and at the Bar of strong Temptations, *Gen. 39. 9.* The eyes of the Lord shall run to and fro through the whole Earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of such whose hearts are thus perfect towards him.

2. Another gracious qualification, intitling the Soul to God's special Protection in the worst and most dangerous times, is the true humiliation for our own and other Mens sins: *Go, set a mark,* saith God *upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof,* *Ezek. 9. 4.* These that thus mourn, when others laugh, shall laugh when others mourn. Lot was the only Mourner in *Sodom*, and he was the only person exempted from destruction in the ruin and overthrow thereof, *2 Pet. 2. 7.* That's a sweet and blessed privilege mentioned in *Isa. 66. 10. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her all ye that love her, rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her, that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations, that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.* Be contented, Christians, to bear your part in *Sion's* groans and sorrows, you may live to bear your part in her triumphs and songs of deliverance; 'tis an Argument of the true publickness and tenderness of your Spirits for present, and as sweet a sign as can appear

upon your Souls, that you are reserved for better days.

3. Righteousness in doing, and meekness in suffering the Will of God, is another Mark or Note, distinguishing and describing those persons whom God will preserve in the evil day. You have both these together in *Zeph. 2. 3. Seek ye the Lord, all ye the meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgments, seek Righteousness, seek Meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.* The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their Prayers, *1 Pet. 3. 12.* If righteousness bring you into danger, the righteous God will take care of you in that danger, and bring you out of it. Oh! 'tis a singular comfort, when a man can say, It was not my Sin, but my Duty, that brought me into trouble; this Affliction met me in the path and way of my duty; 'tis for thy sake, O Lord, that I am in trouble; as the Martyr that held up the Bible at the Stake, saying, *This hath brought me hither.*

To conclude, Manage all your Sufferings for Christ with Christian Meekness: As Righteousness must bring you into them, so Meekness must carry you through them; if you avenge your selves, you take the Cause out of God's hand into your own, but the meek Christian leaves it to the Lord, and shall never have cause to repent of his so doing. If thou have an upright heart with God, a tender and mournful heart for sin, and thou suffer with Meekness for Righteousness-sake, thou art one of these Souls to whom that sweet Voice is directed in my Text,

Come, my People, enter thou into thy Chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thy self, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be over-past.

Π Α Λ Α Ν Η Λ Ο Γ Ι Α

A

Succinct and Seasonable
DISCOURSE
 OF THE
 Occasions, Causes, Nature, Rise, Growth, and Remedies
 OF
MENTAL ERRORS.

THE Reverend Authour of the ensuing Treatises, having in them explained and defended several Gospel-Truths, unto which divers things in the

Writings of the Reverend Dr. Crisp deceased, do seem very opposite; Whereas some of us who subscribed a Paper, the design whereof was only to testify, That we believed certain Writings of the Doctor's *never before published*, were faithfully transcribed by his Son, the Publisher of them; which Paper is now, by the Bookseller, prefixed to the whole Volume, containing a large Preface, which we never saw till after the Publication, together with all the Doctor's former Works that were *published many years before*; And are hereupon, by some weak People, misunderstood, as if by that Certificate, we intended an Approbation of all that is contained in that Volume. We declare, we had no such Intention: As the Paper we subscribed hath no word in it that gives any such intimation: But are well pleased these latter Writings are Publish'd (in reference whereto we only certified our belief, which we fixedly retain, of the Publisher's fidelity) as they contain many passages in them, that may in some measure remedy the hard and hurtful construction that many expressions were more liable to in the former; whereof the Doctor seem'd apprehensive himself, when in the beginning of his Discourse, on Tit. 2. 11, 12. he speaks thus: [*Beloved, I am jealous of you with an holy jealousy, 1. Cor. 11. 2, 3. Left after the sweet wooing of you in Christ's Name, that ye might be espoused unto him; I say, I am jealous, and fear, lest as the Serpent beguiled Eve, through his subtilty, namely, bewitching her to a presumptuous, licentious adventuring on God's gentleness, while she tasted the forbidden Fruit; so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in him, namely, by presuming too much upon him, and adventuring to continue in Sin, in hope that Grace may abound. For the preventing of which dangerous miscarriage, which hath been the dangerous lot of many Thousands,*

Vol. I.

I thought good to step in with this Text, which I am persuaded will prove a seasonable warning to some at least.] And this Pious caution of the Authour herein, lest he should be misunderstood, gives us some grounds to believe, that he intended them not in the more exceptionable sense. 'Tis best, if any unwary Reader receive hurt, that he receive his healing also from the same hand. And whereas a Paper was printed upon this occasion, soon after the Publication of the Doctor's Works, we willingly adopt so much of it as is requisite to our present purpose, which is to this effect:

'Some who subscribed this Certificate, saw only the Paper it self, to which Subscription was desired; never having perused the Works of Dr. Crisp. The Certificate only concern'd the Son, not the Father; and certified only concerning the Son, That they who should subscribe it, believed him in this, to deal truly; that he was not a *Falsarius*; that he would not say that was his Father's, which was not so; a Paper so sober, so modest, was (*taken by it self*) scarce refusible by a Friend.

'The Son's Preface, some that subscribed this Certificate, saw not, nor had any notice, or the least imagination of its Contents, otherwise the part of a Friend had certainly been done, as well in advising against much of the Preface as in subscribing the Certificate.

'For the Works of this Reverend Person themselves, as it no way concern'd the subscribing this Certificate, to know what they were; so from the opinion that went of the Authour, among many good Men, That he was a Learned, Pious, Good Man, it was supposed they were likely to have in them many good and useful things; to which it was only needful to think them *but*, not to think them *perfect*.

'We may in some respect judge of Books as of Men, *i. e.* reckon, that though divers very valuable Men, have had remarkable failings; yet that upon the whole, 'tis better they have lived and been known in the

X x x

World,

World, than that they should not have lived, or have lived obscure.

The Truth is (which we have often considered) that though the great Doctrines of Christian Religion do make a most coherent, comely Scheme, which every one should labour to comprehend and digest in his mind; yet when the Gospel first becomes effectual for the changing mens hearts, 'tis by God's Blessing this or that passage which drops; the most discern not the series and connection of Truths at first, and too little afterwards.

Upon that view of Dr. Crisp's Writings we have had since the Publication, we find there are many things said in them, with that good favour, quickness, and spirit, as to be very apt to make good impressions upon mens hearts; and do judge, that being greatly affected with the Grace of God to Sinners himself, his Sermons did thereupon run much in that strain. All our minds are little, and incomprehensive; we cannot receive the weight and impression of all necessary things at once, but with some inequality; so that when the Seal goes deeper in some part, 'tis the shallower in some others.

If some parts of Dr. Crisp's Works be more liable to exception, the danger of hurt thereby seems in some measure obviated in some other: As when he says, p. 46. Vol. 1. *'Sanctification of Life, is an inseparable Companion with the Justification of a Person by the Free-Grace of Christ. And Vol. 4. p. 93. That in respect of the Rules of Righteousness, or the Matter of Obedience, we are under the Law still, or else we are Lawless, to live every Man as seems good in his own eyes, which I know no true Christian does so much as think.*

In like manner whereas, Vol. 2. Sermon. 15. and perhaps elsewhere, the Doctor seems to be against evidencing our Justification and Union to Christ, by our Sanctification and new Obedience; we have the Truth of God in this matter plainly deliver'd by him. Vol. 4. p. 36. when he teacheth, that our Obedience is a comfortable evidence of our being in Christ; and on that, as well as on many accounts, necessary.

The difference between him and other good men, seems to lie not so much in the things, which the one or other of them believe, as about their order and reference to one another; where 'tis true, there may be very material difference: but we reckon, That notwithstanding what is more controversial in these Writings, there are much more material things, wherein they cannot but agree, and would have come much nearer each other, even in these things, if they did take some words or terms which come into use on the one or the other hand, in the same sense; but when one uses a word in one sense, another uses the same word (or understands it, being used) in quite another sense, here seems a valid disagreement, which proves at length to be verbal only, and really none at all: As let by Condition, be meant a *deserving Cause*, (in which case 'tis well known *Civilians* are not wont to take it) and the one side would never use it, concerning any good Act that can be done by us, or good Habit that is wrought

in us, in order to our present acceptance with God, or final Salvation. Let be meant by it, somewhat, that by the constitution of the Gospel-Covenant, and in the nature of the thing is *requisite* to our present and eternal well-being, without the least notion of desert, but utmost abhorrence of any such notion in this case, and the other side would as little refuse it. But what need is there for contending at all about a *Law-Term*, about the proper or present use whereof, there is so little agreement between them it seems best to serve, and them it offends. Let it go, and they will well enough understand one another. Again, Let *Justification* be taken for that which is compleat, entire, and full, as it results at last from all its Causes and Concurrents, and on the one hand it would never be denied, that Christ's Righteousness justifies us at the Bar of God in the Day of Judgment, as the only *deserving Cause*; or affirmed, that our Faith, Repentance, Sincerity, do justify us there, as any *Cause* at all. Let Justification be meant only of being justified in this or that particular respect; As for instance against this particular Accusation, of never having been a Believer: and the honest mistaken Prefacer would never have said, O horrid! upon its being said, Christ's Righteousness doth not justify us in this Case: For he very well knows Christ's Righteousness will justify no man that never was a Believer; but that which must immediately justify him against this particular Accusation, must be proving, that he did sincerely believe, which shews his interest in Christ's Righteousness, which then is the only *deserving Cause* of his full entire Justification.

There is an Expression in Vol. 1. p. 46. *'That Salvation is not the end of any good work we do, which is like that of another; we are to act from Life, not for Life. Neither of which are to be rigidly taken, as 'tis likely they were never meant in the strict sense.* For the former, this Reverend Author gives us himself the handle, for a gentle interpretation, in what he presently subjoins, where he makes the end of our good works to be the manifestation of our Obedience and Subjection; the setting forth the praise of the glory of the Grace of God; which seems to imply, that he meant the foregoing negation in a comparative, not in an absolute sense; understanding the glory of God to be more principal; and so that By end, he meant the very ultimate end: so for the other 'tis likely it was meant, that we should not act or work for life only, without aiming and endeavouring, that we might come to work from life also.

For it is not with any tolerable Charity supposable, that one would deliberately say the one or the other of these in the rigid sense of the words; or that he would not, upon consideration, presently unlay it, being calmly reasoned with. For it were in effect to abandon Humane Nature, and to sin against a very Fundamental Law of our Creation, not to intend our own felicity; it were to make our first and most deeply Fundamental Duty, in one great essential branch of it, our sin, viz. To take the Lord for our God: For

For to take him for our God most essentially includes our taking him for our *supream good*; which we all know is included in the notion of the *last end*; it were to make it unlawful to strive against all Sin, and particularly against sinful aversion from God; wherein lies the very death of the Soul, or the sum of its misery; or to strive after perfect conformity to God in holiness, and the full fruition of him, wherein its final blessedness doth principally consist.

It were to teach us to violate the great Precepts of the Gospel; Repent, that your sins may be blotted out— Strive to enter in at the Strait Gate— Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling: To obliterate the Paterns and Precedents set before us in the Gospel. We have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified— I beat down my body, lest I should be a cast-away— That thou mayest save thyself, and them that hear thee.

It were to suppose one bound to do more for the Salvation of others, than our own Salvation. We are required to save others with Fear, plucking them out of the Fire. Nay, we were not (by this rule strictly understood) so much as to pray for our own Salvation; (which is a doing of somewhat) when no doubt, we are to pray for the success of the Gospel, to this purpose, on behalf of other men.

Twere to make all the Threatnings of Eternal Death, and Promises of Eternal Life, we find in the Gospel of our Blessed Lord, useless, as motives to shun the one, and obtain the other: For they can be motives no way but as the escaping of the former, and the attainment of the other have with us the place and consideration of an end.

It makes what is mentioned in the Scripture, as the Character and Commendation of the most eminent Saints, a fault; as of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, &c. That they sought the better and Heavenly Country; and declared plainly that they did so: which necessarily implies their making it their end.

But let none be so harsh as to think of any good man, that he intended any thing of all this; if every passage that falls from us be stretch'd and tortured with utmost severity, we shall find little to do besides accusing others, and defending our selves as long as we live.

A Spirit of Meekness and Love, will do more to our Common Peace, than all the Disputations in the World.

Upon the whole, We are so well assured of the peaceful healing temper of the present Authour of these Treatises, that we are persuaded he designed such a course of managing the Controversies wherein he hath concerned himself, as not on the one hand to injure the memory of the Dead; and on the other to prevent hurt or danger to the Living.

Nor do we say thus much of him, as if he sought, or did need any Letters of Recommendation from us; but as counting this Testimony to Truth, and this expression of respect to him, a Debt; to the spontaneous payment whereof, nothing more was requisite besides such a fair occasion as the Providence of God hath now laid before us, inviting us hereunto.

John Howe,
Vin. Alsop,
Nath. Matber, } John Turner,
Increase Matber, } Ricb. Buret,
Tbo. Powell

An Epistle to the Reader.

Candid Reader,

Ensure not this Treatise of Errors, as an Error in my Prudentials, in sending it forth at such an improper time as this.

I should never spontaneously have awakened sleeping Controversies, after God's severe censure of his people for them, and in the most proper and hopeful Season for their Redintegration.

And beside what I have formerly said, I think fit here to add, That if the attack had been general, and not so immediately and particularly upon that Post or Quarter I was set to defend, I should with Ellihu have modestly waited till some abler and more skillful hand had undertaken the defence of this Cause.

If ever I felt a temptation to envy the happiness of my Brethren, it hath been whilst I saw them quietly feeding their Flocks, and my self forced to spend some part of my precious and most useful time (devoted to the same Service) in combating with unquiet and erring Brethren: But I see I must not be my own chaser. Notwithstanding, I hope, and am in some measure persuaded, that publick benefit will redound to the Church from this irksome Labour of mine. And that this strife will spread no further, but the Mala-

dy be cured by an Antidote growing in the very place where it began: And that the Christian Camp will not take a general Alarm from such a single Duel.

The Book now in thy Hands consisteth of Four parts, viz. 1. A general Discourse of the Causes and Cures of Errors, very necessary at all times (especially at this time) for the reduction and establishment of seduced and staggering Christians; and nothing of that nature having occurred to my observation among the manifold Polemical Tracts that are extant, I thought it might be of some use to the Churches of Christ in such a verisimilous age as we live in; and the blessing of the Lord go forth with it for benefit and establishment.

2. Next, thou hast here the Controversies moved by my Antagonist, first about the Mosaic Law complexly taken, which he boldly pronounces to be an Adam's Covenant of Works. And secondly about God's Covenant with Abraham, Gen 17. which he also makes the same with that God made with Adam in Paradise; and affirms Circumcision (expressly called a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith) to be the Seal of the said Covenant of Works first made with Adam.

3 Finding

3. Finding my Adversary in the pursuit of his design, running into many Antinomian delirations, to the reproach and damage of the Cause he contends for; I thought it necessary to take the principal Errors of Antinomianism into examination, especially at such a time as this, when they seem to spring afresh, to the hazard of God's Truth, and the Churches Peace; wherein I have dealt with becoming modesty and plainness, if haply I might be any way instrumental in my plain and bome way of Argumentation, to detect the falsity and dangerous Nature of those notions which some good men have vented; and preserve the sounder part of the Church from so dangerous a contagion.

4. In the next place I think it necessary to advertise the Reader, That whereas in my first Appendix under that head of the Conditionality of the New Covenant, I have asserted Faith to be the Condition of it, and do acknowledge, p. 246. that the word Condition is variously used among Jurists; yet I do not use it in any sense, which implies or insinuates, that there is any such Condition in the New Covenant, as that in Adam's Covenant was, consisting in perfect, personal, and perpetual Obedience; or any thing in its own Nature meritorious of the benefits promised, or capable to be performed by us in our own strength; but plainly, that it be an act of ours (tho' done in God's strength) which must be necessarily done before we can be actually justified or saved; and so there is found in it the true justifying nature of a Condition; which is the thing I contend for, when I affirm, Faith is the condition of the New Covenant.

How many senses soever may be given of this word Condition, this is the determinate sense in which I use it throughout this Controversy. And whosoever denies the suspending Nature of Faith, with respect to actual justification, pleads (according to my understanding) for the actual justification of Infidels. And thus I find a Condition defined by Navar. Johan. Baptista. Petrus de Perus. &c. *conditio est Suspendio alicujus dispositionis tantisper dum aliquid futurum fiat. And again, Conditio est quidam futurus eventus, in quem dispositio suspenditur.*

Once more, My Reader possibly may be stumbled at my calling Faith sometimes the Instrument, and sometimes the Condition of our justification, when there is so great a Controversy depending among Learned Men, with respect to the use of both those terms. I therefore desire the Reader to take notice, That I dive not into that Controversy here, much less presume to determine it; but finding both those Notions equally opposed by our Antinomians, who reject our actual justification by Faith either way, and allow to Faith no other use in our actual justification, but only to manifest to us what was done from Eternity; I do therefore use both those terms, viz. the Conditionality and Instrumentality of Faith, with respect unto our justification, and shew in what sense those terms are useful in this Controversy, and are accommodate enough to the design and purpose for which I use them. Now repugnant soever they are in that particular, wherein the Learned contend about the Use and Application of them.

To be plain, when I say, Faith justifies us as an Organ or Instrument; my only meaning is, that it receives, or apprehends the Righteousness of Christ, by which we are justified; and so speaking to the Quomodo, or manner of our justifications—I say with the general Suffrage of Divines, we are justified instrumentally by Faith.

But in our Controversy with the Antinomians, where another different Question is moved about the Quando, or time of our actual justification; there I affirm, that we are actually justified at the time of our believing, and not before; and this being the Act upon which our justification is suspended, I call Faith the Condition of our justification.

This, I desire, may be objected, lest in my use of both those terms, my Reader should think, either that I am not aware of the Controversy depending about those terms; or, that I do herein manifest the vacillancy of my Judgment, as if I leaned sometime to one side, and sometime to another. I speak not here, ad idem, as they do in that Contest; but when I call it a Condition of justification, my meaning is, that no Man is justified until he believe. And when I call it an Instrument, my meaning is, that it is the Righteousness of Christ apprehended by Faith, which doth justify us when we believe. And so I find the Generality of our Divines calling Faith sometimes a Condition, and sometimes an Instrument of our justification, as here I do.

And if there be any Expression my Reader shall meet with, which is less accurate, and may be capable of another sense: I crave that Candor from him, that he interpret it according to this my declared Intention.

5. Lastly, I have added to the former, a short, plain, practical Sermon, to promote the Peace and Unity of the Churches of Christ, and to prevent their Relapse into past Follies.

In all the Parts of this Discourse, I have sincerely aimed at the Purity and Peace of the Church of God; and be greatly mistakes, that takes me for a Man of Contention. 'Tis true, I am here contending with my Brethren, but pure necessity brought me in; and an unpleasant irksomeness hath attended me through it, and an hearty desire, and serious motion for Peace amongst all the professed Members of Christ, shall close and finish it. Let all Litigations of this nature (at least in this Critical juncture) be suspended by common Consent, since they waste our time, bind our Communion, imbitter our Spirits, impoverish practical Godliness, grieve the Spirit of God, and grieve Men, make sport for our common Enemies, who warm their own fingers at the Fire of our Contentions; and place more Trust in our dividing Lusts, than they do in their own feeble Arguments or calumniated Penal Laws, to effect our Ruin.

It is my grief (the Lord knows) to see the delightful Communion the Saints once enjoyed, whilst they walked together under the same Ordinances of God, now dissolved in such a sad and scandalous Degree, by the Impressions of erroneous Opinions, made upon their Heads and Hearts. I do therefore heartily join with Budaus in his pious Wish, "That God would give his People as much Consistency in retaining the Truths they once received, as they had Joy and Comfort at their first Reception of them. I must in this occasion declare my just Jealousy, that the Non-improvement of our Baptismal Covenant unto the great and solemn Ends thereof in our Mortification, Vivification, and regular Communion with the Church of Christ, into which Society we were matriculated by it; is at this day punished upon Professors in those fiery Heats, and fierce Oppositions unto which God seemeth to have penally delivered us at this day.

For my own part, it is my fixed Resolution to provoke no good Man if I can help it. But if their own intemperate Zeal shall provoke them, in pursuit

* Utinam
non confite-
ri manibus
conspiciam
comprehens-
re
ritatem
met senti-
re possent
quodam
sine ap-
piti
aculis
calum-
re.

suit of their Errors, to destroy the very Nature of God's Covenant of Grace with Abraham and his Seed, and I have a plain call (as here I had) at once to defend God's Truths and Peoples Souls against them, I will earnestly contend in the Cause of Truth, whilst I can move my Tongue, or make use of the Pen of the Scribe.

Reader, I shall appeal to thee, if thou be wise and impartial, Whether any man that understands the Covenant of God renewed with Abraham (which is the grand Charter, by which we and our Children hold and enjoy the most invaluable Privileges) can endure to see it dissolved and utterly destroyed, by making it an abolished Adam's Covenant of Works; and stand by as an unconcerned Spectator, when challenged and provoked to speak in defence thereof.

Is there any thing found in God's Covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. to make it an abolished Covenant of Works, which doth not as injuriously bear upon, and strike at the very life of the Covenant of Grace in the last and best Edition of it, under which the whole Church of God now stands? What is that thing (I would fain know) in God's Covenant with Abraham? Is it the Promissory part of it, I will be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee, Gen. 17. 7. God forbid: for the essential and sweetest part of the New Covenant is contained in that Promise, Jer. 31. 33. Heb. 8. 10. Yet thou wilt find my Antagonist here forced to assert, God may become a Peoples God in a special manner by virtue of the abolished Covenant of Works; and such be makes this Covenant to be.

Or does the Restipulation Abraham and his were here required to make unto God, even to walk before him, and be perfect; doth this make it an Adam's Covenant of Works? Surely no. For as God there requires perfection of Abraham, so Christ requires the same perfection of all New-covenant Federates now, Matth. 5. 48. Be ye perfect; as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect; which is altogether as much as ever God required of Abraham and his, in Gen. 17. 1. Take perfection in what sense you will, either for a positive Perfection, consisting in truth and sincerity; or a comparative Perfection, consisting in the growth and more eminent degrees of Grace; or a superlative Perfection, which all New-covenant Federates strive after here, Phil. 3. 12, 13. and shall certainly attain in Heaven, Heb. 12. 23. In this also the Covenant with Abraham, and with us are truly and substantially one and the same.

Or doth my mistaken Friend imagine, that God

required this Perfection of Abraham, and his, as in the First Covenant be required it from Adam and all his? viz. to be performed and maintained in his own strength, under penalty of the Curse; but now though Christ command perfection, yet what duty lies in any command, answerable strength for it lies in the Promise? Very well, and was it not so then? compare the Command, Deuter. 10. 16. Circumcise therefore the fore-skins of your hearts, with the answerable gracious Promise to enable them so to do, Deut. 30. 6. The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy Seed, to love the Lord thy God.

Or Lastly, Did Circumcision, the Sign and Seal added to Abraham's Covenant, make it an Adam's Covenant of Works? That's equally impossible with the former: for no man, but such a daring Man as I am concerned with, will dare to say, that a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith (as Circumcision was, Rom. 4. 11.) can make the Covenant, to which it is affixed (and which I have shewn in all the other substantial parts, the very same with that we are now under) to become an Adam's Covenant of Works.

These things I have here superadded, to leave as little as is possible behind me to be an occasion of further trouble and contention. Let all strife therefore in so plain a case be ended: Contentious Spirits are not the most excellent Spirits among Christians. Fire (and so Contention) is more apt to catch in low-built thatch Cottages, than in high-built Castles and Princely Palaces: the higher we go, still the more peace. The highest Region is most sedate and calm. Stars have the strongest influence, when in conjunction. Angels (tho' Legions) have no wars among them; and as willingly go down, as up the Ladder, without jussling each other. And the Most High God is the God of Peace; let us also be the Children of Peace. And I do assure the Persons with whom I contend, That whilst they hold the head, and are tender of the Churches Peace, I can live in Charity with them here, and hope to live in glory with them hereafter.

I remain, Reader, thine and
the Truth's Friend.

John Flavell.

The INTRODUCTION.

FINDING by sad Experience, what I before justly feared, that *Errors* would be apt to spring up with Liberty (though the restraint of just Liberty, being a practical Error in Rulers, can never be the cure of *Mental Errors* in the Subjects;) I judged it necessary at this Season to give a Succinct Account of the Rife, Causes, and Remedies of several Mistakes and Errors, under which even the Reformed Churches among us, as well as others, do groan at this Day.

I will not stay my Reader long upon the Etymology and Derivations of the Word. We all know that Etymologies are no Definitions: Yet because they cast some light upon the Nature of the thing we enquire after, it will not be lost labour to observe, that this word *ERROR* derives it self from three Roots in the Hebrew Language.

חטא (1.) The first word primitively signifies to deviate or decline from the true Scope or Path, as Unskilful Marks-men, or Ignorant and Inadvertent Travellers use to do. The least variation or turning aside from the true Rule and Line, tho' it be but an Hairs breadth, presently becomes an Error. We read, *Judg.* 20. 16. of 700. *Beniamites*, who could every one sling Stones at an Hairs breadth, and not miss, חטא'ו Heb. and not err. This by a *Metaphor* is applied to the Mind or Judgment of Man; and denotes the warpings thereof from the Straight, Perfect, Divine Law or Rule, and is usually translated by the word *Sin*.

שגגה (2.) It is derived from another word also, which signifies to wander in variable and uncertain Motions: You find it in the Title of the 7th. Psalm, *Shiggaion of David*, a wandering Song, or a Song of variable Notes and Tunes, higher and lower, sharper and flatter. In both the former Derivations it seems to note simple Error, through meer Weakness and Ignorance. But then—

שטן (3.) In its Derivation from a third Root, it signifies not only to Err, but to cause others to Err also; and so signifies a Seducer, or one that is active in leading others into a wrong way; and is applied in that sense to the Prophet in *Isaiah*, who seduced the People, *Ezek.* 13. 10. The Greek Verb *πλανω* takes in both these senses, both to go astray, and when put Transitive, to lead or cause others to go astray with us. Hence is the word *πλανήτης*, *Planets* or wandering Stars; the Title given by the Apostle, *Jude*, ver. 13. to the false Teachers and Seducers of his Time.

An Error then is any departure or deviation in our Opinions or Judgments from the perfect Rule of the Divine Law: And to this all Men by Nature are not only liable but inclinable. Indeed Man by Nature can do nothing else but Err, *Psal.* 58. 3. *He goeth astray as soon as born*; makes not one true step till

renewed by Grace, and many false ones after his Renovation. The Life of the Holiest Man is a Book with many *Errata's*; but the whole Edition of a wicked Man's Life is but one continued Error; he that thinks he cannot Err, manifestly Errs in so thinking. The Pope's supposed and pretended *Infallibility* hath made him the great Deceiver of the World. A good Man may Err, but is willing to know his Error, and will not obstinately maintain it, when he once plainly discerns it.

Error and Herefy among other things differ in this; Herefy is accompanied with pertinacy; and therefore the Heretick is *ἀντιστάτης*, self-condemned; his own Conscience condemns him, whilst Men labour in vain to convince him. He doth not formally and in terms condemn himself, but he doth so equivalently, whilst he continues to own and maintain Doctrines and Opinions which he finds himself unable to defend against the evidence of Truth. Humane frailty may lead a Man into the first, but Devilish Pride fixes him in the last.

The word of God, which is our Rule, must therefore be the only Test and Touchstone to try and discover Errors; for *Regula est index sui & obliqui*. 'Tis not enough to convince a Man of Error, that his Judgment differs from other Mens; you must bring it to the Word, and try how it agrees or disagrees therewith; else he that charges another with Error, may be found in as great or greater an Error himself. None are more disposed easily to receive and tenaciously to defend Errors, than those who are the *Antesignani*, Heads or Leaders of Erroneous Sects, especially after they have fought in defence of bad Causes, and deeply engaged their Reputation.

The following Discourse justly entitles it self, *A BLOW AT THE ROOT*: And though you will here find the Roots of many Errors laid bare and open; which comparatively are of far different degrees of Danger and Malignity; which I here mention together, many of them springing from the same Root: Yet I am far from censuring them alike; nor would I have any that are concerned in lesser Errors be exasperated, because their lesser Mistakes are mentioned with greater and more pernicious ones; this Candor I not only intreat, but justly challenge from my Reader.

And because there are many general and very useful *Observations* about Errors, which will not so conveniently come under the Laws of that Method which governs the main part of this Discourse, viz. the *CAUSES* and *CURES* of Error: I have therefore sorted them by themselves, and premised them to the following Part in Twenty *Observations* next ensuing.

Twenty general OBSERVATIONS about the rise and increase of the Errors of the Times.

First Observation.

Truth is the proper Object, the natural and pleasant Food of the Understanding, *Joh 12. 11. Doth not the Ear (that is, the Understanding by the Ear) try words, as the Mouth tasteth Meats?* Knowledge is the assimilation of the Understanding to the Truths received by it. Nothing is more natural to Man, than a desire to know: Knowledge never cloyes the Mind, as Food doth the natural Appetite; but as the one increaseth, the other is proportionably sharpened and provoked. The Minds of all (that are not wholly immers'd in Sensuality) spend their Strength in the laborious search and pursuit of Truth. Sometimes climbing up from the Effects to the Causes, and then descending again from the Causes to the Effects; and all to discover Truth. Fervent Prayer, sedulous Study, fixed Meditations, are the labours of inquisitive Souls after Truth. All the Objections and Counter-Arguments the Mind meets in its way, are but the pauses and hesitations of a bivious Soul, not able to determine whether Truth lies upon this side, or upon that.

Answerable to the sharpness of the Mind's Appetite, is the fine edge of Pleasure and Delight it feels in the discovery and acquisition of Truth. When it hath rack'd and tortured itself upon knotty Problems, and at last discovered the Truth it sought for; with what Joy doth the Soul dilate itself, and run (as it were with open Arms) to clasp and welcome it?

The Understanding of Man at first was perspicacious and clear, all Truths lay obvious in their comely order and ravishing beauty before it: *God made Man upright*, *Ecc 1. 7. 29.* this rectitude of his Mind consisted in Light and Knowledge, as appears by the prescribed Method of his Recovery, *Col. 3. 10. Renewed in Knowledge, after the Image of him that created him.* Truth in the Mind, or the Minds union with Truth, being part of the Divine Image in Man, discovers to us the Sin and Mischief of Error, which is a defacing (so far as it prevails) of the Image of God.

No sooner was Man created, but by the exercise of Knowledge he soon discovered God's Image in him; and by his Ambition after more, lost what he had. So that now there is an haziness or cloud spread over Truth by Ignorance and Error, the sad effects of the Fall.

Second Observation. Of Knowledge there are divers sorts and kinds; some is *Humane*, and some *Divine*; some *Speculative*, and some *Practical*; some *Ingrained*, as the Notions of *Morality*, and some *Acquired* by painful search and Study: But of all Knowledge none like that Divine and Supernatural Knowledge of saving Truths revealed by Christ in the Scriptures; from whence ariseth the different degrees both of the sinfulness and danger of Errors; those Errors being always the worst,

which are committed against the most important Truths revealed in the Gospel.

These Truths lie infolded either in the plain words, or evident and necessary consequences from the words of the Holy Scriptures; Scripture-Consequences are of great use for the refutation of Errors; it was by a Scripture-consequence, that Christ successfully proved the *Resurrection* against the *Sadduces*, *Matth. 22.* The *Arrians* and other *Hereticks* rejected consequential Proofs, and required the express words of Scripture only, hoping that way to defend and secure their Errors against the Arguments and Assaults of the *Orthodox*.

Some think that reason and natural light is abundantly sufficient for the direction of Life; but certainly nothing is more necessary to us for that end, than the written Word; for though the remains of natural Light have their place and use, in directing us about natural and earthly things; yet they are utterly insufficient to guide us in spiritual and heavenly things, *1 Cor. 2. 14. The natural Man receiveth not the things of God, &c. Eph. 5. 8. Once were ye darkness, but now ye are light in the Lord, i. e. by a beam of heavenly light shining from the Spirit of Christ, through the written Word, into your Minds or Understandings.*

'Tis the written word which shines upon the path of our Duty, *Psal. 119. 105.* the Scriptures of the *Old and New Testament* do jointly make the solid Foundation of a Christian's Faith. Hence, *Eph. 2. 20.* we are said to be built upon the Foundation of the *Apostles and Prophets*. We are bound therefore to honour *Old Testament* Scriptures, as well as *New*, they being part of the Divine Canon; and must not scruple to admit them as sufficient and authentick Proofs, for the confirmation of Truths, and refutation of Errors. Christ refer'd the People to them, *Joh. 5. 39.* and *Paul Preached and Disputed from them, Acts 26. 22.*

Third Observation. Unto the Attainment of Divine Knowledge out of the Scriptures, some things are naturally, yet less principally requisite in the Subject; and something absolutely and principally necessary.

The natural Qualifications desirable in the Subject, are clearness of Apprehension, solidity of Judgment, and fidelity of Retention. These are desirable requisites to make the Understanding susceptible of Knowledge; but the irradiation of the Mind, by the Spirit of God, is principally necessary, *Joh 16. 13. He shall guide you into all Truth:* The clearest and most comfortable light he giveth to Men, is in the way of Sanctification, called the teachings of the Anointing, *1 Joh 2. 27.*

When this spiritual sanctifying light shines upon a Mind, naturally enriched and qualified with the three forementioned requisites, that

that Mind excels others in the riches of knowledge. And yet the teachings of the Spirit in the way of Sanctification, do very much supply and recompence the defects and weakness of the forementioned qualifications. Whence two things are highly remarkable :

1. That men of great abilities of Nature, clear apprehensions in natural things, strong Judgments, and tenacious Memories, do not only frequently fall into gross Errors and damnable Heresies themselves ; but become *Heresiarchs*, or Heads of erroneous Factions, drawing multitudes into the same Sin and Misery with themselves ; as *Arius*, *Socinus*, *Pelagius*, *Ballarmin*, and multitudes of others have done.

And secondly, It is no less remarkable, that men of weaker parts, but Babies in comparison, through the Sanctification and Direction of the Spirit, for which they have humbly waited at his feet in Prayer, have not only been directed and guided by him into the Truth, but so confirmed and fixed therein, that they have been kept found in their Judgments in times of abounding Errors, and firm in their adherence to it in days of fiercest Persecution. How men of excellent natural Parts have been blinded, and men of weak natural Parts illuminated ; see 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. *Matth.* 11. 25.

Fourth Observation. Among the manifold impediments to the obtaining of true Knowledge, and settling the mind in the Truth and Faith of the Gospel, these Three are of special remark and consideration, viz. Ignorance, Curiosity, and Error.

Ignorance slights it, or despairs of attaining it. Truth falls into contempt among the ignorant, from sluggishness and apprehension of the difficulties that lie in the way to it, *Prov.* 24. 7. *Wisdom is too high for a fool.* Curiosity runs beside or beyond it. This Pride and Wantonness of the mind puffs it up with a vain conceit, that it is not only able to penetrate the deepest Mysteries revealed in the Scripture, but even unrevealed secrets also, *Col.* 2. 18. intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshy mind. But Error militates directly against it, contradicts and opposeth Truth, especially when an Error is maintained by Pride against inward convictions, or means of better information. 'Tis bad to maintain an Error for want of light ; but abundantly worse to maintain it against light. This is such an affront to the Spirit of God, as he usually punishes with Penal Ignorance, and gives them up to a Spirit of Error.

Fifth Observation. Error is binding upon the Conscience, as well as Truth ; and altogether as much, and sometimes more influential upon the Affections and Passions, as Truth is.

For it presents not it self to the Soul in its own name and nature, as Error ; but in the name and dress of Truth ; and under that notion binds the Conscience, and vigorously influences the passions and affections ; and then being more indulgent to Lust than Truth is, it is for that so much the more embraced and hugg'd by the deceived Soul, *Acts* 22, 4, 5. The heat that Error puts the Soul into, differs

from Religious Zeal, as a *Feverish* doth from a *Natural* heat, which is not indeed so benign and agreeable, but much more fervent and scorching. A mind under the power of Error, is restless and impatient to propagate its Errors to others, and these heats prey upon, and eat up the vital Spirits and Powers of Religion.

Sixth Observation. 'Tis exceeding difficult to get out Error, when once it is imbib'd, and bath rooted it self by an open profession.

Errors, like some sorts of Weeds, having once seeded in a Field or Garden, 'tis scarce possible to subdue and destroy them, especially if they be hereditary Errors, or have grown up with us from our youth ; a *teneris assuescere multum est*, saith *Seneca* ; 'tis a great advantage to Truth or Error, to have an early and long possession of the mind. The *Pharisees* held many erroneous opinions about the Law, as appears by their corruptive Commentaries upon it, refuted by Christ, *Matth.* 5. but did he root them out of their Heads and Hearts thereby ? No ? no ; they sooner rid him out of the World. The *Sadducees* held a most dangerous Error about the *Resurrection* ; Christ disputed with them to the admiration of others ; and proved it clearly against them ; and yet we find the Error remaining long after Christ's Death, *2. Tim.* 2. 18. The *Apostles* themselves had their minds tainted with this Error, That Christ should be outwardly great and magnificent in the World, and raise his Followers to great Honours and Preferments amongst men : Christ plainly told them it was their Mistake and Error ; for the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister ; yet this did not rid their minds of the Error ; it stuck fast in them, even till his Ascension to Heaven. Oh how hard is it to clear the heart of a good man once leaven'd with Error ! and much more hard to separate it from a wicked man *.

* I am persuaded (saith Mr. Gurnal) some men take more pains to furnish themselves with Arguments to defend some Error they have taken up, than they do for the most saving Truths in the Bible. Austin said, when he was a Manichean, Non Tu eras, sed Error meus erat Deus meus ; Thou O Lord, wert not, but my Error was my God. Gurnal's Christian Armour, part 2. page 36.

Some have chose rather to die, than to part with their darling Errors, and Soul-damning Heresies. I have read (saith Mr. Bridges) of a great Atheist, that was burnt at Paris for blaspheming Christ ; held fast his Atheistical Opinions till he came to the very Stake ; boasted to the Priests and Fryars that followed him, how much more confidently he went to sacrifice his Life in the strength of reason, under which he suffered, than Christ himself did ; but when he began to feel Torments indeed, then he roared and raged to the purpose. *Vili ego hominem*, saith the Author ; in his Life he was Loose ; in his Imprisonments, Sullen ; and at his Death, Mad with the Horrors of Conscience.

Some indeed have recovered the soundness of their Judgments, after deep corruptions by dangerous Errors. Austin was a Manichee, and fully recovered from it. So have many more ; and yet multitudes hold them fast even

to death, and nothing but the Fire can reveal their Work, and discover what is Gold, and what is Straw and Stubble.

Seventh Observation. It deserves a Remark, *That Men are not so circumspect and jealous of the corruption of their Minds by Errors, as they are of their Bodies in times of Contagion; or of their Lives with respect to gross Immoralities.*

Spiritual dangers affect us less than corporeal; and intellectual evils less than moral. Whether this be the effect of *Hypocrisy*, the Errors of the Mind being more secret and invisible than those of the Conversation, God only knows, Man cannot positively determine.

Or whether it be the effect of *Ignorance*, that Men think there is less sin and danger in the one than in the other; not considering, that an *Apoplexy* seizing the Head, is every way as mortal, as a *Sword* piercing the Body: And that a *Vertigo* will as much unfit a Man for service, as an *Ague* or *Fever*: The Apostle in 2 Pet. 2. 1. calls them *apostatus*, damnable Heresies, or Heresies of Destruction. An Error in the Mind may be as damning and destructive to the Soul, as an Error of Immorality or Profaneness in the Life.

Or whether it may come to pass from some remains of fear and tenderness in the Conscience, which forbids Men to reduce their erroneous Principles into Practice; there lying under many confident Errors in the Mind a secret Jealousie, which we call *formido oppositi*, which will not suffer them to act to the full height of their professed Opinions. *Austin* gives this Character even of *Pelagius* himself, *Retract. lib. 2. cap. 33. Nomen Pelagii non sine laude aliqua posui, quia vita ejus a multis predicabatur*: I have not mentioned (*saith* he) the name of that Man, without some praise, because his Life was famed by many. And of *Swinkfeldius* it is said, *Caput regulatum illi desinit, cor bonum non desinit*: His Heart was much more regular than his Head. Yet this falls out but rarely in the World; for loose Principles naturally run into loose Practices; and the Errors of the Head into the Immoralities of Life.

Eighth Observation. *It is a great Judgment of God, to be given over to an erroneous Mind.*

For the Understanding being the leading Faculty, as that guides, the other Powers and Affections of the Soul follow, as *Horses* in a Team follow the *Fore-horse*. Now how sad and dangerous a thing is this, for *Satan* to rattle the *Fore-horse*, and guide that that is to guide the Life of Man? That's a dreadful, spiritual, judicial stroke of God, which we read of, *Rom. 1. 26. transibatur a rectis in vias iniquitatis*; God by a penal Tradition suffered them to run into the dregs of Immorality, and pollutions of Life; and that because they abused their Light, and became vain in their Imaginations, *ver. 21.*

Wild whimsies and fancies in the Head, usually mislead Men into the puddle and mire of Profaneness, and then 'tis commonly observed God sets some visible mark of his

Displeasure upon them; especially the *Herefarchs*, or Ring-leaders in Error. *Nestorius* his Tongue was consumed by Worms *Cerintus* his Brains knock'd out by the Fall of an Houfe. *Montanus* hang'd himself: It were easie to instance in multitudes of others, whom the visible Hand of God hath marked for a warning to others; but usually the spiritual Errors of the Mind are followed with a consumption and decay of Religion in the Soul. If Grace be in the Heart, where Error sways its Scepter in the Head, yet usually there it languishes and withers. They may mistake their *Droptie* for growth and flourishing, and think themselves to be more spiritual, because more airy and notional; but if Men would judge themselves impartially, they will certainly find that the Seeds of Grace thrive not in the Heart, when shaded and over-dropt by an erroneous Head.

Ninth Observation. *'Tis a pernicious Evil, to advance a meer Opinion into the place and seat of an Article of Faith; and to lay as great a stress upon it, as they ought to do upon the most clear and fundamental Point.* To be as much concerned for a Tile upon the Roof, as for the Corner-stone, which unites the Walls, and sustains the Building.

Opinion (as one truly saith) is but Reason's Projector, and the Spy of Truth: It makes in its fullest discovery no more than the dawning and twilight of Knowledge; and yet I know not how it comes to pass, but so it is, that this Idol of the Mind holds such a sway and Empire over all we hold, as if it were all the Day we had. Matters of meer Opinion, are every where cried up by some *Errorists*, for *Mathematical* Demonstration, and Articles of Faith, written with a Sun-beam; worshipping the Fancies and Creatures of their own Minds, more than God; and putting more trust in their ill-founded Opinions, than in the surer word of Prophecy. Much like that *Humorist* that would not trust day-light, but kept his Candle still burning by him; because (*said* he) this is not as subject to *Eclipses*, as the Sun is.

And what more frequent, when Controversies grow fervent, than for those that maintain the Error, to boast every silly Argument to be a *Demonstration*; to upbraid and pity the blindness and dulness of their Opposers, as Men that shut their Eyes against Sun-beams; yea, sometimes to draw their presumptuous Censures through the very Hearts of their Opposers, and to insinuate, that they must needs hold the Truths of God in Unrighteousness, in against their Knowledge, and that nothing keeps them from coming over to them, but Pride, Shame, or some Worldly Interest? What a complicated Evil is here! Here's a proud exalting of our own Opinions, and an immodest imposing on the Minds of others, more clear and sound than our own, and a dangerous Usurpation of God's Prerogative in judging the Hearts and Ends of our Brethren.

Z z z z

Tenth

Tenth Observation. *Error being conscious to its self of its own weakness, and the strong assaults that will be made upon it, evermore labours to defend and secure it self under the wings of Antiquity, Reason, Scripture, and high pretensions to Reformation and Piety.*

Antiquity is a venerable word, but ill used, when made a cloak for Error. Truth must needs be elder than Error, as the Rule must necessarily be, before the aberration from it. The gray Hairs of Opinions are then only Beauty, and a Crown, when found in the way of Righteousness. *Copper* (saith Learned *Dumoulin*) will never become Gold by Age. A Lye will be a Lye, for it be never so ancient. We dispute not by Years, but by Reasons drawn from Scripture. That which is now call'd an Ancient Opinion, if it be not a true Opinion, was once but a new Error. When you can tell us, how many Years are required to turn an Error into Truth, then we will give more heed to *Antiquity*, when press'd in the service of Error, than we now think due to it.

If *Antiquity* will not do, *Reason* shall be press'd to serve Error's turn at a dead lift; and indeed the Pencil of Reason can lay curious Colours upon rotten Timber, and varnish over erroneous Principles, with fair and plausible Pretences. What expert Artists have the *Socinians* proved themselves in this matter? But because Men are bound to submit human Authority and Reason to Divine Revelation, both must give way and strike fail to the Written Word.

Hence it comes to pass, that the great *Parasites* and *Fattors* for Error, do above all things labour to gain countenance to their Errors from the Written Word; and to this end they manifestly wrest and wrack the Scriptures to make them subservient to their Opinions; not impartially studying the Scriptures first, and forming their Notions and Opinions according to them; but they bring their Erroneous Opinions to the Scriptures, and then with all imaginable art and sophistry wire-draw and force the Scriptures to countenance and legitimate their Opinions †.

† Cum u-
naquaque
Hæresis sui commentii parentem habeat Diabolum, ac pudore tam
exosi nominis tenetur; pulcherrimum, & quod super omnia est,
nomen Salvatoris profectur, Scripturarumque dictionibus amictur,
Athanas. contra Arian.

* Take heed
(with one)
that when
Reformati-
on knocks
at the door,
some new
Errors step
not in with
it, which
will as
much need
an after
Reforma-
tion.

But because pretences of *Piety* and * *Refor-*
mation are the strokes that give life to the Face
of this Idol, and give it the nearest resem-
blance unto Truth, these therefore never fail
to be made use of, and zealously professed
in the favour of Error, though there be little
of either many times to be found in their Per-
sons, and nothing at all in the Doctrines that
lay claim to it.

Eleventh Observation. *God in all Ages in his tender care for his Churches and Truths, hath still qualified and excited his Servants for the defence of his precious Truths, against the Errors and Heresies that have successively assaulted them.*

As Providence is observed in every Climate and Island of the World to have provided *Antidotes* against the poisonous Plants and Animals of the Country; and the one is never far from the other: So is the care of his Providence much more conspicuous in the case now before us. When, or wheresoever venomous Errors and deadly Heresies do arise, he hath his Servants at hand with *Antidotes* against them.

When *Arrius*, that cunning and deadly Enemy to the Deity of Christ, struck at the very heart of our Religion, Faith and Comfort; a Man of subtil Parts and blameless Life, which made his Heresie much the more spreading and taking; the Lord had his well-furnished *Athanasius* in a readiness to resist and confound him. And as he had his *Athanasius* to defend the Deity of Christ; so he wanted not his *Basil* to defend the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit against *Macedonius*.

So when *Pelagius* was busily advancing *Free-*
will into the Throne of *Free-grace*, Providence wanted not its Mallet in Learned and Ingenious *Augustin*, to break him and his Idol to pieces: And it is highly remarkable (as the Learned Dr. Hill observes) that *Augustin* was born in *Africa* the same Day that *Pelagius* was born in *Britain*.

When *Gottschalchus* published his dangerous Doctrine about *Predestination*, the Lord drew forth *Hincmarus* to detect and confute that Error, by evincing clearly, that God's Predestination forces no Man to Sin.

So from the beginning and first rise of *Po-*
pery, that center and sink of Errors, we have a large Catalogue of the Learned and Famous Witnesses, which in all Ages have faithfully resisted and opposed it; and when notwithstanding all, it had even over-run Europe like a rapid Torrent, or rather Inundation of the Ocean: And Germany was brought to that pass, that if the Pope had but commanded it, they would have eaten Grass or Hay more *pecudum*. Then did the Lord bring forth Invincible *Luther*, and with him a troop of Learned Champions, into the Field against him; since which time the Cause of *Papery* is become desperate.

Thus the care of Providence in all Ages hath been as much displayed in protecting the Church against the dangers that arose from false Brethren within it, as from avowed persecuting Enemies without it; and had it not been so, the rank Weeds of Heresies and Errors had long since overtopped and choaked the Corn, and made the Church a barren Field.

Twelfth Observation. *The want of a modest Suspicion, and just reflection, gives birth confidence and growth to Erroneous Opinions.*

If matters of meer Opinion were kept in their proper place, under the careful guard of Suspicion; they would not make that bustle and confusion in the Churches, they have done, and do at this day.

'Tis confessed, that all Truths are not matters of meer Opinion; neither are all Opinions of equal weight and value; and therefore not to be left hanging in an *equivocal* *Scepticism*: And yet it is as true, that matters of Opinion ought carefully to be fort-
ed

ed from matters of Faith, and to be kept in their own rank and class, as things doubtful, *quibus potest habere fallum*; whilst matters of Faith clearly revealed, are to stand upon their own sure and firm *Basis*. The former, *viz.* matters of meer Opinion, we are so to hold, as upon clearer light to be ready to part with them, and give them up into the hands of Truth. The other, *viz.* matters of Faith, we are to hold with resolutions to Live and Dye by them.

What is Opinion, but the wavering of the understanding betwixt probable Arguments, for and against a point of Doctrine? So that it's rather an inclination, than an assertion, as being accompanied with Fear, Floating, an Inconstancy. In such cases there should be a due concession and allowance of other mens Opinions to them, and why not, whilst they offer as fair for the Truth as we? And haply their Parres, Helps, and Industries, are not inferior to ours, it may be beyond them, and we may discern in them as much tenderness of Conscience, and fear of Sin as in ourselves. In this case a little more modest Suspicion in our Opinions, would do the Church a great deal of right; and that which should prevail with all modest persons to exercise it, is the just reflection they may make upon their own former confident mistakes.

Thirteenth Observation. *There is a remarkable involution or concatenation of Errors, one linking in, and drawing another after it.*

Amongst all Erroneous *Se&ts*, there is still some *παρτωνήσεις*, some *Helena*, for whose sake the war against Truth is commenced; and the other lesser Errors are pref'd for the sake and service of this leading darling Error. As we see the whole *Troop of Indulgences, Bulls, Masses, Pilgrimages, Purgatory, with multitudes more, flow from, and are pref'd into the Service of the Pope's Supremacy and Infallibility. So in other *Se&ts*, men are forced to entertain many other Errors, which in themselves considered, they have no great kindness for; but they are necessitated to entertain them in defence of that great, leading darling Opinion they first espoused.

As we see the whole *Troop of Indulgences, Bulls, Masses, Pilgrimages, Purgatory, with multitudes more, flow from, and are pref'd into the Service of the Pope's Supremacy and Infallibility. So in other *Scix*, men are forced to entertain many other Errors, which in themselves considered, they have no great kindness for; but they are necessitated to entertain them in defence of that great, leading darling Opinion they first Papa, &c. espoused.

Those that cry up and trumpet abroad the Sovereign Power of *Free-will*, even without the preventing Grace of God, enabling men to supernatural works, as if the *Will* alone had escaped all damage by the Fall, and *Adam* had not sinned in that noble Virgin faculty. To defend this *Idol*, which is the *πρωτον ψευδος*, they are forced to oppugn and deny several other great and weighty Truths, as particular eternal Election, the certainty of the Saints Perseverance, the necessity of preventing Grace in Conversion; which Errors are but the Out-works raised in defence of that *Idol*.

So in the *Baptismal Controversie*, men would never have adventured to deny God's Covenant with *Abraham*, to be a Covenant of Grace ; or

to assert the *Ceremonial Law*, so full of Christ, to be an *Adam's Covenant* of works; and *Circumcision*, expressly called the *seal of the Righteousness of Faith*, to be the Condition of *Adam's Covenant*. Much less would they place all the elect of God in *Israel*, at one and the same time, under the severest Curse and Rigour of the *Law*, and under the pure *Covenant of Grace*, were they not forced into these Errors and Absurdities by dint of Argument, in defence of their darling Opinion.

Fourteenth Observation. Errors abound most, and spring fastest in the times of the Churches Peace, Liberty, and outward Prosperity under Indulgent Rulers. * Arianism sprang up under Constantine's mild Government. Arrian Alexandrinus Hæresis

incipit Alexandriae sub annum Domini 324, ut *Eusebius* annotavit. Anno Imperii Constantini 15.

Christian benevolent Rulers are choice Mercies and Blessings to the Church. Such as rule over men in the fear of God, are to the Church, as well as Civil State, like the light of the morning, when the Sun ariseth, even a morning without Clouds, as the tender Grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain, 2. Sam. 22. 4.

But this as well as other mercies, is liable to abuse; and under the influences of indulgent Governours, Error as well as Truth, springs up, Flowers, and Seeds. Perfection gives check to the wantonness of mens Opinions, and finds them other and better work to do. *Caterpillars* and *Locusts* are swept away by the bitter *East*-winds, but swarm in *Halcion* days, and fall upon every green thing. So that the Church rides in this respect more safely in the stormy *Sea*, than in the calm *Harbour*. Peace and Prosperity is apt to cast its Watchmen into a sleep, and whilst they sleep, the envious one soweth *Tares*, *Matth.* 13. 25.

'Twas under *Constantine's* benign Govern-
ment that Poison was poured out into the
Churches. The abuse of such an excellent
mercy provokes the Lord to cut it short, and
cause the Clouds to gather again after the Rain.
We have found it so once and again (alas! that
I must say again,) in this wanton and foolish
Nation. Professors could live quietly together,
Converse, Fast, and Pray in a Christian
manner together under common Calamities
and Dangers; differences in Opinion were
suspended by consent. But no sooner do we
feel a warm Sun-blast of Liberty and Peace,
but it revives and heats our dividing Lufts and
Corruptions, instead of our Graces. The
Sheep of Christ fight with each other, though
their furious pushing one at another is known
to preface a change of Weather.

Fifteenth Observation. *Errors in the tender bud and first spring of them, are comparatively shy and modest, so what they prove afterwards, when they have spread and rooted themselves into the minds of Multitudes, and think it time to set up and juggle for themselves in the World **

suam (communicato Consilio cum Eudoxio) aliquandiu occulte et intricatè ac perplexè sparsit; tandem animo sumpto, quæ hæreticè sentier, in ecclesiis publicis palam ostendit. *Theodoret.* lib. 2. cap. 29.

They usually begin in modest Scruples, conscientious Doubts and Queries. But having once gotten many Abettors, and amongst them some that have subtilty and ability to plead and dispute their Cause, they ruffle it out at another rate; glory in their numbers, piety and ability of their Party; boast and glory in the conceited Victories they have achieved over their Opposers. The Masque drops off its Face, and it appears with a brow of Brafs, becomes insolent and turbulent both in Church and State. Of which it is eafie to give many pregnant instances, in the *Arians* of old, and more recent Errors, which I shall not at present be concerned with, lest I exasperate, whilst I seek to heal the Wound.

* The Donatists in Augustin's time modestly moved, that men might not be compelled to live holy. Coacta & in vita pietas, they mentioned it with dislike; but when grown in power, facti insolentes vim Orthodoxis inferrebant, inasmuch that Caelcitus the Tribune was faine to defend the Orthodox against them with an Army.

* Should a man hear the Sermons, or private Discourses of *Errorists*, whilst the Design is but forming and projecting, he should meet with little to raise his jealousy. They speak in Generals, and guard their Discourses with Politick Reserves. You shall not see, tho' you seem to see, the tendency of their Discourses. Hence the

Apostle saith, 2 Pet. 2. 1. *improvidenti, They shall privily (or covertly) bring in damnable Heresies*: As the Boy in *Plutarch*, being asked by a Stranger, what is that you carry so closely under your Cloak? wittily answered, You may well know that I intend you shall not know it by my so carrying it.

Sixteenth Observation. *Nothing gives more countenance and increase to Error, than a weak and feeble defence of the Truth against it*.*

* Quidam verbis non

facis Cœlestibus literis eruditi, cùm veritatis accusatoribus respondere non possent, obijciuntibus, vel impossibile, vel incongruens esse, ut Deus in uterum filii mulieris includeretur, &c. quæ omnia cùm necque ingenio, necque doctrinâ defendere ac refutare possent (nec enim vim rationis quæ penitus pervidebant) depravati sunt ab invidie recto, & cœlestes literas corrupterunt, & novam sibi doctrinam sine ullâ radice ac stabilitate composuerunt. *Lactan.* lib. 4. cap. 30 de Hæresibus.

The strength of Error lieth much in the weakness of the Advocates and Defendants of Truth. Every Friend of Truth is not fit to make a Champion for it. Many love it, and pray for it, that cannot defend and dispute for it. I can dye for the Truth (said the Martyr) but I cannot dispute for it. *Zuinglius* blamed *Carlostadius* for undertaking the Controversie of that Age, because (said he) non habuit satis humerorum, his Shoulders were too weak for the burthen.

It can be said of few, as *Cicero* speaks of one, *Nallam unquam in disputationibus rem defendit, quam non probavit; nullam oppugnavit, quem non evertit*; He undertook no Cause in dispute, which he could not defend; he opposed no Adversary, but could overthrow him. Here is a rare and happy Disputant, who can clear and carry every point of Truth, of which he undertakes the defence. 'Twere happy for the Church, if the abilities and prudence of all her Friends were commensurate and equal to their love and zeal. Every little foyl, e-

very weak or impertinent Answer of a Friend to Truth, is quickly turned into a weapon to wound it the deeper.

Seventeenth Observation. *Errors of Judgment are not cured by compulsion and external force, but by rational conviction, and proper spiritual Remedies.*

Bodily sufferings rather spread than cure intellectual Errors, I deny not but fundamental Heresies breaking forth into open Blasphemies against God, and Seditions in the Civil State, ought to be restrained. 'Tis no way fit men should be permitted to go up and down the World with Plague-fores running upon them. Nor do I understand why men should be more cautious to preserve their Bodies than their Souls. But I speak here of such Errors as may consist with the foundations of the Christian Faith, and are not destructive to Civil Government. They take the ready way to spread and perpetuate them, that think to root them out of the World by such improper and unwarrantable means as external force and violence. The Wind never causes an Earthquake, till it be pent in, and restrained from motion.

We neither find, nor can imagine, That those Church or State Exorcists should ever be able to effect their end, who think to confine all the Spirits of Error within the Circle of a severe Uniformity. Fires, Prisons, Pillories, Stigmatizings, Mutilations, Whippings, Banishments, &c. are the Popish Topics to confute Errors. 'Tis highly remarkable that the World long ago consented for the avoiding of dissent in judgment, to enslave themselves and their Posterity to the most fatal and destructive Heresie that ever it groaned under.

'Tis a rational and proper Observation long since made by *Lactantius*, *Quis mihi imponat necessitatem credendi, quod nolim, vel non credendi, quod velim? Who can force me to believe what I will not, or not to believe what I will?* The rational and gentle Spirit of the Gospel is the only proper and effectual method to cure the Diseases of the Mind.

Eighteenth Observation. *Errorneous Doctrines producing Divisions and fierce Contentions amongst Christians, prove a fatal Stumbling-block to the World; fix their Prejudices, and obstruct their conversion to Christ*.*

* Many Enemies to

Christianity flock to the Nicene Synod, odio Christianorum, proper abolitam Gentium superstitionem, ut haberent in quos illuderes. Say the Centurions.

They dissolve the lovely union of the Saints, and thereby scare off the World from coming into the Church. This is evidently implied in that Prayer of Christ, *John 17*. That all his People might be one, that the World might believe the Father had sent him. There is indeed no just cause for any to take offence at the Christian Reformed Religion, because so many Errors and Heresies spring up among the Professors of it, and divide them into so many Sects and Parties; for in all this we find no more than what was predicted from the be-

beginning, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 19. *I hear there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it: for there must be also Heresies among you, &c.* And again, Acts 20. 30. *Also of your own selves shall Men arise, speaking perverse things: to draw away Disciples after them.*

* Ante omnia, sci-
re nos convenit, & ipsum, & legatos ejus praxidisse, quod plurimæ
Scizæ, & Hereses deberent existerre, quæ concordiam sancti corporis
rumperent: ac monuisse, ut summâ prudentiâ caveremus, ne quando
in laqueos & fraudes illius adversarii nostri cem quo nos Deus luctari
voluit, incideremus, *Laſan.* lib. 4. cap. 30.

The very same things strongly confirm the Christian Religion, which wicked Men improve to the reproach and prejudice of it. When *Celsus* objected to the Christians the variety and contrariety of their Opinions; saying, *Were we willing to turn Christians, we know not of what Party to be, seeing you all pretend to Christ, and yet differ so much from one another.* *Tertullian*, the Christian Apologist, made him this wise and pertinent Reply, *Hereses non dolemus venisse, quia novimus esse predictas. We are not troubled that Heresies are come, seeing it was predicted that they must come.* These things destroy not the credibility of the Christian Religion, but increase and confirm it, by evidencing to the World the truth and certainty of Christ's Predictions (which were quite beyond all human foresight) that as soon as his Doctrine should be propagated, and a Church raised by it, Errors and Heresies should spring up among them, for the tryal of their Faith and Constancy.

Nevertheless, this no way excuses the sinfulness of Errors and Divisions in the Church. Christ's Prediction neither excuses, nor excuses the Evil predicted by him: for what he elsewhere speaks of Scandals, is as true in this case of Errors. *These things must come to pass, but woe be to that Man by whom they come.*

Nineteenth Observation. *How specious and taking soever the pretences of Error be, and how long soever they maintain themselves in esteem among Men, they are sure to end in the loss and shame of their Authors and Abettors at last.**

Truth is a Rock, the waves of Error that dash against, evermore return in froth and foam: yea, they foam out their own shame, faith the Apostle, *Jude* 13. What *Tacitus* spake of crafty Counsels, I may as truly apply to crafty Errors, *Consilia callida primò specie laeta, tractatu dura, eventu tristia. They are pleasant in their beginnings, difficult in their management, and sad in their event and issue.*

Suppose a Man have union with Christ, yet his Errors are but so much Hay, Wood, Straw, Stubble built, or rather endeavoured to be built upon a foundation of Gold: this the fiery tryal burns up; the Author of them suffers loss; and though himself may be saved, yet so as by fire, 1 Cor. 3. 12, 13, 14, 15. the meaning is, he makes a narrow escape. As a Man that leaps out of an House on fire, from a Window or Battlement, with great difficulty saves his Life; just so Errorists shall be glad to quit their Erroneous Opinions, which they have taken so much pains to build, and draw others into: and then, oh what a

Vol. I.

shame must it be for a good Man to think, how many Days and Nights have I worse than wasted, to defend and propagate an Error, which might have been employed in a closer study of Christ, and mine own Heart! *Keckerman* relates a Story of a vocal Statue, which was thirty Years a making by a cunning Artiss, which by the motion of its Tongue, with little Wheels, Wires, &c. could articulate the Sound, and pronounce an entire Sentence. This Statue saluting *Aquinas*, surprized him, and at one stroke he utterly destroyed the curious Machin, which exceedingly troubled the fond Owner of it, and made him say with much concernment, *Uno istu opus triginta annorum destruxisti, thou hast at one stroke destroyed the study and labour of thirty Years.*

Keck. Phys.
p. 16.
Albertus
Magus.

Beside, What shame and trouble must it be to the zealous Promoters of Errors, not only to call away so vainly and unprofitably their own time and strength, which is bad enough; but also to ensnare and allure the Souls of others into the same, or worse Mischief; for though God may save and recover you, those that have been misled by you may perish.

Twentieth Observation. *If ever Errors be cured, and the Peace and Unity of the Church established, Men must be convinced of, and acquainted with the Occasions and Causes both within and without themselves, from whence their Errors do proceed; and must both know and apply the proper Rules and Remedies for the prevention or cure of them.*

There is much difference betwixt an Occasion, and a proper Cause; these two are heedfully to be distinguished. Critical and exact Historians, as *Polybius* and *Tacitus*, distinguish betwixt the *causæ*, and the *causæ*, the beginning Occasions, and the real Causes of a War; and so we ought in this case of Errors carefully to distinguish them. The most excellent and innocent things in the World, such as the Scriptures of Truth, the Liberty of Christians, the Tranquillity and Peace of the Church (as you will hear anon) may, by the Subtlety of Satan working in conjunction with the Corruptions of Mens Hearts, become the Occasions, but can never be the proper culpable Causes of Errors.

Accordingly having made the twenty Remarks upon the Nature and Growth of Errors (which cannot so well be brought within the following Rules of Method) I shall in the next place proceed in the discovery both of the near Occasion, as also of the proper culpable Causes of Errors, together with the proper Preventives and most effectual Remedies placed together in the following order.

The Occasion.

The holy God, who is a God of Truth, *DIVINE*
Deut. 32. 4. and hateth Errors, *PERMISSIO-*
Rev. 2. 6. the God of Order, and hates Confusions and Schisms in his Church, 1 Cor. 14. 33. is yet pleased to permit Errors and Heresies to arise, without whose permission they could never spring. And this he doth for the tryal of his Peoples Faith and Constancy, and for a spiri-
tual

A a a a a

tual punishment upon some Men for the abuse of his known Truths; and by the permission of these Evils he advanceth his own Glory, and the good of his Church and People. *Augustine* answers that Question, Why doth not God, since he hates Errors, sweep them out of the World? Because (saith he) it is an act of greater Power to bring good out of Evil, than not to suffer Evils to be at all.

Satan's Design in Errors is to cloud and darken God's Name and precious Truths; to destroy the Beauty, Strength, and Order of the Church. But God's ends in permitting and sending Errors, are (1.) to plague and punish Men for their abuse of Light, 2 *Theff.* 2. 11. For this cause God shall send them strong Delusions, &c. (2.) To prove and try the Sincerity and Constancy of our Hearts, *Deut.* 12. 1, 3. 1 *Cor.* 11. 19. And lastly, By these things the Saints are awakened to a more diligent search of the Scriptures, which are the more critically read and examined upon the trial of Spirits and Doctrines by them, 1 *Job.* 4. 1. Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits; And *Rev.* 2. 2. Thou hast tried them, that say they are Apostles, &c.

The Prevention.

Though Heresies and Errors must (for the Reasons assigned) break forth into the World, and God will turn them eventually into his own Glory, and the benefit of his Church: yet it is a dreadful Judgment to be delivered over to a spirit of Error, to be the Authors and Abettors of them; this is a judicial stroke of God: and as ever we hope to escape, and stand clear out of the way of it, let us carefully shun these three following Causes and Provocations thereof.

(1.) Want of love to the Truth, which God hath made to shine about us in the means, or into us by actual illumination under the means of knowledge. 2 *Theff.* 2. 10, 11. Because they received not the love of Truth, God gave them up to strong Delusions. They are justly plagued with Error that slight Truth. False Doctrines are fit Plagues for false Hearts.

(2.) Beware of Pride and Wantonness of Mind. 'Tis not so much the Weakness as the Wantonness of the Mind, which provokes God to inflict this Judgment. None likelier to make Seducers than Boasters, *Jude* 16. Arrius gloried, that God had revealed some things to him, which were hidden from the Apostles themselves. *Simon Magus* boasted himself to be the mighty Power of God. The erroneous Pharisees loved the praises of Men. When the Papist reproached *Luther* that he affected to have his Disciples called *Lutherans*, he replied, *Non sic, o fatue, non sic; oro ut nomen meum taceatur*: he disdain'd that the Children of Christ should be called by so vile a name as his.

(3.) Beware you neglect not Prayer, to be kept found in your Judgments, and guided by the Spirit into all Truth, *Psal.* 119. 10. With my whole Heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander, or err, from thy Commandments. This do, and you are safe from such a judicial Tradition.

The First Cause.

We shall next speak of the Causes of Error found in the evil Dispositions of the Subjects, which prepare and incline them to receive Erroneous Doctrine and Opinions, and even catch at the Occasions and least Sparkles of Temptation, as dry Tinder: and amongst these is found,

(1.) A perverse wrangling Humour at the pretended OBSCURITY of the Scriptures. The Romish Party snatch at this Occasion, and make it the proper Cause, when indeed it is but a pickt Occasion of the Errors and Mistakes among Men. They tell us the Scriptures are so difficult, obscure, and perplex, that if private Men will trust to them as their only Guide, they will inevitably run into Errors, and their only relief is to give up their Souls to the conduct of their Church; whereas indeed the true Cause of Error is not so much in the Obscurity of the Word, as in the corruption of the Mind, 1 *Tim.* 6. 5. 2 *Tim.* 3. 8.

We do acknowledge there are in the Scriptures, *vira obscura, et vira dunkinda*, some things hard to be understood, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. the sublime and mysterious nature of the matter rendring it so: and some things hard to be interpreted from the manner of expression; as indeed all mystical parts of Scripture, and Prophetical Predictions are, and ought to be delivered. The Spirit of God this way designedly casts a veil over them, till the proper season of their revelation and accomplishment be come. Besides (as the Learned *Glossius* observes) in *Paul's* style there are found some peculiar words and forms of Speech, which ordinary Rules of Grammar take no notice, nor give any parallel Examples of: as *to be buried with Christ; to be baptized into his death;* to which I may add, *to be circumcised in him,* &c. There are also multitude of words found in Scripture, of various and vastly different Significations: and accordingly there is a diversity, and sometimes a contrariety of Senses given of them by Expositors; which to an Humourist, or quarrelsome Wit gives an occasion to vent his Errors with a plausible appearance of Scripture-consent. And indeed *Tertullian* saith, *Non periclitor dicere ipsas Scripturas ita dispositas esse, ut materiam subministrarent Hæreticis*. The Scriptures are so disposed, that Hereticks may pick Occasions; and those that will not be satisfied, may be hardened. See *Mark* 4. 11, 12.

But all this notwithstanding, the great and necessary things to our Salvation are so perspicuously and plainly revealed in the Scriptures, that even Babes in Christ do apprehend and understand them, *Matth.* 11. 25. 1 *Cor.* 1. 27, 28, 29. And though there be difficulties in other Points more remote from the foundation; yet the Spirit of God is not to be accused, but rather his Wisdom to be admired herein. For (1.) this serves to excite our most intense study and diligence, which by this difficulty is made necessary, *Prov.* 2. 3, 4, 5. the very Prophets, yea the very Angels search into these things, 1 *Pet.* 1. 11, 12. (2.) Hereby a standing Ministry in the Church is made necessary, *Nebem.* 8. 8. *Eph.* 4. 11, 12, 13.

So

So that to pretend *Obscurity* of Scripture to be the culpable cause of *Error*, when indeed the fault is in our selves; this is too much like our Father *Adam*, which would implicitly accuse God, to excuse himself; he laid it upon the *Woman* which God gave him, and we upon the *Scriptures* which God hath given us.

The Remedies.

The proper *Remedies* and *Preventives* in this case are an heedful attendance to, and practice of these *Rules*.

Rule I. Let all obscure and difficult Texts of Scripture be constantly examined and expounded according to the Analogy or proportion of Faith, which is St. Paul's own Rule, *Rom. 12. 6. Let him that propheseth, (i. e. expoundeth the Scriptures in the Church) do it according to the proportion of Faith.* The Analogy or proportion of Faith is what is taught plainly and uniformly in the whole Scriptures of Old and New Testament, as the rule of our Faith and Obedience. Whilst we carefully and sincerely attend hereunto, we are secured from sinful corrupting the word of God. Admit of no sense which interfereth with this proportion of Faith. If Men have no regard to this, but take liberty to rend off a single Text from the body of Truth to which it belongs, and put a peculiar interpretation upon it, which is abominous and discordant to other Scriptures, what woful work will they quickly make?

Give but a *Papist* liberty to take that Scripture, *Jam. 2. 24. out of the frame of Scripture, A Man is justified by Works, and not by Faith only;* and expound it without regard to the Tenor of the Gospel-Doctrine of *Justification in Paul's Epistles to the Romans and Galatians*, and a gross Error starts up immediately. Give but a *Socinian* the like liberty to practise upon *John 14. 28.* and a gross Heresie shall presently look with an Orthodox face.

Rule II. Never put a new sense upon words of Scripture, in favour of your preconceived Notions and Opinions, nor wrest it from its general and common use and sense. This is not to interpret, but to rack the Scriptures, as that word *ἐρμηνεύω* signifies, *2 Pet. 3. 16. Interpretis officium est, non quid ipse velit, sed quid censens ille, quem interpretatur, exponere,* as Hieron. against *Ruff.* speaks. We are not to make the *Scriptures* speak what we think, but what the *Prophet* or *Apostle* thought, whom we interpret. In *1 Cor. 7. 14.* we meet with the word [*boly*] applied to the Children of Believers; that word is above 500 times used for a state of separation to God: Therefore to make it signify in that place nothing but Legitimacy, is a bold and daring practising upon the Scripture.

Rule III. Whenever you meet with an obscure place of Scripture, let the Context of that Scripture be diligently and thoroughly searched; for 'tis usual with God to set up some light there to guide us through the obscurity of a particular Text. And there is much truth in the Observation of the *Rabbines*,

Nulla est obsecutio in Lege, quæ non habet solutionem in latere. There's no scruple or objection in the Law, but it hath a solution at the side of it.

Rule IV. Let one Testament freely cast its light upon the other; and let not Men undervalue or reject an *Old Testament* Text, as no way useful to clear and establish a *New-Testament* Point of Faith or Duty. Each Testament reflects light upon the other. The *Jews* reject the *New-Testament*, and many among us sinfully slight the *Old*: But without the help of both, we can never understand the mind of God in either. 'Tis a good Rule in the *Civil-Law*, *Turpe est de Lege judicare, tota lege nondum inspectâ. We must inspect the whole Law, to know the sense of any particular Law.*

Rule V. Have a due regard to that sense given of obscure places of Scripture, which hath not only the current sense of Learned *Expositors*, but also naturally agrees with the scope of the place. A careless neglect and disregard to this, is justly blamed by the *Apostle*, *1 Tim. 1. 7.*

Cause II.

A Second evil temper in the Subject, disposing and inclining Men to receive and stick in erroneous Doctrines and Opinions, is the *Contro-ABUSE* of that just and due *CHRISTIAN* *LIBERTY* allowed by Christ to all his People to read, examine, and judge the sense of Scriptures with a private judgment of discretion.

locus, post à Montreux Statum cum Sociis Anno MDXXI. occasione scripti Lutheri de libertate Christiada Fred Spanb. Elemib. Contr. p. 95.

This is a glorious acquisition, and blessed fruit of Reformation, to vindicate and recover that just Right, and gracious Grant made to us by Christ and the Apostles, out of the injurious hands of our *Papist* Enemies, who had usurped and invaded it. The exercise of this *Liberty*, is at once a Duty commanded by Christ, and commended in Scripture. 'Tis commanded by Christ, *John 5. 39. Search the Scriptures, faith Christ to the People.* *1 Cor. 10. 15. I speak as to wise men; judge you what I say.* And the exercise of this private judgment of discretion by the People, is highly commended by St. Paul in the *Bereans*, *Acts 17. 11. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so.* This *Liberty* is not allowed in that latitude in any Religion, as it is in the Christian Religion, nor enjoyed in its Fulness, as it is in the Reformed Religion, whose glory it is that it allows its Principles and Doctrines to be critically examined and tried of all Men by the Rule of the Word, as well knowing, the more it is sifted and searched by its Professors, the more they will be still confirmed and satisfied in the truth of it.

But yet this gracious and just liberty of Christians, suffers a double abuse: One from the *Papist* Enemies, who injuriously restrain and deny it to the People. Another, by Protestants themselves, who sinfully stretch and extend it beyond the just degree and measure in which Christ allows it to them.

The

The *Pope* injuriously restrains it, discerning the danger that must necessarily follow the concession of such a liberty to the People, to compare his superstitious and erroneous Doctrines with the Rule of the Word.

St. Peter, in 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. tells the People they have a more sure Word of Prophecy, whereunto they do well that they take heed. Certainly the *Pope* forgot either that he was Peter's Successor; or that ever St. Peter told the People they did well to make use of that liberty which he denies them. Mr. Pool tells us of a Spaniard that used this Expression to an English Merchant, *You People of England (saith he) are happy, you have liberty to see with your own eyes, and to examine the Doctrines delivered to you, upon which your everlasting Life depends; but we dare not say our Souls are our own, but are commanded to believe whatever our Teachers tell us, be it never so unreasonable or ridiculous.* This is a most injurious and sinful restraint upon it on the one side.

And then Secondly, 'Tis too frequently abused, by stretching it beyond Christ's allowance and intendment upon the other side; when every ignorant and confident Person shall, under pretence of liberty granted by Christ, rudely break in upon the Sacred Text, distort, violate, and abuse the Scriptures at pleasure, by putting such strange and foreign senses upon them, as the Spirit of God never

* *Pro* 8.22. meant or intended *.

How often have I heard that Scripture, *Micah* 4. 10. *They shall be brought even to Babylon*, confidently interpreted for almost, but not full home to *Babylon*, against the very *Grammar* of the Text, and the Truth of the *History*? And so again, that place, *Isa.* 58. 8. *The glory of the Lord shall be thy reward*, through ignorance of the word, read *re-reward*, that is, a double reward to his People? But these are small matters compared with those grosser abuses of Scripture by the ignorant and unlearned, which prejudice Truth, and too much countenance Popish Reproaches.

The Remedies.

The proper way to prevent and remedy this Mischief, is not by depriving any Man of his just Liberty, either to read or judge for himself what God speaks in his Word, and think that way to cure Errors; that were the same thing as to cut off the Head to cure an Head-ach. Leave that sinful Policy with the false Religion. Let those only that know they do evil, be afraid of coming to the light. But the proper course of preventing the Mischief that come this way, is by labouring to bound and contain Christians within those limits Christ himself hath set unto this liberty which he hath granted them. And these are such as follow:

Limitation I.

Tho' Christ have indulged to the meanest and weakest Christian a liberty to read and judge of the Scriptures for himself; yet he hath neither thereby, nor therewith granted him a liberty publicly to Expound and Preach the Word to others: That's quite another thing.

Every Man that can read the Scriptures, and judge of their sense, is not thereby presently made Christ's Commission-Officer, publicly and authoritatively to Preach and Inculcate the same to others: Two things are requisite to such an Employment, viz. *Proper Qualifications*, 1 *Tim.* 3. And a solemn Call or designation, *Rom.* 10. 14. 15. The Ministry is a distinct Office, *Acts* 20. 17, 28. 1 *Thes.* 5. 12. and none but qualified and ordained Persons can authoritatively preach the Word, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. 1 *Tim.* 5. 22.

Christians may privately edify one another by reading the Scriptures, communicating their sense one to another of them, admonishing, counselling, reprovng one another in a private fraternal way, at seasons wherein they interfere not with more public Duties: But for every one that hath confidence enough (and the ignorant usually are best stock'd with it) to assume a liberty without due Qualification or Call, to expound and give the sense of Scriptures, and pour forth his crude and unstudied Notions, as the pure sense and meaning of God's Spirit in the Scriptures; this is what Christ never allowed, and through this Flood-gate Errors have broken in, and overflowed the Church of God, to the great scandal of Religion, and confirmation of Popish Enemies.

Limitation II.

Though there be no part of Scripture shut up or restrained from the knowledge or use of any Christian; yet Jesus Christ hath recommended to Christians of different Abilities, the study of some parts of Scripture rather than others, as more proper and agreeable to their Age and Stature in Religion.

Christians are by the *Apostle* rank'd into three Classes, *Fathers*, *Young-men*, and *Little Children*, 1 *John* 2. 13. and accordingly the Wisdom of Christ hath directed to that sort of Food which is proper to either: For there is in the Word all sorts of Food suitable to all Ages in Christ; there's both *Milk* for *Babe*, and *strong Meat* for *grown Christians*, *Heb.* 5. 13, 14. Those that are unskilful in the word of Righteousness, should feed upon *Milk*, that is, the easie, plain, but most nutritive and pleasant practical Doctrines of the Gospel. But *strong Meat* (saith he) that is, the more abstruse, deep, and mysterious Truths, belongeth to them that are of full Age, even those who, by reason of use, have their Senses exercised to discern both good and evil; that is, *Truth* and *Error*. To the same purpose he speaks, 1 *Cor.* 3. 2. *I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it.*

Art thou a weak unstudied Christian? a Babe in Christ? Then the easier, and more nutritive Milk of plain Gospel-Doctrine is fitter for thee, and will do thee more good, than the stronger Meat of profound and more mysterious Points; or the Bones of Controversy, which are too hard for thee to deal with.

God hath blessed this Age with great variety of sound and allowed *Expositors* in our own Language, by the diligent study of which, and prayer for the illumination and guidance of

of the Spirit, you may not only attain unto the true sense and meaning of the more plain and obvious; but also unto greater knowledge, and clearer insight into the more obscure and controverted parts of Scripture.

Cause III.

There is also another evil disposition in the Subject, rendering it easily receptive of Errors, and that is spiritual *SLOTHFULNESS* and carelessness in a due and serious search of the whole Scripture, with a sedate and rational consideration of every part and particle therein, which may give us any, though the least light to understand the mind of God in those obscure and difficult Points we search after the knowledge of.

Truth lies deep, as the rich Veins of Gold do, *Prov. 2.* If we will get the Treasure, we must not only *beg*, as he directs, *ver. 3.* but *dig* also, *ver. 4.* else as he speaks, *Prov. 14. 23. The talk of the lips tends only to poverty.* We are not to take up with that which lies uppermost, and next at hand upon the surface of the Text; but to search with the most sedate and considerative Mind into all parts of the written Word, examining every Text which hath any respect to the Truth we are searching for, heedfully to observe the Scope, Antecedents, and Consequents, and to value every *Apex, Title, and Iota*; for each of these are of Divine Authority, *Matt. 5. 18.* and sometimes greater weight is laid upon a small word, yea, upon the addition or change of a Letter in a word, as appears in the names of *Abraham* and *Sarah*.

It will require some strength of Mind, and great sedulity, to lay all parts of Scripture before us, and to compare words with words, and things with things, as the Apostle speaks, *1 Cor. 2. 13. comparing spiritual things with spiritual.* And though it be true that some important Doctrines, as that of *Justification by Faith*, are methodically disposed, and thoroughly clear'd and settled in one and the same Context; yet it is as true, that very many other points of Faith and Duty are not so digested, but are delivered *sporsum*, here a little, and there a little, as he speaks, *Isa. 28. 10.* You must not think to find all that belongs to one Head or Point of Faith, or Duty, laid together in a *System*, or common place in Scripture; but scattered abroad in several Pieces, some in the *Old Testament*, and some in the *New*, at a great distance one from another.

Now in our searches and inquiries after the full and satisfying knowledge of the Will of God in such Points, it is necessary that the whole Word of God be thoroughly searched, and all those parcels brought together to an interview. *Ex. Gr.*

If a Man would see the entire discovery that was made of Christ, to the Fathers, under the *Old Testament*, he shall not find it laid together in any one Prophet; but shall find that one speaks to one part of it, and another to another.

Moses gives the first general hint of it, *Gen. 3. 15, The seed of the Woman shall break the Serpent's head.* But then if you would know

Vol. I.

more particularly of whose Seed, according to the Flesh, he should come, you must turn to *Gen. 22. 18. In thy seed (saith God to Abraham) shall all Nations of the Earth be blessed.* And if you yet doubt what Seed God means there, you must go to the Apostle, *Gal. 3. 16. To thy seed, which is Christ.* If you would further know the place of his Nativity, the Prophet *Micah* must inform you of that, *Mic. 5. 2. it should be Bethlehem Ephrata.* If you inquire of the quality of his Parent, another Prophet gives you that, *Isa. 7. 14. Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and call his name Immanuel.* If the time of his Birth be inquired after, *Moses* and *Daniel* must inform you of that, *Gen. 49. 10. Dan. 9. 24.*

So under the *New-Testament*, If a Man inquire about the change of the Sabbath, he must not expect to find a formal repeal of the Seventh Day, and an express infirmation of the first Day in its room; but he is to consider,

First, What the *Evangelist* speaks, *Mark 2. 28. That Christ is Lord of the Sabbath*, and so had power, not only to dispense with it, but to change it.

Secondly, That on the first Day of the Week Christ rose from the dead, *Matt. 28. 1, 2.* And that this is that great Day, foretold to be the Day to be solemnized upon that account, *Psal. 118. 24.*

Thirdly, That accordingly the first Day of the Week is emphatically siled the Lord's Day, *Rev. 1. 10.* where you find his own Name written upon it.

Fourthly, You shall find this was the Day on which the Apostles and Primitive Christians assembled together for the stated and solemn performance of publick Worship, *John 20. 19;* and other publick Church-A&s and Duties, *1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.* And so by putting together, and considering all these Particulars, we draw a just Conclusion, That it is the Will of God, that since the Resurrection of Christ, the first Day of the Week should be observed as the Christian-Sabbath.

In like manner as for the Baptizing of Believers *Infants*; We are not to expect it in the express words of a *New-Testament*-Institution or Command, that *Infants* under the Gospel should be Baptized; but God hath left us to gather satisfaction about his Will and our Duty in that point, by comparing and considering the several Scriptures of the *Old* and *New-Testament* which relate to that Matter; which if we be impartial and considerate, we may do,

First, By considering, that by God's express Command, *Gen. 17. 9, 10.* the Infant Seed of his People were taken into Covenant with their Parents, and the then Sign of that Covenant commanded to be applied to them.

Secondly, That though the Sign be altered, the Promise and Covenant is still the same, and runs as it did before to Believers and their Children, *Acts 2. 38, 39.*

Thirdly, That the federal holiness of our Children is plainly asserted under the *New-Testament*, *1 Cor. 7. 14. Rom. 11. 16.*

Bbbbb

Fourthly,

Fourthly, We shall further find, that *Baptism* succeeds in the room of *Circumcision*, and that by an Argument drawn from the completeness of our Privileges under the *New-Testament*, no way inferior, but rather more extensive than those of the *Jews*, Col. 2. 10, 11, 12.

Fifthly, We shall find that upon the Conversion of any *Master* or *Parent*, the whole Household were Baptized. By putting all these things, with some others, together, we may arrive to the desired satisfaction about the Will of God in this matter.

But some Men want Abilities, and others are too sluggish and lazy to gather together, compare and weigh all these and many more hints and discoveries of the Mind of God, which would give much light unto this point; but they take an easier and cheaper way to satisfy themselves with what lies uppermost upon the surface of Scripture, and so, as it were by consent, let go, and lose their own, and their Childrens blessed and invaluable Privileges, for want of a little labour and patience to search the Scriptures; a folly which few would be guilty of, if but a small earthly inheritance were concerned therein.

The Remedies.

To cure this Spiritual sluggishness, and awaken us to the most serious and diligent search after the Will of God in such controversial and doubtful Points, that we may not neglect the smallest hint given us about it, the following *Considerations* will be found of great use and weight.

Consideration I.

The most sedate, impartial, and diligent inquiries after the Will of God revealed in his Word, is a Duty expressly enjoined by his Sovereign Command, which immediately and indispensably binds the Conscience of every Christian to the practice of it.

Remarkable is that Text to this purpose, Rom. 12. 2. *And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.* Here you find this Duty, not only associated with, but made the very end of our Non-conformity to the World, and renovation of our Minds, the very things which constitute a Christian.

And to sweeten our pains in this Work, that Will of God, for the discovery whereof we search, is presented to us under three illustrious and alluring Properties, viz. *Good, Acceptable, and Perfect.* Good it must needs be, because the Will and Essence of God, the chief Good, are not two things, but one and the same. And *Perfect* it must needs be, because it is the Beam and Standard, by which the Actions of all reasonable Creatures ought to be weighed and tried, as to the moral good or evil of them. And being both good and perfect, how can it chuse but, upon both accounts, be highly *Acceptable* and grateful to an upright Soul, as that Epithete *εὐαγγέλιον* there imports. See *reb* the Scriptures, saith Christ, Job. 5. 39. *To the Law and to the Testimony*, saith the Prophet, Isa. 8. 20. This is not matter of meer Christian Liberty,

but commanded Duty; and at our peril be it if we neglect it.

Consideration II.

No act of ours can be good and acceptable to the Lord, further than it is agreeable to his Will revealed in the Word.

No Man can be a Rule to himself. He can be no more his own Rule than his own End. One Man cannot be a Rule to another. The best of Men, and their Actions, and Examples, are only so far a Rule of imitation to us, as they themselves are ruled by the Divine revealed Will, 1 Cor. 11. 1. uncommanded acts of Worship are abominable to God, and highly dangerous to our selves; they kindle the fire of his Jealousie to the ruin and destruction of the presumptuous Sinner, *Levit.* 10. 1, 2. So that if the beauty and excellency of the Will of God be not enough to allure us, the danger of acting without the knowledge of it may justly terrify us.

Consideration III.

In this Duty we tread in the Footsteps of the wisest and holiest Men that ever went to Heaven before us.

It is not only the Characteristical note of a good Man, *Psal.* 1. 2. but it has been the constant practice of the most eminent Believers in all Ages. The greatest *Prophets*, that had this advantage of us, that they were the Organs or inspired Instruments of discovering the Will of God to others, yet were not excused from, neither did they neglect to search it diligently themselves, 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11. *Daniel*, that great Favourite of Heaven, who had the Visions and Revelations of God; yet he himself diligently searched the written Word, in order to the discovery of the Mind of God, *Dan.* 9. 2.

Consideration IV.

Every discovery of the Will of God by fervent Prayer, diligent and impartial search of the Scriptures, and all other allowed helps, gives the highest pleasure the Mind of Man is capable of in this World.

If *Archimedes*, upon the discovery of a Mathematical Truth, was so transported and ravished, that he cried out, *εὕρηκα, εὕρηκα, I have found it, I have found it*; what pleasure then must the investigation and discovery of a Divine Truth give to a sanctified Soul! *Thy words were found of me* (saith *Jeremiah*) *and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart*, Jer. 15. 16. as pleasant Food to a famished Man; for now Conscience is quieted, comforted, and cheered in the way of Duty. A Man walks not at adventure with God, as that word signifies, *Levit.* 26. 40, 41. but hath the pleasant directive light of the Word and Will of God, shining sweetly upon the path of his Duty.

Consideration V.

By this means you shall find your Faith greatly confirmed in the truth of the Scriptures.

The sweet consent, and beautiful harmony of all the parts of the written Word, is a great Argument of its Divinity; and this you will clearly discern, when by a due search you shall find things that lie at the remotest distance

stance, to conspire and consent in one, and one part casting light, as well as adding strength, to another. Thus you shall find *Vetus Testamentum in novo reuelatum, & novum in veteri velatum*. The New Testament veiled in the Old, and the Old revealed in the New: And that such a consent of things, so distant in time and place, can never be the project and invention of Man.

Consideration VI.

The diligent and impartial search and inquiry after the Will of God, out of no other design than to please him in the whole course of our Duties, will turn to us for a testimony of the integrity and sincerity of our hearts.

Thy word (said David) *have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee*: And God will not hide his Will from those that thus seek to know it. If men would apply themselves to search the World by fervent Prayer, and fixed Meditations, upon so pure a design, not bringing their prejudiced or prepossessed minds unto it; the Spirit of the Lord would guide them into all Truth, and keep them out of dangerous and destructive Errors.

Fourth Cause.

Besides the slothfulness of the mind, there is found in many Persons another evil Disposition preparing them easily to receive Errorneous Impressions; namely, the *INSTABILITY* and Fickleness of the Judgment, and Unsettledness of Mind about the Truth of the Gospel.

Of this the Apostle warns us, *Eph. 4. 14. That we henceforth be no more Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive*. None are so constant and steady in the profession of the Truth, as those that are fully convinced of, and well satisfied with the Grounds of it. Every Professor, like every Ship at Sea, should have an *inner gyration*, a ballast and steadiness of his own, *2 Pet. 3. 17.* ready and prepared to render a reason of the hope that is in him, *1 Pet. 3. 15.* able upon all occasions to give an account of those inward motives which constrained his assent to the Truth.

He that professeth a Truth ignorantly, cannot rationally supposed to adhere to it constantly. He that is but half convinced of a truth, when he engages in the profession of it, must needs be *double-minded*, a double-minded Man, as the Apostle calls him, *1 Jam. 1. 8.* half the mind hangs one way, and half another, and so it is easily moveable this way or that, with the least breath of temptation. And hence it comes to pass they are so often at a loss about their Duty and their Practice; for *Animi voluntas pendente redditur viam*. A doubtful Mind must needs make a staggering and uncertain Practice.

Errorneous Teachers are called wandering Stars, *Jude 13.* which keep no certain course as the fixed Stars do, but are sometimes nearer and sometimes remoter one from another. Thus *Errorists* first imbibe unfeeling Opinions, and then discover them in their inconstant Practices. *Bertius* wrote a Book *de Apostasia Sanctorum*, and soon after turned *Papist*. The

Socinians and *Libertines* teach, That a Man of any Perseverance in Religion may be saved, so that he walk not contrary to his own Light: Such Doctrine directly tends to *Scepticism* in Religion.

And this *Instability* of the Judgment proceeds either from *Hypocrisis* or *Weakness*. Sometimes from *Hypocrisis*; All Hypocrites are *double-minded Men*: *1 Jam. 4. 8.* *The double-minded man (that is the Hypocrite) is unstable in all his ways*. One of that number was not alhamed to say, *Se duas habere animas in eodem corpore, unam Deo dicatam, alteram unicuique illam vellet*: That he had two Souls in one Body, one for God, and another for whosoever would have it.

Sometimes *Instability* of the mind is the effect only of *Weakness* in the Judgment, proceeding merely from want of age and growth in Christ, not having as yet attained Senses exercised to discern both good and evil, *Heb. 5. 14.* they are but Children in Christ, and Children are easie and credulous Creatures, *Eph. 4. 14.* presently taken with a new Toy, and as soon weary of it; such a wavering and instable temper invites temptation, and falls an easie prey into its hands.

I confess some Cases may happen, where the Pretences on both sides may be so fair, as to put a judicious Christian to a stand what to chuse; but then their deliberation will be answerable, and then they will not change their Opinions every Month, as *Scepticks* do. Wherever Error finds such a mutable disposition, its work is half done before it make one assault. How many wavering Professors at this day lie in Temptation's way? and how great a harvest have *Errorists* and *Hereticks* had among them? There's not a Mountebank comes upon the Stage, but he shall find ten times more Customers for his Druggs, than the most Learned and Experienced Physician. The giddy-headed Multitude have more regard to Novelty, than Truth.

The Remedies.

How necessary and desirable are some effectual Rules and Remedies in this Case! O what a mercy would it be to the Professors of these days, to have their Minds fixed, and their Judgments settled in the Truths of Christ! Happy is that man whose Judgment is so guarded, that no dangerous Error or Heretic can commit a Rape upon it. To this end I shall here commend the four following Rules to prevent this vertiginous Malady in the Heads of Christians.

Rule 1. Look warily to it that you get a real inward implantation into Christ, and lay the foundation deep and firm in a due and serious deliberation of Religion whenever you engage in the publick profession of it.

To this sense sound the Apostle's words, *Col. 2. 6, 7.* *As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as you have been taught. Fertility and Stability in Christ, a pair of inestimable Blessings, depend upon a good rooting of the Soul in him at first. He that thrusts a dead stick into the Ground, may*

may easily pull it up again, but so he cannot do by a well-rooted Tree. A colour raised by violent action, or a great Fire, soon dies away; but that which is natural or constitutional will hold. Every thing is as its foundation is. 'Twas want of a good root and due depth of earth which soon turned the green Corn into dry Stubble, *Matth. 13. 21.*

Rule II. Labour after an inward Experimental taste of all those Truths which you profess.

This will preserve your minds from wavering and hesitation about the certainty and reality of them. We will not easily part with those Truths, which have sensibly shed down their sweet influences upon our Hearts, *Heb. 10. 34.* No Sophister can easily persuade a Man that hath tasted the sweetness of Honey, that it is a bitter and unpleasant thing; *Non est disputandum de gustu*: You cannot easily persuade a man out of his Senses.

Rule III. Study hard and pray earnestly for satisfaction in the present Truths; *2. Pet. 1. 12.* *That you may be established in the grace of God, in the Truth that now is under opposition and controversy.* Be not ignorant of the Truths that lie in present hazard.

Antiquated Opinions that are more abstracted from our present Interest, are no Tryals of the soundness of our Judgments, and integrity of our Hearts, as the controversies and conflicts of the present Times are. Every Truth hath its time to come upon the Stage, and enter the Lists; some in one Age, and some in another; but Providence seems to have cast the Lot of your Nativity for the honour and defence of those Truths, with which Error is struggling and conflicting in your time.

Rule IV. Lastly, Be thoroughly sensible of the benefit and good of establishment, and of the evil and danger of a wavering Mind and Judgment.

Be not carried about with divers and strange Doctrines (saith the Apostle) for it is a good thing that the heart be established, &c. *Heb. 13. 9.* Established Souls are the honour of Truth. It was the honour of Religion in the primitive days, that when the Heathens would proverbially express an Impossibility, they used to say, *You may as soon turn a Christian from Christ, as do it.*

The Fickleness of Professors is a stumbling-block to the World. They'll say as *Cato* of the Civil Wars betwixt *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, *quem fugiam, video, quem sequar, non video*: They know whom to avoid, but not whom to follow. And as the honour of Truth, so the flourishing of your own Souls depend on it. A Tree often removed from one Soil to another, can never be expected to be fruitful, 'tis well if it make a shift to live.

Fifth Cause.

Another inward Cause disposing men to receive Erroneous Impressions, is an unreasonable EAGERNESS to snatch at any Doctrine or Opinion that promised ease to an anxious Conscience.

Men that are under the frights and terrors of Conscience are willing to listen to any

thing that offers present relief. Of all the Troubles in the World, those of the Mind and Conscience are most intolerable. And those that are in pain are glad of ease, and readily catch at any thing that seems to offer it.

This seems to be the thing which led those poor distressed Wretches, intimated *Micah 6. 6.* into their gross Mistakes and Errors about the method of the remission of their Sins. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the high God? shall I come before him with Burnt-offerings, with Calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, or with ten thousand of Rivers of Oyl? Shall I give my First-born for my Transgression, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul? They were ready to purchase inward peace, and buy out their pardon at any rate. Nothing but the twinges of Conscience could have extorted these things from them. Great is the efficacy and torment of a guilty Conscience.*

Satan, who feels more of this in himself than any other Creature in the World, and knows how ready poor ignorant, but distressed Sinners, are to catch at any thing that looks like ease or comfort, and being jealous what these Troubles of Conscience may issue into, prepares for them such Erroneous Doctrines and Opinions under the names of *Anodines* and quieting *Recipe's*, by swallowing of which they feel some present ease; but their Disease is thereby made so much the more incurable.

* 'Tis upon this account he hath found such vent in the World for his Penances, Pilgrimages and Indulgences among the Papists. But seeing this Ware will not go off among the Reformed and more enlightened Professors of Christianity, he changeth his hand, and stirreth other Doses under other Names to quiet sick and distressed Souls, before ever their frights of Conscience come to settle into true Repentance and Faith in the Blood of Christ, by dressing up, and presenting to them such Opinions as these, viz.

That they may boldly apply to themselves all the Promises of Pardon and Peace, without any respect at all to Repentance or Faith in themselves; that it is not at all needful, nay, that it is illegal and sinful to have any respect to these things, soasmuch as their Sins were pardoned, and they justified from Eternity; and that the Covenant of Grace is in all Respects absolute, and is made to Sinners, as Sinners, without any regard to their Faith or Repentance; and whatever Sins there be in them, God sees them not. †

† *Salmarsht,* in the Title-page of his Book called *Free-grace*, shews you the Sovereign Virtue of Antinomian Principles, to quiet Troubles of Conscience of 12 years growth.

To such a Charm of Troubles as this, how earnestly doth the Ear of a distressed Conscience listen! how greedily doth it suck in such pleasing words? Are all Sins that are pardoned, pardoned before they are committed? and does the Covenant of Grace require neither

* *Mr. Gataker, in his Book against Salmarsht, p. 27. tells me of one that had taken ill Courses, and being under much trouble of mind, could not be quiet till he turned Papist, and had been stirred and advised by a Priest.*

† *Salmarsht,* in

ther Repentance nor Faith antecedently to the application of the Promises? how groundless then are all my Fears and Troubles? This, like a Dose of *Opium*, quiets, or rather stupifies the raging Conscience: for even an Error in Judgment, till it be detected and discovered to be so, quiets and comforts the Heart, as well as principles of Truth; but whenever the fallacy shall be detected, whether here or hereafter, the anguish of Conscience must be increased, or (which is worse) left desperate.

The Remedies.

To prevent and cure this Mistake and Error in the Soul, by which it is fitted and prepared to catch any Erroneous Principle (which is but plausible) for its present relief and ease, I shall desire my Reader seriously to ponder and consider the following *Queries* upon this Case.

Query I. Whether by the vote of the whole Rational World, a good Trouble be not better than a false Peace? Present ease is desirable, but eternal safety is much more so: and if these two cannot consist under the present Circumstances of the Soul, Whether it be not better to endure for a time these painful pangs, than feel more acute and eternal ones, by quieting Conscience with false Remedies before the time?

'Tis bad to lie tossing a few Days' under a laborious *Fever*; but far worse to have that Fever turned into a *Letargy* or fatal *Apoplexy*. Erroneous Principles may rid the Soul of its present Pain, and eternal hopes and safety together. Acute Pains are better than a senseless Stupidity. Though the present rage of Conscience be not a right and kindly conviction, yet it may lead to it, and terminate in faith and union with Christ at last, if Satan do not this way practise upon it, and quench it before its time.

Query II. Bethink your selves seriously, Whether Troubles so quieted and laid asleep, will not revive and turn again upon thee with a double force, as soon as the virtue of the Drug (I mean the Erroneous Principle) hath spent its self?

The efficacy of Truth is eternal, and will maintain the peace it gives, for ever; but all delusions must vanish, and the Troubles which they damnd up for a time, break out with a greater force. Satan employs two sorts of *Witches*. Some to torment the Bodies of Men with grievous pain and anguish: but then he hath his *White-Witches* at hand to relieve and ease them. And have these poor Wretches any great cause (think you) to boast of the Cure, who are eased of their Pains at the price of their Souls?

Much like unto this, are the cures of inward Troubles by Erroneous Principles. I lament the Case of blinded *Papists*, who by *Pilgrimages*, and *Offerings*, to the *Shrines* of *Tiular Saints*, attempt the cure of a lesser Sin, by committing a greater. Is it because there is not a God in *Israel*, who is able in due season to pacify Conscience with proper and durable Gospel-Remedies, that we suffer our

Vol. I.

Troubles thus to precipitate us into the Snares of Satan for the sake of present ease?

Query III. Read the Scriptures, and inquire whether God's People, who have lain long under sharp inward Terrors, have not at last found settlement and inward peace by those very Methods, which the Principles that quiet you, do utterly exclude?

If you will fetch your Peace from a groundless Notion, that your Sins were pardoned, and your Persons justified from all Eternity, and therefore you may apply boldly and confidently to your selves the choicest Promises and Privileges in the Gospel, without any regard to Faith or Repentance wrought by the Spirit in your Souls: I am sure holy *David* took another course for the settlement of his Conscience, *Psal.* 51. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. And it hath been the constant practice of the *Saints* in all Ages, to clear their Title to the Righteousness of Christ wrought without them, by the Works of his Spirit wrought within them.

Sixth Cause.

The next Evil Temper in the Subject, preparing and disposing it for Error, is an easie *CREDULITY*, or sequacious humour in Men, rendering them apt to receive things upon trust from others, without due and thorough examination of the Grounds and Reasons of them, themselves.

This is a disposition fitted to receive any impression Seducers please to make upon them: they are said to deceive the Hearts of the simple, *Lucan.* i. e. credulous, but well-meaning People that suspect no harm. 'Tis said, *Prov.* 14. 15. *the simple believeth every word.* Through this Sluce or Flood-gate, what a multitude of Errors in *Papery* have overflowed the People! They are told, they are not able to judge for themselves, but must take the matters of their Salvation upon trust from their Spiritual Guides; and so the silly People are easily seduced, and made easily receptive of the grossest Absurdities their ignorant Leaders please to impose upon them.

And it were to be wished, That those two Points, *viz. Ministrorum muta officia, & populi caeca obsequia*, the dumb Services of their Ministers, and the blind Obedience of the People had stay'd within the *Papists* Confines. But alas, alas! how many simple *Protestants* be there, who may be said to carry their Brains in other Mens Heads? and like silly Sheep follow the next in the tract before them; especially if their Leaders have but wit and art enough to hide their Errors under specious and plausible Pretences. How many poisonous Drugs hath Satan put off under the gilded Titles of *Antiquity*, *Zeal for God*, *higher attainments in godliness*, *new Lights*? &c. How natural is it for Men to follow in the Tract, and be tenacious of the Principles and Practices of their Progenitors? Multitudes seem to hold their Opinions *jure Hereditario*, by an Hereditary Right, as if their Faith descended to them the same way their Estates do.

The Emperor of *Morocco* told King *John's* Ambassador, That he had read *St. Paul's* Epistles; And truly (said he) *were I now to change my Religion, I would embrace Christianity before*

Cccccc

any

any Religion in the World: but every Man ought to dye in that Religion he received from his Ancestors.

Many honest, well-meaning, but weak Christians, are also easily beguiled by specious pretences of new Light, and higher attainments in Reformation. This makes the weaker sort of Christians pliable to many dangerous Errors cunningly insinuated under such taking Titles. What are most of the Erroneous Opinions now vogue'd in the World, but old Errors under new Names and Titles?

The Remedies.

The Remedies and Preventions in this Case are such as follow.

Remedy I. 'Tis beneath a Man to profess any Opinion to be his own, whilst the grounds and reasons of it are in other Mens keeping, and wholly unknown to himself.

If a Man may tell God after his Father, then sure he may and ought to try and examine Doctrines and Points of Faith after him. We are commanded to be ready to give an account of the hope that is in us, and not to say, this or that is my Judgment or Opinion, but let others give an account of the ground and reason of it.

I confess, if he that leads me into an Error were alone exposed to the hazard, and I quit and free, whatever become of him; it were quite another thing. But when our Saviour tells us, *Matth. 16. 14.* that both (that is, the Follower as well as the Leader) fall into the ditch; at my peril be it if I follow without Eyes of my own. That's but a weak building that is shored up by a prop from a Neighbour's Wall. How many Men have ruined their Estates by Suretiship for others? but of all Suretiship none so dangerous as spiritual Suretiship. *We neither ought* (as a late Worthy speaks) *to defy the Judgment of the weakest, nor yet on the other side to defy the Judgment of the strongest Christian.* He that pins his Faith upon another Man's Sleeve, knows not whither he will carry it.

Remedy II. As you ought not to abuse your Christian Privilege and Liberty to try all things, *1 Thess. 5. 21.* so neither on the other side to undervalue or part with it. See the things that so much concern your eternal peace with your own Eyes.

I shewed you before, this Liberty is abused by extending it too far; and under the notion of proving all things, many embolden themselves to innovate and entertain any thing: yet beware of bartering such a precious Privilege for the fairest Promises others can make in lieu of it. I would not slight nor undervalue the Piety and Learning of others, nor yet put out my own Eyes to see by theirs.

Remedy III. Before you adventure to espouse the Opinions of others, diligently observe and mark the fruits and consequences of those Opinions in the Lives of the zealous Abettors and Propagators of them: *By their fruits (saith Christ) ye shall know them.*

When the Opinion or Doctrine naturally tends to looseness, or when it sucks and draws away all a Man's Zeal to maintain and dis-

fuse it, and practical Religion thereby visibly languishes in their Conversations, 'tis time for you to make a pause, before you advance one step farther towards it.

Seventh Cause.

The next Evil Disposition that I shall note in the Subject, is a vain *CURIOSITY* of Mind, or an itching desire to pry into things unrevealed, at least above our ability to search out and discover.

'Tis an Observation as true as ancient, *Pruritus aurium scabies Ecclesie*, itching Ears come to a Scab upon the face of the Church. The Itch of Novelty produceth the Scab of Error. Of this Disease the Apostle warns us, *2 Tim. 4. 3.* *For the time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears.* Nothing will please them but new Notions, and new modes of Language and Method, Tone and Gesture.

Sound Doctrine is the only substantial and solid Food that nourishes and strengthens the Heart of the new Creature: but vain Scepticks nauseate and despise this as trite, vulgar, cheap and low. Nothing humours them but Novelties and Rarities: their unsettled Brains must be wheel'd about, *diversis modis et locis, with divers and strange Doctrines, Heb. 13. 9.* Novelty and Variety are the only Properties that commend Doctrines to wanton Palats. Hence it is they so boldly intrude into things they have not seen, *Col. 2. 18.* These Cyril fity calls τῶν ἀκαταστάτων ἀποστάσεων, the domincerings, or darings of bold Spirits.

The Schoolmen have filled the World with a thousand ungrounded Fancies, as the distinct Offices and Orders of Angels; and higher flights of fancy than these, which seem to be invented for no other end or use, but to please the itching Ears of the Curious.

There is not only a *vesana temeritas Genethliacorum*, a wild and daring rashness of Astrologers, presuming to foretell Futurities, and the Fates of Kingdoms, as well as particular Persons, from the conjunctions and influences of the Stars; but there is also found as high a presumption and boldness among Men in matters of Religion.

Satan is well aware of this humour in Men, and how exceeding serviceable it is to his Design; and therefore having the very knack of clawing and pleasing itching Ears with taking-Novelties, he is never wanting to feed their Minds with a pleasing variety, and fresh succellion of them: new Opinions are still invented and minted, in which the dangerous Hooks of Error are hid. If Men were once cured of this spiritual itch, and their Minds reduced to that temper and sobriety, as to be pleased with, and bless God for the plain revealed Truths of the Gospel; Satan would drive but a poor Trade, and find but few Customers for his Erroneous Novelties.

The Remedies.

The proper Remedies to cure this itch after Novelty, or dangerous Curiosity of the Mind, are

Remedy

Remedy I. Due reflection upon the manifold Mischiefs that have ensued into the World this way.

It was this Curiosity and desire to know, that overthrew our first Parents, *Gen. 3. 6.* When the Woman saw that the Tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a Tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof. The very same way by which he let in the first Error, he hath let thousands into the World since that Day. Nothing is more common in the World, than for an old Error to obtain afresh under the name of new Light. Satan hath the very art of turkening stale Errors after the mode of the present times, and make them current and passable, as new Discoveries and rare Noveltyes.

Thus he puts off *Libertinism*, the old Sin of the World, under the Title of *Christian Liberty*. What a troop of *Pagan Idolatrous Rites* were by this means introduced among the *Papists*? A great part of *Popery* is but *Ethnicism* revived, *Heathenism* revived. The *Pagans Pontifex Maximus* was revived under the new Title of *Pope*. The *Gentiles Lustrations* in the *Papish Holy-Water*. Their *Noventidiale sacrum*, or *Sacrifice* nine Days after the burial of the Party, in the *Papish Masses* for the dead. Their *Alvarium Fratrum*, in *Cloisters of Monks and Fryars*. Their *Enchantments*, in *Papish Exorcisms*. Their *Asyla*, in *Papish Sanctuaries*. With multitudes more of *Pagan Rites* quite out of date in *Christianism*, introduced again under new names in *Popery*; as was intimated, *Rev. 11. 2.* and *Rev. 13. 15.*

Quod ne-
scitur sine
crimine,
ne disci-
tatur cum
discrimine.

Remedy II. Be satisfied that God hath not left his People to seek their Salvation, or spiritual subsistence among curious, abstruse and doubtful Notions; but in the great, solid, and plainly revealed Truths of the Gospel, *John 17. 3.* This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. In facili & absoluto stat eternitas: the great concerns of our Salvation are plain and easie to be understood.

Remedy III. Vain Curiosity is a dangerous Snare of Satan. By such Trifles as these, he devours our time, eats up our strength, and diverts our Minds from the necessary and most important business of Religion. Whilst we immerse our Thoughts in these pleasing, but barren Contemplations, Heart-work, Closet-work, Family-work, lie by neglected. Whilst we are employed in garnishing the Dish with Flowers, and curious Figures, the cunning Cheat takes away the Meat our Souls should subsist by.

Eighth Cause.

Pride and Arrogancy of HUMAN REASON, is another Evil Disposition, molding and preparing the Mind for Errors. When Men are once conceited of the strength and perspicacity of their own carnal Reasons and Apprehensions, nothing is more usual than for such Men to run mad with Reason into a thousand Mistakes and Errors. To

this cause Ecclesiastical Historians ascribe the Errors that infect the Church.*

* Deinde,

& huma-

ne rationis sapientia quæ religioni plurimum semper nocuit, seu Philosophia, non paucas ex sese produxit hæreses. Namque eo tempore Philosophica studia maxime vigebant; & suis argutiis, seu (ut ipsi putabant) demonstrationibus, in sua secentia ita confirmati erant: ut nihil verum existimarent, quod ab eorum conceptis jamdudum opinionibus discreparet. *Magdeb. in Cent. a. cap. 5. pag. 55.*

Reason indeed is the highest natural excellency of Man: it exalts him above all Earthly Creatures, and in its primitive Perfection almost equalized him with Angels, *Heb. 2. 7.* The Pleasures which result from its exercises and experiments, transcend all the delights and pleasures of sense. How common is it for Men to dote upon their own intellectual Beauty, and glory in their Victories over weaker Understandings? And tho' the reason of fallen Man is greatly wounded and weakened by Sin; yet it conceits it self to be as strong and clear as ever; and with *Samson*, when his Locks were shorn, goes forth as before time, being neither sensible of its own weakness, or of the mysterious and unsearchable depths of Scripture.

Reason is our Arbitrer and Guide by the institution and Law of Nature, in civil and natural Affairs: 'tis the beam and standard at which we weigh them. It is an home-born Judge and King in the Soul: Faith comes in as a stranger to Nature, and so it is dealt with, even as an Intruder into Reason's Province, just as the *Sodomiters* dealt with *Lot*. It refuseth to be an Underling to Faith. Out of this Arrogancy of carnal Reason, as from *Pandora's Box*, swarms of Errors are flown abroad into the World.

By this means *Socinianism* first started, and hath since propagated it self. They look upon it as a ridiculous and unaccountable thing to reason, that the Son should be co-equal and co-eternal with the Father: that God should forgive sins freely, and yet forgive none but upon full satisfaction. That Christ should make that satisfaction by his Sufferings, and yet be pars læsa, the Party offended, and so make satisfaction to himself: with many more of the like stamp.

Yea, *Atheism*, as well as *Socinianism*, are births from this Womb. 'Tis proud and carnal Reason which quarrels at the Creation of the World, and seems to triumph in its uncontrollable Maxim, *Ex nihilo nihil fit, out of nothing comes nothing*. It looks upon the Doctrine of the Resurrection with a deriding smile, as a thing incredible. It thinks it hard and harsh that God should command Men to turn themselves to him, and threaten them with damnation in case of refusal; and yet at the same time Man should not have in himself a sufficient Power, and a free will to do this, without the supernatural and preventing Grace of God. It thinks it a ridiculous thing for such a great and solemn Ordinance of God as *Baptism* is, to pass upon such a Subject as an Infant of a Week old, which is not capable to understand the Ends and Uses of it. Hence it is some over-heated Zealots have not stuck to say, That we have as good warrant and reason to baptize *Cats, Dogs, and Horses*, as we have to baptize Men.

Mr. Samuel
Clark's
Golden
Applier.
have p. 149.

have to baptize Infants. Oh the madness of Carnal Reason!

The Remedies.

To take down the Arrogance, and prevent the mischief of Carnal Reasonings, let us be convinced,

Remedy I. That it is the Will of God, that Reason in all Believers should resign to Faith, and all Ratiocination submit to Revelation.

Reason is no better than an Usurper, when it presumes to arbitrate matters belonging to Faith and Revelation. * Reason's proper place is to sit at the feet of Faith, and instead of searching the secret grounds and reasons, to adore and admire the great and unfathomable Mysteries of the Gospel.

* Man having sinned by Pride, the Wisdom of God humbles him at the very root of the Tree of Knowledge, and makes him deny his own Understanding, and submit to Faith; or else for ever to lose his desired Felicity. Laud against Fisher, p. 5.

None of God's Works are unreasonable, but many of them are above Reason. It was as truly, as ingenuously said by one; Never doth Reason shew it self more reasonable, than when it ceaseth to reason about things that are above Reason. Where is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this World? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this World? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the World by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, 1 Cor. 1. 20, 21. 'Tis not Reason, but Faith that must save us.

The Wisdom of God in the Gospel, is wisdom in a Mystery, even hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the World unto our glory, 1 Cor. 2. 7. Such wisdom as the most Eagle-eyed Rationalists and famed Philosophers of the World understood not. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of Man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them to us by his spirit, *ibid.* ver. 9, 10.

Remedy II. Be convinced of the weakness and deep corruption of natural Reason, and this will restrain its Arrogance, and make it modest and wary. A convinced and renewed Soul is conscious to it self of its own weakness and blindness, and therefore dares not pry audaciously into the Arcana Cæli, nor summon the great God to its Bar. It finds it self puffed by the Mysteries of Nature, and therefore concludes it self an incompetent Judge of the Mysteries of Faith.

The Arrogancy of Reason is the reigning Sin of the Unregenerate, though it be a Disease with which the Regenerate themselves are infected. When Conviction shall do its work upon the Soul, the Plumes of spiritual Pride quickly fall; and it saith with Job: Once have I spoken, but I will speak no more; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further. q. d. I have done, Father, I have done; I have uttered things that I understood not, Job 42. 3. Spiritual Illumination cures this Ambition.

Remedy III. Consider the manifold Mischief and Evils flowing from the pride of Reason.

It doth not only fill the World with Errors and Distractions; but it also invades the

Rights of Heaven, and casts a vile reflection upon the Wisdom, Sovereignty, and Veracity of God. It lifts up it self against his Wisdom, not considering that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, 1 Cor. 1. 25. It spurns at his glorious Sovereignty, not considering that he giveth no account of his matters, Job 33. 13. It questions his Veracity, in saying with Nicodemus, How can these things be? Joh. 3. 9.

Cause IX.

The last Evil Disposition I shall here take notice of in the Subject, is rash and ignorant Z E A L; a Temper preparing the Mind both to propagate furiously, and receive easily Erroneous Doctrines and Opinions.

When there is in the Soul more heat than light; when a fervent Spirit is governed by a weak Head, such a temper of Spirit Satan desires, and singles out as fittest for his purpose, especially when the Heart is graceless, as well as the Understanding weak. A blind Horse of an high Mettle will carry the Rider into any Pit, and venture over the most dangerous Precipices.

Such were the Superstitious Jewish Zealots: they had a Zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. This *ἄνευ νοῦ* blind Zeal, St. Paul charges justly upon the Jewish Bigots, Rom. 10. 2. as the proper cause of their dangerous Errors about the great point of Justification: and surely no Man understood the evil of it more than he, who in his unregenerate state was transported by it to the most furious persecution of the Saints, Acts 26. 11. and even to dotage, and extreme fondness upon the Erroneous Traditions of his Fathers, Gal. 1. 14.

Blind Zeal is a Sword in a Mad-man's hand. No Persecutor to a Conscientious one, whose Erroneous Conscience offers up the blood of the Saints to the glory of God, Job 16. 2. The blind, but zealous Pharisees would compass Sea and Land to make one Profelyte, Mat. 23. 15 as our Modern Pharisees, the Jesuits, have since done, who have mingled themselves with the remotest and most barbarous Nations, to draw them to the Romish Error. Of the same temper were the false Teachers taxed by the Apostle, Gal. 4. 17. they zealously affect you, but not well: yea, they would exclude you (*viz.* from our Society and Ordinances) that you might affect them.

And as it is the great Instrument by which Satan propagates Errors, so it makes a fit temper in the Souls of the People to receive them. For by this means Error gains the possession of the Affections, without passing a previous and due test by the Understanding, and so gains the Soul by the advantage of a Surprise. Every thing, by how much the more weak and ignoble it is, by so much the more it watcheth upon Surprisals and Advantages. Error cares not to endure the due examination and test of Reason; and therefore seeks to gain by surprisal, what it despairs of ever gaining by a plain and fair trial.

There be few Errorists in the World of Alexander's Mind, who would rather lose the day, than

than *steal the Victory*. Hence it comes to pass that the greatest number of those they lead Captives are silly *Women*, as the *Apostle* speaks, who are the most affectionate, but least judicious *Sex*.

From this *blind Zeal* it is, that they cunningly wind their Erroneous Opinions into all their Discourses, where they have any hope to prevail. A rational and modest Contradiction puts them into a Flame, it breaks the nearest bonds of Friendship and Society.

Rabshakeb in 2 *King* 18. would not treat with *Hezekiah's* Counsellors of State, but with the common People upon the Wall: And Error cares not to treat with sound Reason, able to sift it through the Scripture-search, but with the Affections; as well knowing, it is in vain to make War in Reason's Territories without first gaining a Party among the Affections.

The Remedies.

The best *Defensatives* against Erroneous Contagions in this case, are to be found in the following Particulars.

Defensive I.

Reflect seriously and sadly upon the manifold Mischiefs occasioned every-where, and in all Ages of the World, by rash Zeal.

Revolve Church-Histories, and you shall find, that scarce any cruel Persecution hath flamed in the World, which hath not been kindled by blind Zeal. Turn over all the Records, both of *Pagan* and *Popish* Persecutions, and you shall still find these two Observations confirmed and verified.

First, That ignorant Zeal hath kindled the Fires of Persecution; and *Secondly*, That the more zealous any have been for the ways of Error and Falshood, still the more implacably fierce and cruel they have been to the sincere Servants of God. None like a Superstitious *Devoto* to manage the Devil's work of Persecution thoroughly and to purpose. They'll rush violently and head-long into the blood of their dearest Relations, or most eminent Saints, to whose sides the Devil sets this sharp Spur. Superstitious Zeal draws all the Strength and Power of the Soul into that one Design; and wo to him that stands in the way of such a man, if God interpose not betwixt him and the Stroke. It was a rational wish of him that said, *Liberet me Deus ab homine unius tantum negotii*, God deliver me from a man of one only Design.

Now consider, Reader, if thy judgment be *weak*, and thy affections *warm*, how much thou liest exposed, not only to Errors which may ruin thy self, but also to Tongue and Hand-persecution, wherein Satan may manage thy Zeal for the Injury or Ruine of those that are better than thy self: And wihal consider, how many dreadful threatnings are found in Scripture against the Instruments of Persecution, so employed and managed by Satan.

Certainly, Reader, it were better for thee to stand with thy naked Breast before the mouth of a discharging Canon, than that thy Soul should stand under this guilt, before such a Scripture-threatening as that, *Psal.* 7. 13.

Vol. I.

He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his Arrows against the Persecutor. And none more likely to become such, than those of thine own temper and complexion; especially if Grace be wanting in the Heart, whilst Zeal for erroneous Principles eats up the Affections.

Second Defensive.

Consider what Mischiefs zeal for an Error will do thine own Soul, as well as others.

It will wholly ingross thy Time, Thoughts, and Strength; so that if there be any gracious Principle in thee, it shall not be able to thrive and prosper: For look, as a Fever takes off the natural Appetite from Food, so will erroneous Zeal take off thy Spiritual Appetite from Meditation, Prayer, Heart-examination, and all other the most necessary and nourishing Duties of Religion, by reason whereof thy Grace must languish.

When thy Soul, with David's, should be filled and feasted, as with Marrow and Fatness, by delightful Meditations of God upon thy Bed, thou wilt be rolling in thy Mind thy barren and insipid Notions, which yield no Food or Spiritual Strength to thy Soul; thou wilt lye musing how to dissolve the Arguments and Objections against thine Errors, when thou shouldst rather be employed in solving the just and weighty Objections that lye against thy sincerity and interest in Christ, which were time far better improved.

Third Defensive.

Consider how baneful this inordinate Zeal hath been to Christian Society, lamentably defacing, and almost dissolving it every where, to the unspeakable detriment of the Churches.

We read, *Mal.* 3. 16. of a blessed time, when they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a Book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name. Oh happy time! *Halcien* days! I, my self, remember the time, when the Zeal of the Saints spent it self in provoking one another to Love and Good Works, in joint and fervent Prayer, in inward, experimental, and edifying Communion; my Soul hath them still in remembrance, and is cast down within me: For alas! alas! how do I see every where Christian Communion turned into vain janglings? Churches and Families into neer Cock-pits? Mens Discouragements falling as naturally into Contentions about Trifles, as they were wont to do into Heavenly and Experimental Subjects, to the unspeakable disgrace and damage of Religion.

Fourth Defensive.

That Opinion is justly to be suspected for erroneous, which comes in at the Postern-door of the Affections; and not openly and fairly at the right Gate of an enlightened and well-satisfied Judgment. 'Tis a Thief that cometh in at the Back-door, at least strongly to be suspected for one. *True* Courts the *Mistress*, makes its first and fairest Addresses to the Un-derstanding. Error bribes the *Handmaid*, and labours first to win the Affections, that by their influence it may corrupt the Judgment.

D d d d

And

And thus you see, besides the innocent *Occasion*, viz. *God's Permission of Errors* in the World, for the trial of his People, Nine proper *Causes of Errors* found in the evil dispositions of the Minds of Men, which prepare them to receive erroneous Doctrines and Impressions, viz.

1. A wrangling humour at the pretended *Obscurity of Scripture*.
2. The Abuse of that *Christian Liberty* purchased by Christ.
3. *Slothfulness* in searching the whole Word of God.
4. *Fickleness and Instability of Judgment*.
5. *Eagerness* after *Anodines* to ease a distressed *Conscience*.
6. An easy *Credulity* in following the Judgments and Examples of others.
7. Vain *Curiosity*, and prying into unrevealed Secrets.
8. The *Pride and Arrogancy of Human Reason*.
9. *Blind Zeal*, which spurs on the Soul, and runs it upon dangerous Precipices.

We next come to consider the principal *Impulsive Cause*, by which *Errors* are propagated and disseminated in the World.

Cause X.

Come we next in the proper order to consider the Principal *Impulsive Cause of Errors*; which is *SATAN* working upon the predisposed Matter in the corrupt Nature of Man. * The Centurion speaking of the strange and sudden growth of *Errors and Heresies*, immediately after the planting of the Gospel by Christ, and the Apostles ascribe it to *Satan*.

* Quæ quidem res abunde docet diam esse Diaboli malitiam: qui videtur, atque prostratus à Christo, nihilominus ausus est ejus Verbum ac totam religionem formam, totis opinionibus ac blasphemis conspuere, lacerare, & propinodum evertere. Ut autem potentia hujus maligni spiritus in conspectu sit & quasi primæ scaturigines plurimarum hæresium, quæ postea, velut alii in se recepti, ita in ipsum in modum excreverunt, &c. *Hist. Magdeb. Gent. 1 Lib. 2. Cap. 5. p. 348.*

When Swinkfeld sent his Books to Luther, he told the Messenger, the Devil was the Author of them; and the Lord rebuke thee Satan, was the Answer so your minds should be corrupted from the simple returned city that is in Christ.

He is exceeding skilful and dexterous in citing and wresting the Scriptures to serve his vile Designs and Purposes; and as impudently daring, as he is crafty and cunning; as appears in the History of Christ's temptation in the Desert, *Mat. 4. 6.* where he cites one part of that Promise, *Psal. 91. 11.* and suppresseth the rest; shews the encouragement, viz. *He shall give his Angels charge over thee*; but clips off the limitation of it, viz. *to keep thee in all thy ways: In viam, non in præcipitium*, In our lawful ways, not in rash and dan-

gerous Precipices; as *Bernard* well glosseth.

And 'tis worth observation, that he introduceth multitudes of *Errors* into the World, under the unsuspected notions of admirable *Prophecylicks*, and approved *Preservatives* from all mischiefs and dangers from himself. Under this notion, he hath nearly and covertly slid into the World, *Holy-water, Crossings, Reliques of Saints*, and almost innumerable other superstitious Rites.

Erroneous Teachers are the Ministers of Satan, however they transform themselves into Ministers of Righteousness, *2 Cor. 11. 15.* and the subtil dangerous Errors they broach, are fitly stiled by the Spirit of God, *τὰ ἑκστα τὰ σατανᾶ*, the depths of Satan, *Rev. 2. 24.* The corrupt Teachers, the *Gnosicks*, &c. called them Depths, i. e. great Mysteries, high and marvellous attainments in Knowledge; but the Spirit of God fits a very proper *Epihete* to them, They are *Satanical depths*, and Mysteries of Iniquity. Now the level and design of Satan herein is double.

First, He aims at the ruin and damnation of those that vent and propagate them; upon which account the Apostle calls them *αἰσχροὶ ἑποχῆται*, *2 Pet. 2. 1.* destructive or (as we render it) damnable Heresies. And because God will preserve the Souls of his own from this mortal Contagion, therefore,

Secondly, He endeavours by lesser Errors to busy the Minds, and check the growth of Grace in the Souls of the Saints, by employing them about things so foreign to true godliness, and the power thereof, *Heb. 13. 9.*

The Remedies.

The Rules for prevention and recovery, are these that follow:

Rule I. Pray earnestly for a thorow change of the state and temper of thy Soul, by sound *Conversion and Regeneration*.

Conversion turns us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, *Acts 26. 18.* They are his own slaves and vassals that are taken captive by him at his will, *2 Tim. 2. 16.* A Sanctified Heart is a Sovereign defensive against Erroneous Doctrines; it furnishes the Soul with spiritual Eyes, judicious Ears, and a distinguishing Taste, by which it may discern both Good and Evil, Truth and Error, *Heb. 5. 14.* yea, it puts the Soul at once under the conduct of the Spirit, and protection of the Promise, *John 16. 13.* and though this doth not secure a Man from all lesser Mistakes, yet it effectually secures him from greater ones, which are inconsistent with Christ and Salvation.

Rule II. Acquaint your selves with the wiles and methods of Satan, and be not ignorant of his devices, *2 Cor. 2. 11.*

When once you understand the wail and paint with which he sets off the ugly face of Error, you will not easily be enamoured with it. Pretences of Devotion upon one side, and of Purity, Zeal, and Reformation upon the other; though they be pleasant sounds to both Ears, yet the wary Soul will examine, before it receive and admit Doctrinal Points under these gilded Titles. Those that have made their

their Observations upon the Stratagems of Satan, will heedfully observe both the tendency of Doctrines, and the Lives of their Teachers; and if they find looseness, pride, wantonness in them, it is not a glorious Title, or magnificent name that shall charm them. They know Satan can transform himself into an Angel of Light; and no wonder if his Ministers also be transformed into Ministers of Righteousness, 2 Cor. 11. 14, 15.

Rule III. Resign your Minds and Judgments in fervent Prayer to the Government of Christ, and Conduct of the Spirit; and in all your addresses to God, pray that he would keep them chaste and pure, and not suffer Satan to commit a Rape upon them. Plead with God that part of Christ's Prayer, *John 17. 17. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

Rule IV. Live in the conscientious and constant practice of all those Truths and Duties God hath already manifested to you.

This will bring you under that blessed Promise of Christ, *John 7. 17. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.* Satan's greatest Successes are amongst idle, notional, and vain Professors; not humble, serious, and practical Christians.

Cause XI.

Having considered and dispatched the several internal Causes of Error, found in the evil dispositions of the seduced, as also the Impulsive Cause, viz. Satan, who fits suitable baits to all these sinful Humours and evil Tempers of the Heart; we come next to consider the Instrumental Cause employed by Satan in this work, viz. the FALSE TEACHER, whom Satan makes use of as his Seeds-man, to disseminate and scatter erroneous Doctrines and Principles into the Minds of Men, ploughed up and prepared by those evil Tempers forementioned, as a fit Soil to receive them.

The choice of Instruments is a principal part of Satan's Policy. Every one is not fit to be employed in such a Service as this. All are not fit to be of the Council of War, who yet take their places of Service in the Field. A *Rustick* carried out of the Field, on Board a Ship at Sea, though he never learned his Compass, nor saw a Ship before, can by another's direction, tug lustily at a Rope; but he had need be an expert *Artist*, that sits at the Helm, and steers the course. The worst Causes need the smoothest Orators; and bad Ware a cunning Merchant to put it off*.

* Subtiles & astutus fuisse Montani fraudes, & quæ blandâ specie quibusvis imponere faciliè poterint; inde liquet quòd totam præpeditam Scripturam suscepit; ac de Deo Patre, Filio, & Spiritu sancto, (ut Epiphanius scribit) eadem docuit quæ Ecclesia Christi. *Magdab. Com. 2. Cap. 5. p. 77.* De Hæresibus sub Commodo.

Deep-pated Men are covered by Satan to manage this Design. None like an eloquent *Tertullus* to confront a *Paul*, *Act. 24. 1.* A subtil *Eccius* to enter the List in defence of the Popish Cause, against the Learned and Zealous Reformers. When the Duke of *Buckingham* undertook to plead the bad Cause of *Ricci's History*, chard the Third, the *Londoners* said, *They never*

thought it bad been possible for any Man to deliver so much bad Matter, in such good Words and quaint Phrases.

The first Instrument chosen by Satan to deceive Man, was the Serpent; because that Creature was more subtil than any Beast of the Field. There is not a Man of eminent Parts, but Satan courts and solicits him for this Service. St. *Austin* told an ingenious, but unsanctified Scholar, *Cupit abs te ornari Diabolus*, The Devil covets thy Parts to adorn his Cause. He surveys the World, and where-ever he finds more than ordinary strength of Reason, pregnancy of Wit, depth of Learning, and elegance of Language, that is the Man he looks for.

These are the Men that can almost discernably sprinkle their Errors among many precious Truths, and wrap up their poisonous Drugs in Leaf-gold or Sugar. *Maresius* notes of *Crellius* and his Accomplices, That by the power of their Eloquence, and sophistry of their Arguments, they were able artificially to cloath horrible Blasphemies to allure the simple*.

* Testatio

quentia, argutissi; Sophisticis & Scripturâ perniciosè detorta, ac fallaci fallentibus; ratione horrenda blasphemiz artificiosè circumvenitur ad incitandos simpliciores. *Præfatio ad Hydr. Socin.*

And like the *Hyena*, they can counterfeit the Voices of the Shepherds, to deceive and destroy the Sheep. There is (saith a late * *Worthy*) an *erudita nequitia*, a Learned kind of wickedness, a subtil art of deceiving the Minds of others. Upon which account the Spirit of God sometimes compares them, *Part 2. p. 2 Pet. 2. 3.* to cunning and cheating *Tradescantmen*, who have the very art to set a gloss upon their bad Wares with fine words, *πλαστή λόγους* sunt quidam vaniloqui, & mensis seductores, non Christiani, sed Cog the Die, to deceive the unskilful, and win their Game, *Eph. 4. 14.* *ὡς τῶ κλέα, &c.* mercantes & caupantes verbum Evangelii, qui venenum Erroris commiscuentes dulci blandimento sicut cœnomeli ut qui bibent illius potus gustabilem sensum, dulcedine captus, insobrievanter morti adducitur. *Ignatius Epist. ad Trallianos, p. 68.*

And sometimes the Spirit of God compares them to *Witches* themselves, *Gal. 3. 1.* *ὡς ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἡ δούλα; scilicet Galatians, who hath bewitched you?* How many strange feats have been done upon the Bodies of Men and Women by *Witchcraft*? But far more and stranger upon the Souls of Men by the *Magick of Error*. *James* and *Jambres* perform'd wonderful things in the sight of *Pharaoh*, by which they deceived and hardened him; and unto these, false Teachers are compared.

Such a Man was *Elymas* the Sorcerer, who laboured to seduce the Deputy, *Sergius Paulus*, though a prudent Man, *Act. 13. 7, 8, 9, 10.* Ob full of all subtilty, and all mischief, thou Child of the Devil! saith *Paul* unto him. The Art of seduction from the ways of truth and holiness, discovers a Man to be both the Child and Scholar of the Devil.

But as the wife and painful Ministers of Christ,

Continuation of Daniell's History, chard the Third, the Londoners said, They never
p. 233.

Christ, who turn many to Righteousness, shall have double Glory in Heaven; so these subtil and most active Agents for the Devil, who turn many from the ways of Righteousness, will have a double portion of misery in Hell.

The Remedies.

The proper Remedies in this Case are principally two.

Remedy I. Pray fervently, and labour diligently in the use of all God's appointed means, to get more solidity of Judgment, and strength of Grace to establish you in the Truth, and secure your Souls against the cunning craftiness of Men that lye in wait to deceive.

'Tis the ignorance and weakness of the People, which makes the Factors for Error so successful as they are. Consult the Scriptures, and you shall find these cunning Merchants drive the quickest and gainfullest trade among the weak and injudicious. So speaks the Apostle, *With good words and fair speeches, they deceive the hearts of the simple; as oxen, harmless, weak, easie Souls, who have a desire to do well, but want wisdom to discern the subtilties of them that mean ill; who are void both of fraud in themselves, and suspicion of others.* Oh! what success have the Deceivers, *ῥητορική ἐν σοφίᾳ*, their fair words and sugared speeches, sweet and taking expressions, among such innocent ones!

And who are they among whom Satan's cunning Gamesters commonly win the Game, and sweep the Stakes, but weak Christians, credulous Souls, whom for that reason the Apostle calls *ἁπλά*, Children. The word properly signifies an Infant, when 'tis referred to the Age; but unskillful and unlearned, when referred (as it is here) to the Mind. So again, 2 Pet. 2. 14. They (that is, the False Teachers there spoken of) beguile *ἁπλοῦς ἀνθρώπων*, unstable Souls, Souls that are not confirmed and grounded in the Principles of Religion. Whence by the way, take notice of the unspeakable advantage and necessity of being well Catechized in our Youth: the more judicious, the more secure.

Remedy II. Labour to acquaint your selves with the sleights and artifices Satan's Factors and Instruments generally make use of, to seduce and draw Men from the Truth. The knowledge of them is a good defensive against them. Now there are two common Artifices of Seducers, which it is not safe for Christians to be ignorant of.

First, They usually seek to disgrace and blast the reputations of those Truths and Ministers set for their defence, which they design afterwards to overthrow and ruin; and to beget credit and reputation to those Errors which they have a mind to introduce. How many precious truths of God are this Day, and with this design, defamed as legal and carnal Doctrines; and those that defend them, as Men of an *Old Testament Spirit*?

Humiliation for Sin, Contrition of Spirit, &c. fall under disgrace with many, and indeed all qualifications and pre-requisites unto coming to Christ, as things not only needless,

but pernicious unto the Souls of Men, although they have not the least dependance upon them: Yea, Faith it self, as a pre-requisite unto Justification, as no better than a Condition pertaining to *Adam's Covenant*.

And so for the Persons of Orthodox Ministers; you see into what contempt the false Teachers would have brought both the Person and Preaching of Paul himself, 2 Cor. 10. 10. *His bodily presence (say they) is weak, and his speech contemptible.*

Secondly, Their other common Artifice is, to insinuate their false Doctrines among many acknowledged and precious Truths, which only serve for a convenient Vehicle to them; and besides that, to make their Errors as palatable and gullful as they can to the vitiated Appetite of corrupt Nature. The forementioned Worthy hath judiciously observed how artificially Satan hath blended his baneful Doses, to please the Palate of *Carnal Reason*, *Spiritual Pride*, and the desire of *Fleishly Liberty*. Mr. W. G.

Carnal Reason is that great Idol, which the more intelligent part of the carnal World worships. And are not the *Socinian* Heresies as pleasant to it, as a well-mixt *Julep* to a feverish *Stomach*.

Spiritual Pride is another *Diana*, which obtains greatly in the World; and no Doctrine like the *Pelagian* and *Semipelagian* Errors, gratify it. A Doctrine that sets fallen Nature upon its Legs again, and persuades it, it can go alone to Christ; at least, with a little external help of Moral suasion, without any preventing or creating work in the Soul. This goes down glib and grateful.

And then for *Fleishly Liberty*, How do those that are fond of it rejoice in that Doctrine or Opinion, which looses Nature from the yoke of restraint? How does the poor deluded *Peipst* hug himself, to think he hath liberty by his Religion, to let loose the reins of his Lust to all Sensualities, and quit himself from all that guilt, by Auricular Confession to the Priest once a Year? How doth the *Familiff* smile upon that Principle of his, which tells him, the Gospel allows more Liberty than severe Legal Teachers think fit to tell them of: They press Repentance and Faith; but Christ hath done all this to thy hands.

Cause XII.

Having considered the several *Causes* of Errors, found in the evil dispositions of the seduced, as also the *impulsive* and *instrumental* *Causes*, namely *Satan* and *false Teachers* employed by him; I shall next proceed to discover some special, and most successful Methods frequently used by them, to draw the Minds of Men from the Truth. Amongst which, that which comes first to consideration, is the great skill they have in representing the *ABUSES* of the Ordinances of God, and Duties of Religion, by wicked Men, to scare tender and weak Consciences from the due use of them, and all further attendance upon them.

The abuse of Christ's holy Appointments are so cunningly improved to serve this design, that the Minds of many well-meaning Per-

Persons receive such deep disgust at them, that they are scarce ever to be reconciled to them again. A strong prejudice is apt to drive Men from one extremum upon another, as thinking they can never get far enough off from that which hath been so fearfully represented to them. Thus making good the old Observation, *Dum vitam sulti vitia, in contraria currunt*; they run from the troublesome smook of Superstition, into the fire of an irreligious contempt of God's Ordinances, split themselves upon *Charybdis* to avoid *Scylla*.
Ex. gra.

The *Papists* having deeply abused the Ordinance of *Baptism*, by their corruptive mixtures and additions of the superstitious *Cross*, *Chrism*, &c. part whereof is not sufficiently purged to this Day by the Reformation; and finding also multitudes of carnal *Protestants* dangerously resting upon their supposed baptismal Regeneration, to the great hazard of their Salvation; which Mistake is but too much countenanced by some of its Administrators: They take from hence such deep offence at the administration of it to any Infants at all (though the Seed of God's Covenanted People) that they think they can never be sharp enough in their Invectives against it; nor have they patience to hear the most rational defences of that Practice.

So, for that Scriptural Heavenly Duty of *Singing*: What more commonly alledged against it, than the abuse and ill effects of that precious Ordinance? How often is the Non-sense and Error of the common Translation, the rudeness and dulness of the Metre of some *Psalms*, as *Psal.* 7. 13. as also the cold formality, with which that Ordinance is performed by many who do but Parrotize? I say, How often are these things buz'd into the Ears of the People, to alienate their Hearts from so sweet and beneficial a Duty?

And very often we find it urged to the same end, how unwarrantable and dangerous a thing it is for carnal and unregenerated Persons to appropriate to themselves in Singing, those Praises and Experiences which are peculiar to the Saints; not understanding or considering, that the singing of *Psalms* is an Ordinance of Christ, appointed for teaching and admonition, as well as praising, *Col.* 3. 16. *Teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns, &c.* * Thus *Antinomianism* took, if not its rise, yet its encouragement from the too rigorous pressing of the Law upon convicted sinners.

* The Divinity of former ages (saith Mr. Saltmarsh) vinced sinners.

Grain, or Drachm of Gospel to a Pound of Law, in their Receipts for distemper'd Souls. Vide Saltmarsh of Free-grace, p. 40.

If Satan can prevail first with wicked Men, to corrupt and abuse God's Ordinances by the superstitious mixtures and additions; and then with good Men, to renounce and slight them for the sake of those abuses; he fully obtains his design, and gives Christ a double wound at once; one by the hand of his avowed Enemies, the other by the hands of his Friends, no less grievous than the first. First, wicked Men corrupt Christ's Ordinances; and then good Men nauseate them.

Vol. I.

The Remedies.

The proper Remedies against Errors, insinuated by the abuses of Duties and Ordinances, are such as follow:

Remedy I. Let Men consider, that there is nothing in Religion so great, so sacred and excellent, but some or other have greatly corrupted or vilely abused them.

What is there in the whole World more precious and excellent than the Free-grace of God? and yet you read, *Jude* 4. of some that turned the Grace of our Lord into lasciviousness. What more desirable to Christians, than the glorious Liberty Christ hath purchased for them by his Blood, and settled upon them in the Gospel-Charter? A Liberty from Satan, Sin, and the rigour and curse of the Law; and yet you read, *1 Pet.* 2. 16. of them that used this Liberty for a cloak of maliciousness. 'Tis true, Christ came to be a Sacrifice for Sin, but not a Cloak for Sin; to set us at Liberty from the Bondage of our Lusts, not from the Ties and Duties of our Obedience. Under the pretence of this Liberty it was, that the *Gnosticks*, *Carapocrations*, and the *Menandrians* of old, did not only connive at, but openly taught and practised all manner of lewdness and uncleanness.

St. Augustin, in his Book of *Heresy*, makes *Menandrianism* his sad complaint, *The Menandrians* (saith he) do willingly embrace all uncleanness as the fruit of the Grace of God towards Men. And yet am not only the Liberty purchased by Christ, but the very Person and Gospel of Christ are liable to abuses; and oftentimes through the corruptions of Mens Hearts become Stones of stumbling, and Rocks of offence. What then? Shall we renounce the Grace of God, our Christian Liberty, the very Gospel, yea, and Person of Christ himself, because each of them have been thus vilely abused by wicked wretches? At the peril of our eternal damnation be it, if we do so. *Blessed is he* (saith our Lord) *that is not offended in me*. Beware, lest by this means Satan at once wound the Lord Jesus Christ by scandal, and thy Soul by prejudice.

Remedy II. Consider also, that it is the nature and temper of a gracious Soul, to raise his esteem, and heighten his love to those Ordinances which are most abused and disgraced by Men.

The more they are abused and opposed by others, the higher they should be valued and honoured by us; *Psal.* 119. 126, 127. *It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy Law; therefore I love thy Commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold, &c.* The more they are disgraced and abused by wicked Men, the more do I honour and prize them. A like Spirit, with *David's* was found in *Elijah*, *1 King.* 19. 14. *I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts; because the Children of Israel have forsaken thy Covenant, thrown down thine Altars, and slain thy Prophets with the Sword.*

A good Man will strive to honour and secure those Truths and Duties most, which he finds under most disgrace or danger. He loves

E e e e

the

the Truth sincerely, who cleaves to it, and stands by it under all opposition. This is a good Tryal of the soundness of thy Heart and purity of thine ends in Religion : Such a proof, as the Honour and Reputation of Religion in the World can never give thee.

In Solomon's time the Jews were very cautious how they admitted and received *Profelytes*, suspecting that by-ends and worldly respects may draw men to it ; but they were not so cautious in times of Disgrace and Persecution.

Remedy III. Before you part with any Ordinance or Practice in Religion, bethink your selves whether you never found any Spiritual Blessings or Advantages in that Path which you are now tempted to forsake.

Had you never any Spiritual Meltings of your Hearts and Affections in that Heavenly Ordinance of *Singing* ? And may there not be now Thousands of Mercies in your possession in consequence to, and as the Fruit of your solemn Dedication to God in *Baptism* by your Covenanted Parents ? For my own part, I do heartily and solemnly bless God for it upon this account ; and so I hope Thousands besides my self have cause to do. However, such a Practice may by no means be deserted by you, because abused by others.

Cause XIII.

Another Method and Artifice, by which *false Teachers* draw multitudes of Disciples after them, is, by granting to their Ignorant and Ambitious Followers the *LIBERTY OF PROPHESYING* ; flattering them into a conceit of their excellent Gifts and Attainments, when God knows they had more need to be Catechised and taught the Principles of Christianity, than undertake to expound and apply those profound Mysteries unto others.

Satan hath filled the Church and World with Errors and Troubles this way. * When

ignorant and unexperienced Persons begin to think it a low and dull thing to sit from year to year under other mens teachings, and to fancy that they are wiser than their Teachers ; their Pride will quickly tempt them to shew their Ignorance, and that mischievous Ignorance will prove dangerous to the Truth,

and troublesome to the Church. The Apostle forbids the Ordination of a *Novice*, lest he be puffed up, and fall into the condemnation of the Devil : and in *1 Tim. 1. 7.* he shews us the reason why some swerved and turned aside unto vain jangling ; and it was this, That they desired to be Teachers of the Law, without understanding what they said, nor whereof they affirmed. That is, They affected to be Preachers, though not able to speak congruously, with tolerable sense and reason.

I do not here censure and condemn the use and exercise of the Gifts of all private Christians. There are to be found amongst them some Persons of raised Parts, and answerable Modesty and Humility, who may be very useful, when called to Service, in ex-

traordinary Cases, by the voice of Providence ; or exercise their Gifts in a probationary way, or in due subordination unto Christ's public Officers and Ordinances, by, and with the consent of the *Pastor*, and Congregation.

But when unqualified and uncalled Persons undertake such a work out of the Conceit and Pride of their own Hearts, or are allured to it by the crafty Designs of Erroneous Teachers, partly to overthrow a publick, regular, and standing Ministry in the Church, to which end the Scriptures are manifestly abused, such as *Jer. 31. 34. Rom. 12. 6. 1 Cor. 14. 1 Pet. 4. 10.* with many others ; This is the practice I here censure, which like a *Trojan Horse*, hath sent forth multitudes of Erroneous Persons into the City of God to infect and defile it.

I cannot doubt but many a sincere Christian may be drawn into such employment which puts him into a capacity of honouring God in a more eminent way, which is a thing desirable to an honest and zealous Heart : And that the temptation may be greatly strengthened upon them by the plausible suggestions of cunning Seducers, who tell them, That those *Ministers* who oppose and condemn this practice, do it as men concerned for their own Interest, as desirous to monopolize the work to themselves, and as envying the Lord's People : And that Christ hath given them a greater Liberty in this case, than those men will allow them. By this means they draw many after them, and fix them in their Erroneous ways.

I have no mind at all here to expose the Follies and Mischiefs introduced this way, as neither being willing to grieve the Hearts of the Sincere on one side, nor gratify scoffing *Atheists*, and prophane Enemies to Religion, upon the other side : only this I will, and must say, That by this means the Sacred Scriptures are most injuriously wrested, the Peace and Order of the Church disturbed, and a great many Mistakes and Errors introduced.

The Remedies.

The prevention and cure of Errors this way introduced, or likely to be introduced into the Church, is by pondering and applying the following *Considerations*.

Consideration. I. Let all that encourage others, or undertake by others encouragement such a Work as this, for which they are not competently qualified, and unto which they are not regularly called, consider seriously with themselves what danger they cast their own, and other mens Souls upon.

The Apostle tells us, *2 Pet. 3. 16.* That the unlearned and unstable do wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. Danger enough, one would think, to scare them from it, did not the same Sin of Ignorance, which makes them wrest the Scriptures, cause them also to slight and overlook the danger of so doing. * *Athenienses* scrip-
turas maliciose intellectas & detortas, errores parce Atheniensibus contra Apostolum.

Certainly, my Friends, it is a great deal safer, and more excusable, to put an ignorant *Rustick* into an *Apothecary's Shop* to compound a Medicine of Drugs and Spirits, which he under-

* Scilicet inique impudenter homines, non intelligentes nihil contrarium in rebus istis ab eodem dictum fuisse, verbis tantum inhaerentes. Causas ipsas dictorum reliquerunt. Et diversa quidem Scripturae dicta videntes, ad imitatem reciderunt, divinorum dictorum incapaces. *Hilarius*, Lib. 1. de Trinitate.

* Athenienses scrip-
turas maliciose intellectas & detortas, errores parce Atheniensibus contra Apostolum.

understands not, and confidently administer the same to the Bodies of Men; than for such Persons as are led by ignorance and confidence, to intermeddle with the Ministerial Employment: The one, perhaps, by mistake, may poison mens Bodies; but the other their Souls. An ignorant *Master*, or *Pilot*, that never learned the *Compass*, are rather to be trusted among Rocks and Quick-sands, than a proud ignorant *Person* with the conduct of *Souls*.

Consideration II. What daring Presumption is it to intrude our selves into so great and weighty an Employment without any Call or Warrant of Christ! *Rom. 10. 14. How shall they call upon him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent.*

These Mysteries must be committed to faithful Men, who shall be able to reach others. Those Abilities must be examined, *1 Tim. 3. 10.* and the Exercise of them warranted by a due and orderly appointment thereunto, *1 Tim. 4. 14.* else (as one well observes) *In tam præposterâ disciplina ruina tot essent sensus, quot capita; tot dissensus, quot sensus; we shall have as many senses of Scripture, as we have Preachers, &c.*

If every *Phaeton*, that thinks himself able, shall undertake to drive the *Chariot of the Sun*, no wonder if the World be set on Fire. Gifts and Abilities of Mind are not of themselves sufficient to make a *Preacher*. Some *Lawyers at the Bar* may be as skillful as the *Judge upon the Bench*, but without a Commission they dare not sit there.

Consideration III. The Honour you affect, to vent your unfound Notions with liberty, is in Scripture-account your greatest dishonour.

The Scripture reckons false Teachers among the basest of the People: *The Prophet that teacheth lies, he is the Tayl, i. e. the basest part of the whole body of the People, Is. 9. 15.* And so far is due Gospel-Liberty from countenancing such dangerous Irregularities, that we find in a clear Prophecy of Gospel-times, what shame God will pour upon them, *Zech. 13. 4, 5. They shall be brought with shame enough to confess, I am no Prophet, I am an Husbandman; for man taught me to keep Cattle from my youth.*

Consideration IV. How much more safe, regular, and advantageous were it for such as you, to fill your own proper Places under able and faithful Gospel-Ministers, and to suck the Breasts of fruitful Ordinances, than to consume and pine away by sucking your own Breasts? I mean, living upon your own weak and insufficient Gifts, in the sinful neglect of Christ's Appointments?

Cause XIV.

False Teachers also propagate their Errors by a Spirit of *ENTHUSIASM*, the usual concomitant of Erroneous Doctrine; and draw away multitudes after them, by pretending to extraordinary Revelations, Visions, and Voices from Heaven, which seem to give great credit to their Way and Party.*

This was an old trick and practice of Deceivers, *Deut. 13. 1.* to give Signs and wonders in confirmation of their Way, which Signs the Lord may permit to fall out to prove his People, *verf. 2. 3.* tho', for the most part, they are confuted by their unanswerable Events.

In the beginning of our Reformation by *Luther, Calvin, &c.* there sprung up a Generation of Men, called *Swenckfeldians*, great Pretenders to Revelations and Visions, who were always speaking of *Deifications*; and an higher strain of Language they commonly used among themselves, than other serious Christians understood, and therefore scornfully entitled Orthodox and humble Christians, who stuck to the Scripture-phrase, and wholesome form of sound words, *Grammatici, Vocabulisti, Irreid Literalisti, &c.* These Men (as * *Sculctetus* suis quibusdam Enthusiasticis la- in his *Annals, ad annum 1525.* observes of them) were so entangled in certain Enthusiastick Snakes, that they thought it the highest impiety to renounce them: And they had de se ex- betooled multitudes with their magnificent words of *Illumination, Revelation, Deification.* *impieratem: dementabant multos magnificis istis verbis, Revelatio, Deificatio, &c.*

Much of the same Spirit was *Thomas Munzer, John of Leyden, David George, Jacob Behmen, &c.* whose cloudy Nonsense, enigmatical Expressions, and wilful Obscurity, drew many into a strange admiration of them: They all pretend to an higher knowledge of Mysteries than what the Gospel is acquainted with; and yet give us (as Mr. *Baxter* well observes) neither *Reasons with Aristotle*, nor *Miracles with Christ*, and his Apostles, to cause us to believe any of their new Revelations, *Vid. Baxter of the Sin against the Holy Ghost, p. 148.*

Of the same Bran were our late *Familists* in England, of whom *Henry Nicholls* was the chief Leader, who decried the written Word as a dead Letter; and set up their own fond Concoits and Fancies under the notion of the Spirit; against whom that Heavenly and Learned Man, Mr. *Samuel Rutherford*, seasonably and successfully appeared. *Hacket, Coppinger and Arbington*, were of the same Tribe; who lived a-while wrapt up in *Antinimian* Fancies, which at last brake forth into the highest and most horrid Blasphemies.

Another Art they make use of to seduce the Credulous, is a pretence unto the Spirit of Prophecy; and great success they promise themselves this way among the weak, but curious Vulgar. And to this end Satan hath inspired and employed some cunninger Heads to invent very pleasing Predictions and Prophecies, in favour of that Party whom he designs to deceive. And how catching and bewitching these things are, gaining more respect among these vain Spirits, than the divine unquestionable Prophecies of Scripture, this Age hath had full and sad experience.

Now the Design of Satan in these things, is to gain Credit to those *Sedit*, as People peculiarly favoured and beloved of God above others; as if they were the particular Favourites of Heaven, as *Daniel* was; and so to draw the Multitude to admire their Persons, and espouse their Errors.

* Nonnulli autem fallorum prophetarum vaticinio illece, de quibus & veri Prophetae, & ipse prædixerat, exciderunt à Doctrina Dei, & traditionem veram reliquerunt. Sed illi omnes dmoniaci fraudibus irreciti, quos prospicere & cavere debuerant, divinum nomen & cultum per imprudentiam perdidit. *Lañ. lib. 4. cap. 30. de Hereticis.*

The Remedies.

Now the Remedies in this Case are such as follow.

Remedy I. Whatever Doctrine or Practice seeks credit to it self this way, falls justly thereby under suspicion, that it wants a solid Scripture foundation.

God hath not left his People to seek satisfaction in such uncertain ways as these; but hath given them a surer word of Prophecy, to which they do well to take heed, 2 Pet. 1. 19. He hath tyed us to the standing Rule of the Word, forbidding us to give heed to any other Voice, or Spirit, leading us another way, 1st. 8. 19. 2 Thess. 2. 1, 2. Gal. 1. 8. Scripture-light is a safe and sure Light, a pleasant and sufficient Light.

The Scripture (saith Luther) is so full, that as for Visions and Revelations, *Nec curio, nec desidero*, I neither regard, nor desire them. And when he himself had a Vision of Christ, after a day of Fasting and Prayer, he cried out, *Avoid Satan, I know no Image of Christ, but the Scripture*. An hankering Mind after these things, speaks a sickly and disordered state of Soul, as longing after Trash in young disordered Persons, doth a disordered state, or ill habit of Body.

Mr. William Bridges somewhere tells us of a Religious Lady of the Emperress Bed-chamber, whose Name was *Gregoria*, who being greatly troubled about her Salvation, wrote to *Gregory*, That she would never cease importuning him, 'till he had sent her word, that he had obtained a Revelation from Heaven, that she should be saved: to whom he returned this Answer; *Rem difficilem postulari & inutilem*, Thou requirest of me that which is difficult to me, and unprofitable for thee.

Remedy II. Consider how often the World hath been abused by the Tricks and Cheats of that officious Spirit, the Devil, in such ways as these.

What hath propagated Idolatry among Heathens and Christians more than this? *Hinc fluxerunt multa peregrinationes, Monasteria, delubra, dies festi & alia*, saith *Lavater*, in *Job 33*. *Pilgrimages, Monasteries, Shrines of Saints, Holy-days, &c.* have been introduced by this Trick. 'Twere endless to give Instances of it in the Histories of former Ages*.

* Of the Prophecies, and pretended Inspirations of *Storke*, *Pleiffer*, *Beccold*, *Warendorp*, &c. with the efficacy of them on the deluded People, and fatal consequences of them both to the Deceived, and Deceivers: See Mr. Samuel Rutherford's Survey of the Spiritual Antichrist, P. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

We have a notable late Account of it among our selves, in a Book, entitled, [A Discovery of the notorious Falsehood and Dissimulation contained in a Book, filed, The Gospel-way confirmed by Miracles] Licensed and published 1649. wherein is laid open to the World, the free Confession of *Ann Wells*, *Matthew Hall*, &c. deluding the People of *Whitfield* in *Sussex* with such pretended Voices, Visions, Prophecies and Revelations, the like have scarcely been heard of in England since the Reformation. Multitudes of People were deluded by them.

At length the Lord extorted from this Woman a full Confession of the notorious falseness of these things, by a terrible Vision of Hell: her Partizans laboured four days to suppress and stifle it, but to no purpose: for the Horrors of Conscience prevailed with her to confess the notorious Dissimulations contained in that Book, before the People of *Whitfield*, and a Justice of the Peace. And thus the Lord out-shot Satan in his own Bow.

Remedy III. Consider how difficult, yea, and impossible it is for a Man to determine, that such a Voice, Vision, or Revelation is of God; and that Satan cannot feign or counterfeit it; seeing he hath left no certain Marks by which we may distinguish one Spirit from another: *an alius? an ater?*

Sure we are, Satan can transform himself into an Angel of Light; and therefore abandoning all those unsafe and uncertain ways, whereby swarms of Errors have been conveyed into the World, let us cleave inseparably to the sure word of Prophecy, the Rule and Standard of our Faith and Duty.

Cause XV.

Another way in which False Teachers discover their Subtlety with great success, is, in TIMING their Assaults, and nicking the proper Season, when the Minds of Men are most apt and easie to be drawn away by their fair and specious Pretences.

Such a Season as this, they find about the time of Mens first Conversion, or soon after their Implantation into Christ. Now it is that their Affections are most lively and vigorous, though their Judgments be but weak. They have now such strong and deep apprehensions of the Grace and Love of Christ, and such transcendent zeal for him, that they easily embrace any thing whereby they conceive he may be honoured and exalted. They have also such deep Apprehensions and powerful Aversions as to Sin, that they are in danger to fly even from Truth and Duty it self, when it shall be artificially represented to them as Sin. For not only that which is *malum per se*, Sin indeed; but that which is *male coloratum*, painted with Sin's Colours, is apt to scare and fright them.

Besides, These young Converts or Novices have not had time to confirm and root themselves in the Truth; and Trees newly planted are much more easily drawn up, than those that have spread and fastened their Roots in the Earth. 'Tis observable what a swarm of false Teachers troubled the Churches of *Corinth*, *Galatia*, and *Philippi*, at, and newly after their first planting: and what danger those young Christians were in, abundantly appears in the Apostles frequent Cautions, and holy Jealousy over them: he bids them *beware of Dogs, beware of Evil Workers, beware of the Concision*, Phil. 3. 2. *I fear lest by any means as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*, 2 Cor. 11. 3. he was afraid of the *Galatians*, lest he had belittled upon them labour in vain, Gal. 4. 11. he would not give place to false Brethren, nor not for an hour,

hour, *Gal. 2. 5.* charges the *Romans* to receive them that were weak in the Faith, but not to doubtful Disputations, *Rom. 14. 1.* All which, and many more Expressions, discover his grounded Jealousy, and their extraordinary danger of seduction at their first plantation. A Novice in Christianity is the Person Satan seeks for: strong Believers are not in such apparent danger as little ones in Christ, *1 John 5. 21.* Little Children, keep your selves from Idols.

And the reason is, because keen Affections, match'd with weak Judgments, give a mighty advantage to Seducers. Children are apt to be taken with beautiful Appearances and fine shews; and Erroneous Teachers have the very knack to set a gloss of extraordinary sanctity upon their dangerous Opinions. Hence those Persons that promoted the Sect of the *Nicolaitans*, made use of a cunning Woman, who for her skill in painting Errors with the colours of Truth, got the name of *Jezebel*, *Rev. 2. 20.* That *Queen* was famous for the art of Painting, *1 Kings 16.* and so was this false Prophetess: indeed there was scarce any eminent Set of Errorists or Hereticks mentioned in Church-History, but some curious feminine Artill hath been employed to lay the beautiful Colours upon it. So we find *Simon Magus* had his *Helena*, *Carpocrates* his *Marcellina*, *Montanus* his *Priscilla* and *Maximilla*. And the curious Colours of Holiness, Zeal, and Free-grace, artificially laid upon the face of Error, how wrinkled and ugly soever in it self, sets it off temptingly and takingly to weak and injudicious Minds.

Moreover, Erroneous Teachers are great Boasters: They usually give out to the World, what extraordinary Comforts they meet with in their way, which proves a strong temptation to young Converts, who have been so lately in the depths of spiritual Trouble, to try at least, if not to embrace it, for the expected Comforts sake.

Ah, how many pious Ministers in *England*, upon such Grounds and Pretences as these, have had their spiritual Children rent from them as soon as born! they have travelled as in birth for them; and no sooner did they begin to take comfort in the success of their Labours, but to the great grief and discouragement of their Hearts, they have been this way bereaved of them. Those that have owned them as their spiritual Fathers one Month, would scarce vouchsafe to own them, when they have met them in the Streets, another Month. Many sad Instances I could give of this, and some as remarkable as they are fresh and recent: but I silence particulars. Oh see the advantage Satan and his Instruments gain by nicking such a critical Season as this is.

The Cure, or Remedy.

The Remedies in this case are twofold: the first respects the spiritual Fathers; and the second the spiritual Children: both are concerned in the danger, and the Lord help both to attend to their duty.

Remedy I. Let all those whose Ministry God blesses with the desirable fruits of Conversion.

version, look carefully after the Souls of young Converts.

No Nurse should be more tender and careful of her Charge, than a Minister should be: and unto the care of a tender Nurse, Paul compareth his care over the young Converts in *Thessalonica*, *1 Thess. 2. 7.* for alas, they lie exposed to all dangers, they are credulous, and Seducers cunning: they want judgment to discern Truth from Error; have not yet attained unto Senses exercised, and Age in Christ to discern Good from Evil: when Errors are made palatable, Children will be hankering after them, and Seducers have the very art to make them so.

—*Velut pueri abſymbia terra medentes
Cum dare conantur, prius oras pocula circum
Contingunt dulci Mellis, flavoque liquore.*

Shepherds look to your Flocks; imitate the great Shepherd of the Sheep, who gathereth the Lambs with his Arms, and carries them in his Bosom; visit them frequently, exhort and warn them diligently, and use all means to establish them in the present Truths.

Remedy II. Let young Converts and weak Christians look carefully to themselves by an heedful attendance unto the following Truths.

First. It is not safe to try, nor upon trial likely that you should find Christ in one way, and comfort in another. God doth not usually bless those ways to Mens comfort and edification, into which they turn aside from that good way wherein they first met with Christ and Conversion. The same Ministry and Ordinances which are appointed and blessed for the one, are likewise appointed, and commonly blessed for the other, *Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13.*

Secondly. 'Tis a manifest Snare of the Devil (and you may easily discern it) to take you off from the great Work you are newly engaged in, by entangling your Minds in Notions that are foreign to it. Your Hearts are now warm with God, Satan labours this way to cool and quench them: the cunning Cheat labours to steal away the sweet and nutritive Food which is before you, and lay the hard and dry Bones of barren Controversies and insipid Notions in their room. Your business is not to frame *Syllogisms*, or study Solutions to cunning Arguments about lower and lesser Matters, so much as it is by Prayer and Self-examination, to clear your Interest in Christ, and to solve those doubts that lie with weight upon your Spirits, with reference to that great Concern.

Thirdly. 'Tis a sad thing to grieve the Hearts of those faithful Ministers that have travelled in pain for us, and rejoiced in our Conversion as the Seal of their Ministry. Oh, serve not your godly Ministers, as the *Hen* is sometimes served, that hath long brooded, brought forth, and with much care and self-denial nourished up young Partridges, which, as soon as fledged, take the wing, and return no more to her.

Caſe XVI.

There is yet another Artifice of false Teachers to draw Men into Errors, and that is,

F f f f

is, by pressing the Consciences of those they have made some impressions upon, unto all *HASTE* and *SPEED*, openly to declare their new Opinions, and avow and own them before the World; as knowing that this will rivet and fix them to all Intents and Purposes.

When they find Men under half Convictions, and strong Inclinations to their way, they are sure then to ply them with a thick succession of Motives and Arguments, to joyn themselves by a free and open Profession, to that erroneous Party which are headed by themselves.

And the Arguments usually pressed to this purpose are,

1. The danger of delay.
2. The comfort of declaring themselves.

First, They press them with the danger of the least delay, by telling them, That now they must live every Day and Hour in known Sin, and hold the truth of God in Unrighteousness, the evil whereof they skillfully aggravate; and the more tender and sensible the Conscience is, the deeper Impressions such Discourses make, although the Case, indeed, will not bear the weight they lay upon it, as having not that due allowance God gives of time and means of full information in matters of this nature; yea, possibly driving them into as great a Snare by Precipitation, and too hasty engagements under a Doubting Conscience.

Secondly, They press them to a quick resolution, with the expectations of abundance of Comfort, inward Peace and Joy, which will result from a full engagement of themselves, and open declaration of their Judgment; professing to a Party, being the main design they drive at.

This was the very Art and Method by which Satan prevailed with *Eve* to swallow the bait, *Gen. 3. 5. For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil. q. d.* The sooner thou tastest, the better; for the first taste will give thee a God-like knowledge, and marvellous advancement of thy understanding: Didst thou but know the benefit that would accrue to thee thereby, thou wouldst not delay one moment. And thus by setting before her the speedy and immediate benefits of eating, he prevailed, and drew her into the fatal snare.

In this the Ministers of Satan imitate the Ministers of Christ: As these press Men to make haste to Christ, left by consulting with Flesh and Blood, and listening to the temptations of Satan, hopeful Inclinations should be blasted in the bud; so the others push Men on to hasty Resolutions, left by hearkening to the voice of God's Spirit, and their own Consciences, the design they have so far advanced should be lost and disappointed. The Ministers of Christ urge Men to a speedy change of their Company, and to associate themselves with spiritual and profitable Christians, as well knowing of what great use this will be to confirm and strengthen them in the ways of God. So Errorists in like manner vehemently urge them to associate with their Par-

ty, as knowing how one wedges in and fixes another in the ways of Error; for such Causes Satan pushes on half-convictions into hasty resolutions, quick dispatch being his great advantage. This the Apostle intimates, *Gal. 1. 6. I marvel (saith he) that ye are so soon removed, &c. 2ndly, what so soon! yes, if it had not been so soon, it might never have been at all; for Errors (as one ingeniously observes) like Filth, must be eaten fresh and new, or they'll quickly stink.*

The Cure, or Remedy.

The Remedies and Preventives in this Case, are such as follow:

Remedy I. Consider, that hasty engagements in weighty and disputable Matters have cost many Souls dear.

As hally *Marriages* have produced long and late repentance; to hath the clapping up of an hally Match betwixt the Mind and Error. By entertaining strange Persons, Men sometimes entertain *Angels* unaware; but by entertaining of strange Doctrines, many have entertained Devils unawares. 'Tis not safe to open the door of the Soul to let in Strangers in the Night; let them wait till a clear Day-light of Information show you what they are.

Remedy II. Weighty Actions require answerable Deliberations. It was the worthy saying of *Augustus Caesar* *, *That's soon enough, that's well enough.* There be many things to be considered, and thoroughly weighed, before a Man change his Judgment, and embrace a new Doctrine or Opinion. *Luther* in his Epistle to the Ministers of *Norimberg*, cites an excellent passage out of *Basil* *, He that is about to separate himself from the society of his Brethren, had need to consider many things even unto anxiety; to beg of God the demonstration of Truth with many Tears, and to pass many solitary Nights with waking Eyes, before he attempt, or put such a matter in execution. By the vote of the whole rational World, Time and Consideration ought to be proportionate to the weight of an Undertakement.

Remedy III. The only season Men have to weigh things judiciously and impartially, is before their Affections be too far engaged, and their Credit and Reputation too much concerned.

Men are better able to weigh Doctrines and Opinions, whilst they are other Mens, than when they have espoused them and made them their own. Before an Opinion be espoused, the Affections do not blind and pervert the Judgment, as they do afterward. Self-love pulls down the ballance at that end which is next us. If therefore by hasty resolution, you lose this only proper and advantageous season of deliberation, you are not like to find such another.

Remedy IV. Trust not to the clearness of your own unassisted Eyes, nor to the strength of your single reason; but consult in such cases, with others that are pious and judicious, especially your godly and faithful Ministers; and hearken to the Counsels they give you.

Paul

Paul justly wondered that the *Galatians* were so soon removed; and well he might: For had they not a *Paul* to consult with, before they gave their consent to false Teachers? Or if he was at a distance from them about the work of the Lord in remote places, had they no godly and judicious Friends near them, whose Prayers and Assurances they might call in, as *Daniel* did? *Dan. 2. 17.* Wo unto him that is alone in a time of temptation, except the Lord be with him by extraordinary assistance and direction.

Remedy V. Lastly, Suspect that Opinion (as justly you may) for erroneous, that's too importunate and pressing upon you, and will not allow you due time of consideration, and means of information. That which is a truth to Day, will be a truth to Morrow: But that which looks like a truth to Day, may be detected, and look like it self, an odious Error to Morrow. And this is the reason of that post-haste that Satan and his Factors make to gain our present consent, lest a speedy detection frustrate the suit, and spoil the design. The *Uses* follow in Six *Confessories*.

Confessory I. From all that hath been said about *Errors*, we see in the first place, the great usefulness and plain necessity of an able, faithful, standing *Ministry* in the Church.

One special end of the Ministry, is the establishment of the Peoples Souls against the Errors of the Times, *Eph. 4. 11, 14.* He gave some *Apostles*, &c. that we benevolently be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of Men, &c. Ministers are Shepherds, and will our Shepherd, how soon will the Flock go astray? *Moses* was absent but a few Days from the *Israelites*, and at his return found them all run into the snares of Idolatry. A Sheep is animal sequax, a Creature that follows a Leader. One stragler may mislead a whole flock. A Minister's work is not only to feed, but to defend the Flock. I am for (saith *Paul*) for the defence of the Gospel, *Phil. 1. 17.* An Orthodox and Faithful Minister, is a double Blessing to the People; but wo to that People, whose Ministers, instead of securing them against Errors, do cause them to err, *Isa. 9. 16.* they are the Dogs of the Flock. Some in Scripture are called dumb Dogs, who, instead of barking at the Thief, bite the Children: But faithful Ministers give warning of spiritual dangers. So did the worthy Ministers of *London*, *Worcester-shire*, *Devon*, &c. in their Testimonies against Errors.

Confessory II. This Discourse shews us also how little quietness and peace the Church may expect, till a greater degree of light and unity be poured out upon it; what by Persecutions from without it, and Troubles from within, little tranquility is to be expected. 'Tis a Note of *St. Bernard's* that the Church hath sometimes had *Pacem à Paganis, sed rariò aut nunquam à filiis*. Peace sometimes from Pagan Persecutors, but seldom or never any peace from her own Children.

We read, *Zech. 14. 7.* the whole state of the Christian Church, from the primitive Days, to the end of the World, set forth un-

der the notion of one Day, and that a strange Day too, the light of it shall neither be clear nor dark, nor day nor night, but at evening time it shall be light; i. e. a Day full of interchangeable and alternate Providences. Sometimes Persecutions, Heresies, and Errors prevail, and these make that part of the Day dark and gloomy; and then Truth and Peace break forth again, and clear up the Day. Thus it hath been, and thus it will be until the evening of it, and at even-time it shall be light; then light and love shall get the ascendant of Error and Divisions. Most of our Scuffles and Contentions are for want of greater measures of both these.

Confessory III. From the manifold Causes and Mischiefs of Errors before-mentioned, we may also see what a choice Mercy it is to be kept found in Judgment, steadfast and unmovable in the Truths and Ways of Christ. A sound and steadfast Christian is a blessing in his Generation, and a glory to his Profession. 'Twas an high *Encomium* of *Athenasius*, *Sedem maluit mutare, quam syllabam*: He would rather lose his Seat, than a syllable of God's Truth. Soundness of Judgment must needs be a choice Blessing; because the Understanding is the *vis cognoscitiva*, that leading-faculty which directs the Will and Conscience of Man, and they his whole Life and Practice. How often and how earnestly doth Christ pray for his People, that they may be kept in the Truth? 'Tis true, Orthodoxy in it self is not sufficient to any Man's Salvation; but the conjunction of an Orthodox Head, with an honest sincere Heart, does always constitute an excellent Christian, *Phil. 1. 10.* Happy is the Man that hath an Head so hearted, and an Heart so headed.

Confessory IV. By this Discourse we may further discover one great and special Cause and reason of the lamentable decay of the spirit and power of Religion, amongst the Professors of the present Age.

'Tis a complaint more just than common, That we do all fade as a leaf. And what may be the Cause? Nothing more probable than the wasting of our Time and Spirits in vain Janglings, and fruitless Controversies, which the Apostle tells us, *Heb. 12. 9.* have not profited, i. e. they have greatly damaged and injured them that have been occupied therein. Many Controversies of these Times grew up about Religion, as Suckers from the Root and Limbs of a Fruit-Tree, which spend the vital Sap that should make it fruitful.

'Tis a great and sad Observation made upon the state of *England* by some judicious Persons, That after the greatest increase of Religion, both intensively in the power of it, and extensively in the number of Converts, what a remarkable decay it suffered both ways, when about the Year Forty-four, Controversies and Disputations grew fervent among Professors. Since that time our Strength and Glory have very much abated.

* *Anglia 4. annis sagitta est colluvies, & eterna omnium errorum, & scelerum Nulla à condito erbe provincia tan parvo ipso toto monstroso latrefes protulit atque hæc. Honor. Reg. de Statu Eccle. Britan p. 1.*

Confessary V. From this Discourse we may also gather, the true Grounds and Reasons of those frequent Persecutions which God lets in upon his Churches and People: These rank Weeds call for Snowy and Frosty Weather to subdue and kill them.

I know the Enemies of God's People aim at something else: They strike at Profession, yea, at Religion it self; and according to their wicked Intention, without timely Repentance, will their Reward be. But whatever the intention of the Agents be, the issues of Persecution are upon this account greatly beneficial to the Church; the Wisdom of God makes them excellently useful, both to prevent and cure the Mischiefs and Dangers of Errors. If Enemies were not, Friends and Brethren would be injurious to each other. Persecution, if it kills not, yet at least it gives check to the rise and growth of Errors: And if it do not perfectly redintegrate and unite the Hearts of Christians, yet to be sure it cools and allays their sinful Heats; and that two ways: (1.) By cutting out for them far better and more necessary work. Now, instead of racking their Brains about unnecessary Controversies, they find it high time to be searching their Hearts, and examining the foundations of their Faith and Hope, with respect of the other World. (2.) Moreover, such Times and Streights, discover the Sincer-

ity, Zeal, and Constancy of them we were jealous of, or prejudiced against before, because they followed not us.

Confessary VI. Lastly, Let us learn hence, both the Duty and Necessity of Charity and mutual Forbearance; We have all our Mistakes and Errors one way or other, and therefore must maintain mutual Charity under dissents in Judgment.

I do not say, but an erring Brother must be reduced if possible, and that by sharp rebukes too, if gentler essays be ineffectual, *Tis. 1. 13.* and the wounds of a Friend have more faithful love in them, than the kisses of an Enemy: And if God make us instrumental by that or any other Method, to recover a Brother from the Error of his way, he will have great cause, both to bless God, and thank the Instrument, who thereby saves a Soul from death, and hides a multitude of sins, *Jam. 5. 20.* 'Tis our Duty, if we meet an Enemy's Ox or Ass going astray, to bring him back again; *Exod. 23. 4.* much more the Soul of a Friend. Indeed, we must not make those Errors that are none, nor stretch every innocent expression to that purpose; nor yet be too hasty in meddling with Contention, till we cannot be both silent and innocent; and then whatever the expence be, Truth will repay it.

A N

A P P E N D I X:

Containing a Full and Modest Reply to Mr. *Philip Cary's*
Rejoinder to my *Vindiciæ Legis & Fœderis*.

Manifesting the badness of his Cause, in the feebleness and impertinency of his Defence. And adding farther light and strength to the Arguments formerly produced in defence of God's Gracious Covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. and the right of Believers Infants to Baptism, grounded thereupon.

S I R,

NEXT to the not deserving a Re-proof, is the due reception and improvement of it. You deserve a sharper reprehension for your temerity and obstinacy, than I am willing to give you from the *Press*. Yet in love to the Truth, and your own Soul, reprove you I must, and I hope God will enable me to be both mild in the manner, and convincingly clear in the matter and cause thereof. 'Tis better to lose the *Smiles*, than the *Souls* of Men. I dare not neglect the duty of a Friend, for fear of incurring the suspicion of an Enemy. Several Learned and Eminent Divines who have seen what hath publicly passed betwixt you and me, have returned me their Thanks, and think you ought to thank me too for the pains I have taken to set you right, hoping you will evidence your self-denial and repentance by an ingenuous retraction of your Errors.

But how will you deceive their Expectations, and unbecome the Character given you by your Friends, when they shall find the true measure both of your ability and humility drawn by your own Pen in the following Rejoinder?

I have thoroughly considered your Reply in the Manuscript you sent me, which I hear is now in the *Press*; and in the following Sheets have given a full, and (I think) a final Answer to whatsoever is material therein. And it so falling out, that my Discourse of *Errors* was just going under the *Press*, whilst your Rejoinder was there also, I thought it not

convenient to delay my Reply any longer, but to have my Antidote in as great readiness as might be to meet it.

One Inconvenience I easily foresee, that the Pages of your Manuscript, which I follow, may not throughout exactly answer to the Print: But every intelligent Reader will easily discern and rectify That, if my Book-seller save him not that trouble, as I have desired him to do.

As to the Controversy about the Right of Believers Infant-seed to *Baptism*, you have altogether adventured it the second time with the consent of your Partizans, upon the three *Hypotheses*, which (if I mistake not) I have fully confuted and baffled in my first Answer. But if my brevity occasioned any obscurity in that, I hope you shall find it sufficiently done here. Mean time you have given, and I accordingly take it for granted, that our Arguments for *Infants Baptism* stand in their full strength against you, 'till you can better discharge and free your dangerous Assertions from the Errors and Absurdities in which they are now more involved and intricated than before.

The weaker any thing is, the more querulous it is. If Scripture-Argument, and clear Reason, will not support the Cause I undertake, I am resolved never to call in passionate Invectives and weak Evasions for my Auxiliaries, as you have here done. The Lord give us all clearer Light, tenderer Consciences, exemplary Humility and Ingenuity.

Vindiciarum Vindex :

O R, A R E F U T A T I O N O F T H E

Weak and Impertinent Rejoinder

O F

Mr. *P H I L I P C A R Y*:

Wherein he vainly attempts the defence of his *Abfurd Thefis*, to the great abuse and injury of the *Laws* and *Covenants* of *G O D*.

AND muſt I be dipt once more in the Water-Controverſy? 'tis time for me to think of undreſſing my ſelf, and making ready for my approaching Reſt, and employ thoſe few Moments I have to ſpend, in more practical and beneficial Studies, for my own, and the Churches greater advantage. And 'tis time for Mr. C. to reflect upon his paſt Follies, which have conſumed too much of his own, and others time, without any advantage; yea, to the apparent loſs and injury of the Cauſe he undertakes to defend.

When I received theſe Sheets from him, in vindication of his *Solemn Call*, I was at a ſtand in my own Reſolutions, whether to let it paſs (without any Animadverſions upon it) as a paſſionate Clamour for a deſperate Cauſe; or give a ſhort and full Answer to his confuted and impertinent Rejoinder. But conſidering that I had under-hand at the ſame time the foregoing *Treatiſe of the Cauſes and Cures of Mental Errors*; and that though my honeſt Neighbour diſcovers much weakneſs in his way of Argumentation, yet it was like to meet with ſome intereſted Readers, to whom, for that reaſon, it would be the more ſuitable; and how apt ſuch Perſons are to glory in the laſt word; but eſpecially conſidering that a little time and pains would ſuffice (as the Caſe ſtands) to end the unſeaſonable Controverſy betwixt us, and both clear and confirm many great and weighty Points of Religion: I was upon theſe Conſiderations prevailed with, againſt my own Inclination, to caſt in theſe few Sheets as a *Montiſſa* to the former ſeaſonable and neceſſary Diſcourſe of *Errors*, reſolving to fill them with what ſhould be worth the Reader's Time and Pains.

As for the rude Inſults, uncomely Reflections, and paſſionate Expreſſions of my diſcontented Friend, I ſhall not throw back the dirt upon him, when I wipe it off from my ſelf:

I can eaſily forgive and forget them too. The beſt Men have their Paſſions, *Jam. 5. 17.* even *Sweet-Briers* and *Holy-Thiſtles* have their offensive Prickles. I conſider my honeſt Neighbour under the ſtrength of a Temptation. It diſquiets him to ſee the Labours of many Years, and the raiſed Expectations of ſo great a Conqueſt and Triumph over Men of Renown, all fruſtrated by his Friend and Neighbour, who had done his utmoſt to prevent it; and often foretold him of the folly and vanity of his Attempt. Every thing will live as long as it can, and *natura vexata prodit ſeipſam*. But certainly it had been more for Truth's Honour, and Mr. C's Comfort, to have confeſſed his Follies humbly to God, and have laid his hand upon his Mouth.

The things in controverſy betwixt us, are great and weighty, *viz.* The true nature of the *Sinai Laws*, in their complex Body; the quality of God's Covenant with *Abraham*; and the diſpenſation of the New Covenant we are now under. Theſe are things of great weight in themſelves; and their due Reſolutions are at this time ſomewhat the more weighty, becauſe my *Antagoniſt* hath adventured the whole Controverſy of Infants Baptiſm upon them.

I have in my *Vindicia Legiſ*, &c. ſtated the ſeveral Queſtions clearly and diſtinctly. Shewn Mr. C. what is no part of the Controverſy, and what is the very hinge upon which it turns; deſired him, if he made any Reply, to keep cloſe to the juſt and neceſſary Rules of Diſputation, by diſtinguiſhing, limiting, or denying any of my Propoſitions; that the Matters in Controverſy might be put to a fair and ſpeedy iſſue. But inſtead of that, I meet with a flood of words rolling ſometimes to this part, and then to another part of my Answer, and ſo back again, without the ſteady direction of Art or Reaſon. There may, for

for ought I know, be some things of weight in Mr. Cary's Reply, if a Man could see them for words : but without scoff or vanity I must say of the rational part of it, as the Poet said of the over-dressed Woman, — *Parva minima est ipsa Puella sui*, 'tis the least part of it. To follow him in his irregular and extravagant way of writing, were to make myself guilty of the same folly I blame him for. I am therefore necessitated to perstringe them, and reduce all I have to say, under three general Heads.

I. I shall clearly evince to the World, That Mr. Cary hath not been able to discharge and free his own *Theses* from the horrid Consequents, and gross Absurdities which I laid to their Charge in my first Reply ; but instead thereof, in this feeble and unsuccessful attempt to free the former, he hath entangled himself in more and greater ones.

II. That he hath left my *Arguments* standing in their full strength against him.

III. And then I shall confirm and strengthen my three *Positions*, which destroy the Cause he manages, by some further Additions of Scripture, Reason, and Authorities, which I hope will fully end this Matter betwixt us.

But before I touch the Particulars, two things must be premised for the Reader's due information.

1. That the Controversie about the true nature of the *Sinai Laws*, both Moral and Ceremonial, complexly considered, is not that very Hinge upon which the Right of Believers Infants to Baptism depends : that stands as it did before, be the *Sinai Laws* what they will. We do not derive the Right of Infants from any other Law or Covenant, but that gracious Covenant which God made with *Abraham*, which was in being 430 Years before *Moses* his Law ; and was no way injured, much less dissannulled, by the addition of it. If *Abraham's* Covenant be the same Covenant of Grace we are now under, the Right of Believers Infants to Baptism, is secured, whatever the *Sinai* Covenant prove to be. Which I speak not out of the least jealousy that Mr. Cary hath, or ever shall be able to prove it to be a pure *Adam's* Covenant of Works ; but to prevent Mistakes in the Reader.

2. It must be heedfully observed also, that how free, gracious and absolute forever the New Covenant be, (for God forbid that I should go about to eclipse the glory of Free-grace, on which my Soul depends for Salvation) yet that will never prove *Abraham's* Covenant to be an abolished *Adam's* Covenant of Works, unless two things more be proved, which I never expect to see, *viz.*

First, That *Abraham* and his believing Posterity, were bound by the very nature and act of Circumcision to keep the whole Law in their own Persons, in order to their Justification and Salvation, as perfectly and perpetually, and under the same penalty for the least failure, as *Adam* was to keep the Law in *Paradise*.

Secondly, It must be further proved, That

Abraham, and all his believing Offspring, who stood with him under that Covenant, whereof Circumcision was the initiating Sign, were all saved in a different way from that in which Believers are now saved under the Gospel : for so it must be, if the addition of Circumcision made it unto them an *Adam's* Covenant of Works. But this would be a direct contradiction to the words of the *Apostle*, speaking of them who were under the Covenant of Circumcision, *Acts* 15. 11. *But we believe, that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they.* If he say, they stood indeed under that Covenant, as a pure Covenant of Works, but were saved by another Covenant ; and so for many Ages the Church of God stood absolutely under the Covenant of Works, and at the same time under the pure Covenant of Grace ; the one altogether absolute and free, the other wholly conditional : and though these two be in their own Natures inconsistent and destructive of each other, yet so it was, that all the Saints for many Ages were absolutely under the one, and yet purely under the other : shall I be then censured for saying he speaks pure contradiction ?

Possibly my Reader will be tempted to think I abuse him, and that no Man of common sense can be guilty of such an horrid Absurdity. I must, whatever respect I have for Mr. C. once more tell him before the World, that this is not only his own Doctrine, but that very Doctrine upon which he hath adventured the whole Cause and Controversy of Infant's Baptism, which I therefore say is hereby become a desperate Cause.

And this brings me to my first general Head, *viz.*

I. First, That Mr. Cary hath not been able to free his *Thesis* from this horrid Absurdity ; but by struggling to do it, hath (according to the nature of Errors) entangled himself in more and greater ones.

Mr. Cary, in p. 174, 175. of his *Solemn Call*, was by me reduced to this Absurdity, which he there owns in express words, "That *Moses*, and the whole body of the People of *Israel*, were absolutely under (without the exception of any) the severest penalties of a dreadful Curse ; and that the *Sinai* Covenant could be no other than a Covenant of Works, a ministration of death and condemnation ; and yet at the same time, both *Moses*, and all the Elect, were under a pure Covenant of Gospel-grace : And if these were two contrary Covenants in themselves, and just opposite the one to the other, as indeed they were, we have nothing to say, but with the *Apostle*, O the depth, &c.

This, Reader, is the Position which must be made good by Mr. Cary, or his Cause is lost. Deformed Issues do not look as if they had beautiful Truth for their Mother. No false or absurd Conclusion can regularly follow from true Premises : But hence naturally and necessarily follows this

Absurdity I.

That *Abraham*, *Moses*, and all the Believers under the Old Testament, by standing absolutely under *Adam's* Covenant of Works, as a ministration of death and condemnation ; and

at

at the same time purely under the Covenant of Grace (as Mr. C. affirms they did) must necessarily, during their Lives, hang midway betwixt Life and Death, Justification and Condemnation; and after Death, midway betwixt Heaven and Hell. During life, they could neither be justified nor condemned. Justified they could not be, for Justification is the Soul's passing from Death to Life, 1 *John* 3. 14. *John* 5. 24. Upon a Man's Justification his Covenant and State are changed; but the Covenant and State of no Man can be so changed as long as he remains absolutely under the severest Penalties and condemnation of the Law, as Mr. C. affirms they did.

Again, Condemned they could not be, seeing all that are under the pure Covenant of Grace (as he saith they were at the same time) are certainly in Christ, and to such there is no condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 1. nor ever shall be: *John* 5. 24. *He that believeth, shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.* What remains then, but that during Life, they could neither be perfectly justified, nor perfectly condemned; and yet being absolutely under the severest Penalties of Adam's Covenant, they were perfectly condemned; and again, being under the pure Covenant of Grace, they must be perfectly justified?

And then after Death, they must neither go to Heaven, nor Hell; but either be annihilated, or stick mid-way in *Limbo Patrum* (as the *Papists* fancy) betwixt both. No condemned Person goes to Heaven, nor any justified Person to Hell. His *Position* therefore, which necessarily infers this gross Absurdity, is justly renounced and derided by Learned and Orthodox Divines.

The Learned and Acute *Turretine*, the late famous Professor of Divinity at *Geneva*, proving that the *Sinai* Law could not be a pure Covenant of Works, brings this very *Medium* to prove it, as a known Truth, allowed by all Men. "The *Israelites* (saith he) with whom God covenanted, were already under *Abraham's* Covenant, which was a Covenant of Grace; and were saved in Christ by it; therefore they could not be under the Legal Covenant. *Nemo enim simul potest duobus fœderibus totâ specie distinctis subesse*; because no Man can be under two Covenants specifically different at the same time, as these two are.

That Great and Renowned Divine Mr. *William Strong*, gives four irrefragable Arguments to prove, that no Man can stand under both these Covenants at the same time, which in co-ordination actually destroy and make void each other. "If the First Covenant stand, there is no place for the Second; and if the Second stand, the First is made void. And this (saith he) will fully appear, if we consider the direct contrariety in the Terms of those two Covenants. For (1.) the Righteousness of the First Covenant is in our selves; but the Righteousness of the Second is the Righteousness of another, 1 *Job.* 5. 11, 12. (2.) In the Covenant of Works, acceptance is first of the Works, and afterwards of the Person; *Gen.* 4. 7. but in the

"Covenant of Grace, the acceptance is first of the Person, and then of the Work, *Gen.* 4. 4. (3.) The First Covenant was a Covenant without a Priest, but the Second is a Covenant with a Priest. (4.) In the First Covenant there is matter of glorying, but in the Second there is none, *Rom.* 3. 27. So that these two can never consist, except you can compound, or reconcile these four Opposites in the justification of the same Person.

To the same purpose, saith that Excellent *Bolton's* Mr. *Samuel Bolton*. "If the Law were a Covenant of Works, then were the *Jews* under a different Covenant from us, and so none of them were saved, which the Apostle gainsays, *Acts* 15. 11. or else they were both under a Covenant of Works, and a Covenant of Grace. But that they could not be; they are utterly inconsistent. Ergo. And thus all found Divines speak. I may therefore say of Mr. *Cary's* Position, as *Revues* before me did, *omnem absurditatem excedere videtur*, it seemeth to exceed all Absurdities. A Man may more rationally suppose two Natures and essential Forms in one Body, and place the same thing under divers Species in the predicament of substance: yea, 'twere more tolerable to affirm, That *ex duobus entibus per se fit unum ens per se*, than to place any (as Mr. C. places all) of God's People under two opposite Covenants. If Mr. C. were absolutely under the condemnation of the Law, would he not be purely justified, think you? Yet he places *Abraham*, *Moses*, and all Believers with them, absolutely under the severest condemnation of the Law, and the pure Gospel-Covenant at once.

But to cover the shame and nakedness of his Assertion, which places Believers absolutely under Adam's Covenant, he is fain to make use of two *Fig-leaves*, as Adam did.

(1.) And the first attempt he now makes, p. 4, 5, 6, 7. of his Reply, is by way of Retortion, by telling us, "That the same pretended Absurdities do fall as heavily, and a great deal more, on our Doctrine, who affirm the *Sinai* Law (complexly taken) to be a Covenant of Faith, or Grace, than upon his who makes them two essentially different Covenants: because we are forced to comprize perfect doing, with the curse for non-performance, under the same Covenant with believing: and that it cannot be denied, but that all the People of God were absolutely under the *Sinai* Covenant, *Gal.* 3. 23. and *Gal.* 4. 4, 5. and consequently under the curse, *Gal.* 3. 10. This is the sum and substance of his first Answer.

I will not be tempted to expose my Neighbour to derision for this his strange Answer; but rather propound two sober Queries to him, and the Reader, viz. (1.) What Orthodox Divines he ever met with, and what are their Names, who are forced to comprize perfect doing, with the curse for non-performance, under the same Covenant with believing: and so make the two opposite Covenants to be specifically one and the same? Name your Men, with their Books and Pages; or retract with shame and sorrow, what you have here abu-

Reply.

Turret.
pars 2da
pag. 290.

Mr. Strong
on the Co-
venant,
p. 66, 67.

abusively affirmed of them. *Cameron* indeed makes it a subservient Covenant; the most true, though obscure Covenant of Grace; but none comprize *Adam's* Covenant with its Curse, in the New Covenant. (2.) Whether it be imaginable, That the same Absurdity can follow from their Doctrine, that make the whole complex body of the *Sinai Law* a Covenant of Grace, though more obscure, and so place all the People of God in those Ages under it; as does necessarily follow his Doctrine, who makes it a pure *Adam's* Covenant of Works, and places the Church of God absolutely under the curse of it, and also under the pure Covenant of Grace at the same time? If Grace and Grace (how different soever in degrees of Manifestation) be as opposite and repugnant, as Grace and Works, as Justification and Condemnation are, 'tis time for me to lay down my Pen; for I have certainly lost my Understanding to guide it any further.

But Mr. *Cary* will say, If you do not, yet Mr. *Roberts* doth comprize both in one Covenant. I say, you abuse Mr. *Roberts* in so affirming: for he faith in that very place you refer to*, That believing in Christ, was ultimately and chiefly intended in the *Sinai* Covenant; and perfect doing was only urged upon *Israel* in subordination and tendency to that believing. And upon that ground it is he affirms that Covenant to be a Covenant of Faith, and so denominates it from the chief scope and intent of it. He sets not *doing* and *believing* in co-ordination, or places the Church under two opposite Covenants, as you do; but places the Law, where it ought to be placed, in subordination to Faith and Christ, and therefore you have abused that good Man, as well as me, and your self most of all in this your first impertinent and silly Answer.

(2.) But you have one Evasion more, p. 7. where you say, "*That how harsh and dreadful soever the Terms or Conditions of the Legal Covenant were to those that were under it, as Moses, and the whole body of the Israelites, then were; yet the grace of the Gospel-Covenant far superseded, and was by far more victorious, powerful, and efficacious,* Rom. 5. 17, 20.

Reply.

Worse and worse. Your Discourse mends like fowre Ale in Summer. Here you fancy the two Covenants (under which you place the whole Church of God) to be in a conflict one with the other; Condemnation and Justification struggling one with another, as I told you before they would: but however, the Grace of the New Covenant prevails at last, and gets the victory over the Covenant of Works. Very good; but then pray, Sir, if you please, answer me a plain Question or two at your leisure.

First, How far did the Covenant of Grace prevail against the Covenant of Works? Was it so far prevalent and victorious, as utterly to vanquish and disannul it, as a Covenant of Works to them? or was it not? Was the Victory you speak of, a compleat, or a partial one? If you say it was incompleat and partial, then you leave them (as I told you before you must) partly under the Promise, and

partly under the Curse; justified in part, and condemned in part. But if you say it was a compleat and perfect Victory, then it utterly dissolved its Obligation as a Covenant of Works; then they did not remain under two opposite Covenants, as you affirmed they did; but on their believing, changed their state with their Covenant, as we affirm they did.

Secondly, If you say, it did not totally free them from the Curse of the Covenant of Works, but however prevailed so far that they were not actually damned by virtue of the Curse; then be pleased to answer me one Question more, *How it was possible for them to be absolutely under the Curse of the Law (as you affirmed they were) and yet that Curse to be so superseded by the Covenant of Grace, as here you speak?*

To supersede the Curse (though it be a Phrase I never met with before) if it signify any thing, it must signify this; That the Covenant of Grace caused the Law to omit, forbear, or give over to curse that People any more. But did, or can the Law forbear or cease to curse those that are absolutely under it as a ministration of death and condemnation? Pray consult, Rom. 3. 19. and Gal. 3. 10. Are you aware what you say, when you place Believers absolutely under the Curse of the Law, and then talk of the New Covenant's victory over it; and after all this, leave them as you do, absolutely under the cursing power of the one; and still under the victorious Grace of the other? For shame, my Friend, give up your absurd Notion, and repent of this Folly. I would not willingly shame you before the World; I did all that lay in me to prevent it. But however, *Pudor est medicina pudoris*, the only way you have left me to prevent your glorying in your shame, is this way, to make you ashamed of your Vain-glory. As for that Scripture you alledge to countenance your Fancy, Rom. 5. 17, 20. you might to as good purpose have opened your Bible, and have taken the first Scripture that came to hand, and it would have done your *Possession* less harm. For the Apostle's scope there, is to demonstrate the perfection of the abounding Righteousness of Christ, for the full discharge of Believers from the guilt of Sin, and curse of *Adam's* Covenant; and cuts the Throat of your *Possession*, which it is alledged to prove.

I have stood the longer upon the clearing of this first Point; because this being fully cleared, it runs through and clears the whole Controversy betwixt us. For now it will be evident to all, That neither *Abraham's*, nor *Moses* his Covenant (complexly taken, as Mr. *Cary* takes it) could possibly be for this reason, an *Adam's* Covenant of Works; and if not a Covenant of Works, then how dark or legal soever the Dispensations of them were, they must needs be the same Covenant of Grace, for substance, under which we are, and so the main Controversy betwixt us is hereby at an end.

I know not how many Covenants of Works, or how many of Grace, Mr. *C.* fancies there are; But Orthodox Divines constantly

* Roberts on the Covenant, pag. 775, 776, 777.

* Vid. Bolton's
Bounds,
p. 148.

stantly affirm, * That as there never were but two ways of Life to Mankind, the one before the Fall, by perfect doing; the other after the Fall, by sincere believing : So answerably there can be but two Covenants betwixt God and Mankind, viz. the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace. The last of which hath, indeed, been more obscurely Administred, and in that respect is called the Old Covenant ; yet that and the New are essentially but one Covenant : And the Church of God, which for many Ages stood under that Old Covenant, did not stand under it as an *Adam's* Covenant, or the First Covenant of Works, for the undeniable Reasons above given. And therefore *Abraham's* Covenant, from whence we derive our Childrens Title to Baptism, must of necessity be the very same Covenant for substance with this New Covenant, which all *Abraham's* believing off-spring, and their Infant-feed, are now under. And in proving this one point, I have sufficiently confuted both Mr. C's *Solemn Call*, and this his feeble vindication of it, together.

But left he should take this for the only Absurdity proved upon him, tho' it be tiresome to me, and must be ungrateful to him ; give me leave to touch one more, among many ; and that the rather, because I make great use of it in this Controversy, and Mr. Cary both yields and denies it. If his own words be the Messengers of his meaning, either he or I, must mistake their Errand.

I had in my *Prolegomena*, distinguished of the Law, as strictly taken for the *Ten Commandments* ; and more largely and complexly, taken, as including the *Ceremonial Law*. The former I considered according to God's Intention and Design in the promulgation of it, which was to add it as an *Appendix* to the Promise, *Gal. 3. 19.* And the carnal *Jews* mistaking and perverting the end of the Law, and making it to themselves a Covenant of Works, by making it the very Rule and Reason of their Justification before God, *Rom. 9. 32, 33. Rom. 10. 3.* I told him, That the Controversy depended upon this double sense of the Law, for that it ought not to be denominated from the abused and mistaken End of it ; but from God's chief scope and design in the promulgation of it, which was to add it as an *Appendix* to the Promise, as the word *προστίθηται* there imports ; and so must be published with Evangelical purposes. Let us now hear Mr. C's sense of this matter.

In his *Call*, p. 131. he yields the distinction in these words.

The *Jews* were right enough in reference to the true nature of the Law, That it was a Covenant of Works, &c. though they were out in respect of its proper use and intention, which was not, that any should attain unto Life and Righteousness thereby ; but to

In his *Reply*, p. 43. proving the Law to be a Covenant of Works, from *Rom. 10. 15.* he saith,

This was the nature of it in the first sanction of it, as the fruit of God's special designation and appointment ; and that it is the greatest violation and perverting of Scripture that can lightly be met with, to

show them the nature of Sin, and the Holiness and Righteousness of God ; to convince them of their Sin and Misery without Christ, and their necessity of a Saviour ; which they being ignorant of, and still going about to establish their own Righteousness which was of the Law, and refusing to submit themselves unto the Righteousness of God, &c. they stumbled at that stumbling stone, and and were accordingly broken, snared, and taken *Rom. 9. 31, 32, 33. Rom. 10. 3.* And this (saith he) was the true ground of dispute between the Apostles and them. This was Orthodoxly spoken, and would end the Controversy, would he stand to it. But

again, but rather leave him to reconcile himself with himself.

I shall only ask Mr. Cary a sober Question or two, instead of Recriminations, and rendering reviling for reviling.

First, How the *Jews* were right enough in reference to the nature of the Law, as it was a Covenant of Works, and yet out in respect of its proper use and intention, which was not, that any should attain unto Life and Righteousness by it, but to convince them of Sin, and of the necessity of a Saviour ; and yet the Law be a Covenant of Works, intentionally, as well as materially considered ; and that in respect of God's special designation and appointment ? If God designed and appointed it in his *Sinai* dispensation, to be to them an *Adam's* Covenant of Works, then certainly they were not out (as you say they were) when they sought Righteousness by the works of it ; nor could that mistake of theirs be the ground of the Controversy betwixt the Apostles and them : For it seems it was no mistake, being by God's Intention, as well as its own primitive Nature, promulgated at *Sinai*, as a true *Adam's* Covenant.

Secondly, You deny the Law was added to the Promise, and ask me why it might not be added to the first Covenant to re-inforce that ? I answer, Because the scope of the place will not bear it, nor any good Expositor countenance such a fancy. You make the *Sinai* Law to be the same with that first Covenant, and by so expounding the Apostles, you make him say, either that the same thing was added to it self, (which multi in your own Phrase, be by a Correspondency of Identity) or else that there are two distinct Covenants of Works when indeed there is but one) and that the latter was added to the former. This is your way of Expounding Scripture, when driven

affirm, that this is uttered and declared by Paul, &c. only because the *Jews* had perverted it, and reduced it (as they thought) to its primitive intention. And again, p. 44. he saith, he hath proved that it was the same with *Adam's* Covenant in both respects, that is intentionally, as well as materially considered. And once more, p. 20. he expressly denies that the Law was added as an *Appendix* to the Promise ; calls that a crude assertion of mine ; and asks me, Why it might not be added as an *Appendix* rather to the first Covenant of Works, to re-inforce that ? And after all, gushes out many slighting and opprobrious terms upon me, which I will not throw back

περοστίθηται
in pœdia,
pro appo-
sita, hoc
est, Προ-
missioni
adjecta. &c.
24.

ven to a freight by dint of Argument. Nothing beside such a pure necessity, could drive you upon such an Absurdity.

vid. Dr. Reynolds's *Life of the Law*, p. 378. full up to my sense, and p 371.
* Dr. Crisp, Lib. 4. Sermon 9.

It was added to the promise (faith Dr. Reynolds) by way of suberviency and attendance, the better to advance and make effectual the Covenant it self. Mr. Strong upon the two Covenants, faith, the Apostle's meaning is, that the Law was added as an Appendix to the Promise. But it may be you had rather hear Dr. Crisp's Exposition * than his; for you say, had it been added to the Promise, it would have given Life. The Doctor will at once give you the true sense of the Text, and with it a full answer to your Objection. "Though Life (faith he) be not the end of the Law, yet there are other sufficient uses of it requiring the promulgation thereof: It was published to be an Appendix to the Gospel, Gal. 3. 19. And this supposes, (1.) The priority of the Gospel to the Law. (2.) The principality of the Promise of Life by Christ, above the Law. (3.) The Consequence of the Law and Gospel. They may well stand one by another, as an House, and the addition to it may. That it was with such an intention added to the Promise, I have met with no Man that had front enough to deny or scruple it before you. And that the Jews did mistake its chief scope and use, from whence we denominate it a Covenant of Grace, the generality of Godly and Learned Divines constantly affirm. See Mr. Amb. Burgess de Lege, p. 227. Bolton's Bounds, p. 160, 161. Mr. Samuel Matther on the Types, p. 11. with multitudes more, whole citations would even weary the Reader. And what you urge from Mr. Pool's Annotations, on 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7. It makes nothing at all to your purpose: For it is manifest the Annotator there, takes the Moral Law in it self, strictly taken, and as set in opposition to the Gospel, which it never was since the Fall, but by the Ignorance and Infidelity of unregenerate Men.

You also labour to shelter your erroneous fancy under the Authority of Dr. Owen; but you manifestly abuse him in your Citation; for in that very place you refer to, he speaks strictly of the Covenant of Works made with Adam in Paradise; and plainly distinguishes it from the Sinai Covenant, which sufficiently shews his judgment in this point. For these are his own words, which you suppressed in the Citation, "As to the Sinai Covenant and the New Testament, with their Privileges thence emerging, they belong not to our present Argument. This Paragraph you willfully omit, that you might include that which his words plainly exclude. In the same place he tells you, that David and Abraham's Covenant, was for essence the Covenant of Grace, notwithstanding the variations made in it: But you take and leave, as best

Dr. Owen of Justification, p 395. 397. Vindicated from Mr. C's gross Misrepresentation.

† But if you will see the

Dr. Owen's judgment, in concurrence with all his Brethren, you have it in these very words: "Although this Covenant hath been variously administered in respect of Ordinances and Institutions in the time of the Law, and since the coming of Christ in the flesh; yet for the substance and efficacy of it, to all its spiritual and saving ends; it is one and the same; upon the account of which various dispensations it is called the Old and New Testament. Vide Declaration of the Faith and Order of the Congregational Churches in England p. 15. at the Savoy, Octob. 12. 1658.

Once more in p. 16, 17, &c. of my *Vindicia Legis*, you find your self pinched with another Dilemma, from Lev. 26. 40, 41, 46. whence I plainly proved, That there is a Promise of Pardon found in the Sinai dispensation, to penitent Sinners. That this Promise was given at Mount Sinai by the hand of Moses, is undeniable from vers. 46. That it contained the Relief of a gracious remission to penitent Sinners, is as undeniable from vers. 40, 41. If you say, this Promise belongs to Moses his dispensation (as vers. 46. tells you it did) then there is remission of Sins found in the Sinai Laws. If you say it only refers to Abraham's Covenant of Grace; then that Covenant of Grace appears to be conditional, which you utterly deny.

Now what is your Reply to this? (1.) You object my own words in the *Method of Grace*, p. 326. as if you had never read the just and fair Vindication I had before given you of them, p. 134, 135. of my first Reply to you. At this rate Men may continue Controversies to the Worlds end. Sir, there are many Witnesses, that you are very well acquainted with my *Method of Grace*. (2.) You say, p. 31 of your Reply, That that Covenant could not be conditional, because a Condition implies merit either of congruity or condignity. This is a further discovery of your ignorance of the nature of Conditions as well as Covenants: But that point belonging to the last Head of Controversy between us, I shall refer it thither.

It were ease for me to inflame in many more Absurdities which Mr. C. cannot eulculate, and to prove them upon him as easily as to name them. But I will not press him too far; what hath been named and proved already, is more than enough to convince the Reader, that my first Argument is left standing in its full force and strength against him, viz.

Argument I. That Proposition can never be true, which necessarily draws many and horrid and gross Absurdities after it by just consequence. But so doth this: Ergo.

Argument II. My next Argument, *Vindicia, &c.* p. 27. is as secure as the first. It was this. If Adam's Covenant had one end, namely, the Happiness and Justification of Men by their own Obedience, and the Law at Sinai had quite another end, namely to bring Sinners to Christ by Faith for their Righteousness; the one to keep him within himself, the other to take him quite out of himself; then the Sinai Law cannot possibly be the same with Adam's Covenant of Works in Paradise.

But so stands the Case, Rom. 10. 4. Christ is the end of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth.

Therefore they cannot be the same, but two different Covenants.

All that touches this Argument, is but three Lines in the 49th page of your Reply; where you say you have sufficiently answered and cleared this in p. 169, 172. of your former Discourse, from the corrupt interpretation by me fastned thereon.

Now, if the Reader will give himself the trouble to examine those Pages, he shall find that

that Mr. C. there allows that very interpretation which he here calls corrupt; and saith it comes all to one reckoning with his own. If this will overthrow my second Argument, it is gone.

Argument III. My third Argument was drawn from *Acts* 7. 38. in this Form :

If Christ himself were the Angel by whom the Laws were delivered to *Moses*, which are there called the lively Oracles of God; then the Law cannot be a pure *Adam's* Covenant of Works : For it is never to be imagined, that ever Jesus Christ himself should deliver to *Moses* such a Covenant directly opposite to all the ends of his future Incarnation.

But it is more than probable from that Text, that it was Christ which delivered the Law to *Moses* on the Mount. Ergo.

To this Argument he saith not one word in p. 49. of his Reply, where he cites a part of it, nibbling a little at that expression [*The lively Oracles of God*,] thinking it unimaginable the *Sinai* Law should be such; when as the Apostle *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. 10. found the Commandment to be unto death; and the Apostle 2 *Cor.* 3. 6, 7. calls it a Ministration of death. I must therefore leave Mr. C. to reconcile those two Scriptures. And withal, I must tell him, that *Spanhemius* gives the same sense I do of *Acts* 7. 38. as the current judgment of Christians against the *Jews*, That it was not a created Angel, but Christ himself.

Argument IV. The last Argument I urged, was from *Rom.* 9. 4. and thus it may run.

No such Covenant as by the Fall had utterly lost all its Promises, Privileges, and Blessings, and could retain nothing but Curses and Punishments, could possibly be numbred among the chief Privileges in which God's *Israel* gloried.

But the Law given at *Sinai* was numbred among their chief Privileges, *Rom.* 9. 4. Ergo.

To this he only saith, p. 57. of his Reply, 'That the Law, even as it was a Covenant of Works, was a privilege inestimable, beyond what all others enjoyed; because the very Curses and Punishments annexed thereunto, in case of the least failure, were of excellent use to convince them of their sin and misery without Christ, and their necessity therefore of a Saviour; which was the proper work of the Law, as a Covenant of Works; which advantage all other Nations wanting, it might well be numbred among the chief Privileges they were invested with.'

But (1.) If the Law were intended by God, to be an *Adam's* Covenant to them (as Mr. C. saith it was) where then is the Privilege of God's *Israel* above other Nations? (2.) If their Privilege consisted in the suberviency of that Law to Christ (as he here intimates it did) then he yields the thing I contend for. For this being its chief scope and end, we do hence justly denominate it a Covenant of Grace, though more obscure and legally administered. And in this Judgment most of our solid Divines concur. Mr. *Charnock* on the Attributes, p. 390. is clear and judicious in the point. Mr. *Samuel Bolton*, in

that excellent Book called, *The Bounds of Christian Liberty*, gives nine solid Arguments to prove the Law was not set up at *Sinai* as a Covenant of Works. Mr. *Anth. Burgess* gives us six Arguments to prove the same Conclusion. Mr. *Greenhill* on *Ezek.* 16. gives us demonstration from that Context, That since it was a Marriage-Covenant, as it appears to be v. 8. it cannot possibly be a distinct Covenant from the Covenant of Grace. The incomparable *Turretine* Learnedly and Judiciously states this Controversy; and both positively asserts, and by many Arguments fully proves, That the *Sinai* Law cannot be a pure Covenant of Works, or a Covenant specifically distinct from the Covenant of Grace. It were easie to fill Pages with Allegations of this kind; but I hope what hath been said, may suffice for this Point.

But still Mr. *Cary* complains, that I have all this while but threatened his Arguments to prove them fallacious, or to have four Terms in them; and therefore he hath drawn out some select Arguments, as he calls them, p. 37. to try my skill upon. I will neither tire my Reader in a foolish chase of such weak and impertinent Arguments as he there produceth, nor yet wholly neglect them, lest he glory in them as unanswerable. And therefore to shew him the fate of the rest, I will only touch his first Argument, which being his Argumentum *Palmarium*, deferredly leads the Van to all the rest. And thus it runs upon all four.

That Covenant that is not of Faith, must needs be a Covenant of Works, yea, the very same for substance with that made with *Adam*.

But the Scripture is express, That the Law is not of Faith, *Gal.* 3. 12. Ergo.

The Law is considered two ways in Scripture. (1.) Largely, for the whole *Mosaic* Oeconomy, comprehensive of the Ceremonial as well as Moral Precepts; and that Law is of Faith, as the Learned *Turretine* hath proved by four Scripture Arguments, Pars secunda, p. 292, 293. * Because it contained Christ the Object of Faith, &c. Because it impelled Men to seek Christ by Faith. Because it required that God be worshipped, which he cannot rightly be without Faith. And because *Paul* describes the Righteousness of Faith in those very words whereby *Moses* had declared the Precepts of the Law, *Deut.* 30. 11, 12, 13.

Again, the Law in Scripture is taken strictly for the Moral Law only, considered abstractly from the Promises of Grace, as the Legal *Jurists* understood it. These are two far different senses and acceptations of the Law. Your Major Proposition takes the Law in its large complex body, as appears by your 3d. Page. Your Minor Proposition, which you would confirm by *Gal.* 3. 12. takes the Law strictly and abstractly, as it is set disjunctly from, yea in opposition to Faith and the Promises, and so there are two sorts of Law in your Argument, and consequently your Argument is fallacious, as all its fellows be, and runs (as I told you before) upon all four.

Bolton's
Bounds,
p. 130, &c.

Burgess,
de Leg.,
p. 225.
Greenhill,
in Loc.

Turretine
part 2. p.
288, 289.

Fr. Spanhem.
Elench.
Controv.
p. 552.

* Lex dicitur non esse ex fide, *Gal.* 3. 12. non ut latet sumitur prout novae Oeconomiae Mosaicam; sed strictè, quoniam sumitur pro Legge Morali abstracta, & scilicet à promissionibus gratiae, quomodo illam intelligebant Jurisconsulti, qui vitam ex ea quaerebant. Nam silem etiam in iudicio Sinaitico præceptam fuisse vincitur, &c.

I hope this may suffice with respect to the Sinai Covenant controverted betwixt me and my Neighbour, to evince that it cannot be what he asserts it to be, even an *Adam's* Covenant of Works: and that I have discharged what I undertook to prove with respect to this Covenant, namely, That Mr. C. cannot free his *Position* from the gross Absurdities with which I loaded it, but endeavouring to do that, hath incurred many more: that his *Reply* hath left my Arguments standing in their full strength against him: and that the *Position* I have set up against him, is well founded in Scripture; and hath the general concurrence and consent of Learned, Holy, and Orthodox Divines.

To conclude, Let the Grave and Learned Dr. Edw. Reynolds, in his excellent *Treatise of the Use of the Law*, determine this Controversy betwixt us, p. 371, &c. where designedly handling this Doctrine from *Rom. 7. 13.*

‘That the Law was revised and promulgated anew on Mount Sinai by the Ministry of Moses, with no other than Evangelical and merciful purposes, he abundantly confirms my Sense and Arguments, and saves me the labour of refusing the principal, and most of yours: where carrying before him the whole Context of *Gal. 3.* from the 15th to the 23d, he clearly carries his Doctrine with it, proving from v. 15.

‘That God’s Covenant with Abraham was perpetual and immutable, and therefore all other subsequent Acts of God (such as the giving of the Law was) do some way or other refer unto it. (2.) From v. 16. he

further proves, “That as God’s Covenant with Abraham is most constant in regard of the wisdom and unvariableness of him that made it; so it can never expire for want of a Seed to whom it is made. (3.) From v. 17.

he proves, that if another Law be made after the Promise, which *prima specie*, and in strict construction, doth imply a contradiction to the terms and nature of the former Law; then it is certain, that this latter Law must be understood in some other sense, and admit of some other subordinate use, which may well consist with the being and force of the former Covenant. (4.) From v. 18. he

proves, that the coming of the Law hath not voided the Promise, and that the Law is not of force (as you vainly dream) towards the Seed to whom the Promise is made; and therefore if it be not to stand in a contradiction, it follows that it must stand in subordination to the Gospel; and so to tend to Evangelical Purposes. (5.) He further proves his Conclusion from v. 19. which shews for what end the Law was added,

propterea. ‘It was not (saith he) set up alone, as a thing in gross by it self; as an adequate, compleat, solid Rule of Righteousness, as it was given to Adam in *Paradise*: much less was it published to void and disannul any precedent Covenant; but so far was it from abrogating, that it was added to the Promise by way of subserviency, and attendance; the better to advance and make effectual the Covenant it self; and that until the Seed should come, which whether it respect Christ

Vol. I.

personal, or mystical; in either sense (saith he) it confirms the point we are upon, viz.

‘That the Law hath Evangelical purposes. If the Seed be understood of the Person of Christ,

then this shews, that the Law was put to the Promise, the better to raise and stir up in

Men the expectations of Christ, the promised Seed. But if we understand by Seed, the

Faithful (which I rather approve); then the Apostle’s meaning is this; That as long as

any are either to come into the unity of Christ’s Body, and have the Covenant of

Grace applied to them, &c. so long there will be use of the Law, both to the Unrege-

nerate, to make them fly to Christ, and those that are already called, that they may

learn to cast all their Faith, Hope, and Expectation of Righteousness upon him still.

This then manifestly shews, that there was no other intention in publishing the Law,

but with reference to the Seed: that is, with Evangelical purposes to shew Mercy: not

with reference to those that perish, who would have had condemnation enough without the Law. And further strengthens his

Conclusion from the last words of *vers. 19.*

‘That it was ordained by Angels in the hand of a Mediator. This (saith he) evidently

declares, That the Law was published in Mercy and Pacification, not in Fury or Revenge;

(for the work of a Mediator is to negotiate Peace, and treat of Reconciliation between

Parties offended) whereas, if the Lord had intended Death in the publishing of the Law,

he would not have proclaimed it in the hand of a Mediator, but of an Executioner. (6.)

From *vers. 20.* Those words (saith he) shew why the Law was published in the hand of

a Mediator, viz. that they should not despair and sink under the fear of his Wrath. For

as he made a Covenant of Promise to Abraham, and his Seed; so he is the same God still,

one in his Grace and Mercy towards Sinners. God is one, i. e. in sending this Mediator, he

doth declare to Mankind, that he is at peace and unity with them again. Moses was the

Representative, and Christ the substantial and real Mediator. God is one, i. e. he carries the same Purpose and Intention both in the

Law and in the Gospel; namely, benevolence, and desire of reconciliation with Men.

(7.) To sum up all that hath been spoken touching the use of the Law in a plain similitude; Suppose we a Prince should proclaim

a Pardon to all Traitors, if they would come in and plead it; and after this, should send

forth his Officers to attach, imprison, examine, convince, arraign, threaten, and

condemn them: Is he now contrary to himself? Hath he repented of his Mercy? No,

but he is unwilling to lose his Mercy, desirous to have the honour of his Mercy acknowledged unto him. The same is the

Case between God and us. To Abraham he made a promise of Mercy and Blessedness to

all that would plead interest in it, for the remission of their Sins; but Men were secure and heedless of their Estate, &c. Hereupon

the Lord published by Moses a severe and terrible Law; yet in all this, God doth but

IIiii

‘pursue his first purpose of Mercy, and take a course to make his Gospel accounted worthy of all acceptance; which clears the general Point, *That God in the publication of the Law by Moses, on Mount Sinai, had none but Merciful and Evangelical Intentions.* And once more; The Law was not published by Moses on Mount Sinai, as it was given to Adam in Paradise, to justify, or to save Men. And p. 385. it is not given, *ex primariis intentionibus*, to condemn Men. In consequence to all which he saith, p. 388, 389. that to preach the Law alone by it self, is to pervert the use of it; neither have we any power or commission so to do. It was published as an *Appendant* to the Gospel, and so must be preached. It was published in the hand of a *Mediator*, and must be preached in the hand of a *Mediator*. It was published Evangelically, and it must be so preached.

See how this agrees now with p. 172. of your *Call*, and how the several parts of the Discourse of this found and eminent Doctor (which I have been forced to sum up and contract) do abundantly confute your vain Notions of the Law, and cut the very Nerves of your best Arguments, if they had any Nerves in them: for indeed it is *moles abque nervis*.

It were easy for me to represent the Sense of many other eminent Divines in perfect harmony with the Doctrine of this great and excellent Divine, who hath substantially proved the Point I defend against you: but 'tis enough.

II. Let us next examine what execution his Reply hath done upon my second Position, set up in direct opposition to him; namely, *That God's Covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. unto which Circumcision was annexed, is, for its substance, the self-same Covenant of Grace with that which Gentile believers and their Infant-seed are now under.*

Here I have abundant cause again to complain, that Mr. C. hath so formed his Answers, as if he had never read the Book he undertakes a Reply to. And I do verily believe, the greatest part of his Reply was made at random, before ever my printed Book was in his hands. For he hath not at all considered the state of the Question, as I there gave it him; nor kept himself to the just and necessary Rules of Disputation, as I earnestly desired he would. However, 'tis not Complaints, but Confirmation and Vindication of my Arguments, which is my proper work. I shall therefore recite them briefly, and vindicate and confirm them strongly; contracting all into as few words as can express the sense and Argument of the Point before me.

Argument I.

If Circumcision be a part of the Ceremonial Law, and the Ceremonial Law was dedicated by Blood; and whatsoever is so dedicated, is by you confessed to be no part of the Covenant of Works: then Circumcision can be no part of the Covenant of Works, even by your own confession. But it is so.

Ergo. To this Mr. Cary returns a *Tragical Complaint* instead of a *Rational Answer*. *Insinuates*

my falsehood and gross abuse of him. Appeals to his Reader. Tells him, I have taken a liberty to say what I please, as if there were no future Judgment to be regarded. And that I can expect no comfort another Day without repentance now. For those things that have thus passed betwixt him and me, shall again be revived, and set in order before me. That he is weary of noting my Miscarriages of this kind. That there is hardly a Page or Paragraph in my whole Reply, but abounds with Transgressions of this nature. He begs the Lord to forgive me; and wishes he could say, Father, forgive him, for he knows not what he doth; as if my Sin were greater than the Sin of those that stoned Stephen, or crucified Christ.

Either I am guilty or innocent in the matters Reply, here charged upon me by Mr. C. If guilty, I promise him an ingenious acknowledgment. If innocent, (as both my Confidence, and his own Book will prove me to be) then I shall only say, *He knoweth not what Spirit he is of.* The Case must be tried by his own Book, and it will quickly be decided. These are the very words in his *Solemn Call*, p. 148. ‘He (that is, Mr. Sedgwick) makes no distinction betwixt the Ceremonial Covenant that was dedicated with Blood, and the Law written in Stones that was not so dedicated. How strangely doth he confound and obscure the word and truth of God, which ought to have been cleared and distinctly declared to those he had preached or written to? With much more, p. 149, 150, 151. where he saith, ‘It's plain, that the Law written in Stones, and the Book wherein the Statutes and Judgments were contained, were two distinct Covenants, and delivered at distinct Seasons, and in a distinct method; the one with, the other without a Mediator; the one dedicated with blood and sprinkling, the other (that we read of) not so dedicated.’

Now let the Reader judge whether I have deserved such Tragical Complaints and dreadful Charges for inferring from these words, That the Ceremonial Law being by him pronounced a distinct Covenant from the Moral Law, which he makes all one with Adam's Covenant; delivered at a distinct season, and in a distinct method; the Ceremonial Law with a Mediator, the Moral Law without a Mediator; the Ceremonial Law dedicated with Blood and sprinkling, the Moral Law not so dedicated: let him judge (I say) whether I have wronged him in saying, that by his own confession, Circumcision being a part of this Ceremonial Law, it can therefore be no part of the Covenant of Works?

But Mr. Cary hath two things to say for himself. (1.) That in the same place he makes the Ceremonial Law no other than a Covenant of Works: And the wrong I have done him, is by not distinguishing (as he did) betwixt *A Covenant of Works*, and *The Covenant of Works*. Here it seems lies my guilt upon which this dreadful out-cry against me is made.

But if I should chance to prove, that there never was, is, or can be any more than one Covenant of Works; and that any other Covenant which is distinguished from it (as he confesses the Ceremonial Law was) by a Mediator, and the Blood of sprinkling, can be

P. 386.

Abraham's Covenant, Gen. 17. the Covenant of Grace.

Vindiciarum Legis, &c. P. 42.

Reply. P. 55.

Exception.

Reply.

be no part of that Covenant of Works: what then will become of Mr. C's distinction of *A Covenant of Works*, and *The Covenant of Works*? Now the matter is plain and evident, That as there never were, are, or can be more than two common Heads appointed by God, namely *Adam*, and *Christ*, 1 Cor. 15. 45, 46, 47, 48. Rom. 5. 15, 17, 18, 19, so it is impossible there should be more than two Covenants, under which Mankind stands, under these two common Heads. And the First Covenant once broken, it is utterly impossible that fallen Man should ever attain Life that way, or that ever God should set it up again with such an intention and scope, *unless* (as Mr. Charnock speaks) *he had reduced Man's Body to the dust, and his Soul to nothing, and framed another Man to have governed him by a Covenant of Works; but that had not been the same Man that had revolted, and upon his revolt was stained and disabled.* If Mr. C. therefore be not able to prove more Covenants of Works with Mankind than one, let him rather blush at his silly distinction betwixt a Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Works. For indeed he makes at least four distinct Covenants of Works, one with *Adam*, two with *Moses*; one Moral, the other Ceremonial; and a fourth with *Abraham* at the institution of Circumcision, Gen. 17.

(2.) If it appear (as it clearly doth) that as there never was, is, or can be any more than one Covenant of Works, so whatsoever Covenant is distinguished from it by a Mediator, and dedication by the sprinkling of Blood (as he saith the Ceremonial Law was) cannot possibly, for the Reasons he gives, be any part or Member of *Adam's* Covenant of Works; then, I hope, I have done Mr. C. no wrong in my assumption from his own words, for which he so reviles and abuses me. But this will appear as plain as the Noon-day-light: for a Covenant with a Mediator, and dedicated by sprinkling of Blood, doth, and necessarily must essentially differ from such a Covenant from that Covenant that had no Mediator, nor dedication of Blood. To deny this, were to confound Law and Gospel, *Adam's* and *Christ's* Covenant; but the distinction betwixt them is his own, therefore my assumption was just. That this Blood was typically the Blood of *Christ*, and that the Holy Ghost signified the one by the other, is plain from Heb. 9. 7, 8. And I never met with that Man that scrupled it before Mr. Cary. So then my first Argument to prove *Abraham's* Covenant of Circumcision to be the Covenant of Grace, and not an *Adam's* Covenant, or any part thereof, stands firm after Mr. C's passionate Reply, which I hope the Lord will pardon to him, though he had scarce Charity enough left to desire a pardon for his Friend, who had neither wronged the Truth, nor him.

Argument II.

My second Argument was this. If Circumcision was the seal of the Righteousness of Faith, it did not pertain to the Covenant of Works; for the Righteousness of Faith and Works are opposite.

But Circumcision was the Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, Rom. 4. 11. Ergo.

The sum of what he answers to this, p. 72, 73, &c. (as far as I can pick his true sense out of a multitude of needless words) is this. *He confesses this Argument seems very plausible; but however, Abraham was a Believer before Circumcision; and tho' indeed it sealed the Righteousness of Faith to him, yet it sealed it to him only as the Father of Believers, and denies that ever Jacob, or Isaac, or any others enrolled in that Covenant, were sealed by it; but to all the rest, beside Abraham, it was rather a token of servitude and bondage.* This is the sum and substance of his Reply.

But, Sir, let me ask you two or three plain Replies.

Questions. (1.) What is the reason you silently slide over the Question I asked you, p. 41. of my *Vindicia*, &c. Did you find it an hot Iron which you durst not touch? 'Tis like you did. My Question was this. Had *Adam's* Covenant a seal of the righteousness of Faith annexed to it, as this bad, Rom. 4. 11? The righteousness of Faith is Evangelical Righteousness, and this Circumcision sealed. Say not it was to *Abraham* only that it sealed it, for 'tis an injurious restriction put upon the Seal of a Covenant which extended to the Fathers as well as to *Abraham*: however, you admit that it sealed Evangelical Righteousness to *Abraham*: but I hope you will not say, that a Seal of the Covenant of Works (for so you make Circumcision to be) ever did, or could seal Evangelical Righteousness to any individual Person in the World.

I find you a Man of great Confidence, but certainly here it failed you: not one word in Reply to this. (2.) 'I told you your distinction was invented by *Bellarmino*, and shew'd you where it was confuted by Dr. *Ames*: but not a word to that. (3.) I shew'd, 'That the extending of that Seal to all Believers, as well as *Abraham*, is most agreeable to the drift and scope of the Apostle's Argument, which is to prove, that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* are justified by Faith, as *Abraham* was: and that the ground of Justification is common to both: and that how great soever *Abraham* was, yet in this case he hath found nothing whereof to glory. And is not your Exposition a notable one, to prove the community of the privilege of Justification, because the Seal of it was peculiar to *Abraham* alone? p. 47, 48.

Sir, You have spent words enough upon this Head to tire your Reader. But why can I not meet with one word among them, that fairly advances to grapple with my Argument? or answer the important Questions before you, upon which the matter depends? If this be all you have to say, I must tell you, You are a weak manager of a bad Cause; which is the less hazard to Truth.

Argument III.

In the Covenant of Circumcision, Gen. 17. God makes over himself to *Abraham*, and his Seed, to be their God, or gives them a special interest in himself.

But in the Covenant of Works, God doth

noe

Charnock
on the At-
tributes,
p. 390.

not since the Fall, make over himself to any to be their God by way of special Interest.

Therefore the Covenant of Circumcision cannot be the Covenant of Works

The sum of your Reply in p. 76. is under two Heads.

(1.) "You boldly tell me, That God *debt* in the Covenant of Works make over himself to Sinners to be their God by way of special Interest: but it being upon such hard terms, that it's utterly impossible for Sinners that way to attain unto Life, he hath therefore been pleased to abolish that, and make a new Covenant: and bring Exod. 20. 2. to prove it.

Reply.

This is new and strange Divinity with me.

(1.) That God should become a People's God by way of special interest, by virtue of the broken Covenant of Works. This wholly alters the nature of that Covenant; for then it was a Law that could give Life, contrary to Gal. 3. 21. unless you can suppose a Soul that's totally dead in Sin, to have a special interest in God, as his God. (2.) This Answer of yours yields the Controversy about the nature of the Sinai Law: for this very Concession of yours, is the Medium by which our Divines prove it to be a Covenant of Grace.

(3.) This Concession of yours confounds the two Covenants, by communicating the essential property and prime privilege of the Covenant of Grace, to Adam's Covenant of Works. Either therefore expunge Jer. 31. 33. as a Covenant of Grace, I will be their God, and they shall be my People; or allow that in Gen. 17. 7. to be specifically the same; and that Exod. 20. though more obscurely delivered. (4.) "You assert, That God may actually become a People's God by way of special interest, and yet the Salvation of that People be suspended upon impossible terms. You sent them before to Purgatory, but by this you must send them directly to Hell: For if the Salvation of God's peculiar People be upon impossible terms, 'tis certain they cannot be saved. And lastly, it is an horrid reflection upon the Wisdom and Goodness of God, who never did, or will make any Covenant, wherein he takes fallen Men to be his peculiar People, and make over himself to be their God; and yet not make provision for their Salvation in the same Covenant, but leave their Salvation for many Ages upon hard and impossible terms, (i. e.) leave them under damnation.

(2.) I told you in my *Vindicia*, &c. p. 49. that you were fain to cut Abraham's Covenant, Gen. 17. into two parts; and make the first to be the pure Covenant of Grace, which is the promissory part to the 9th verse; and the Rescipulation (as you call it, p. 205.) to be as pure a Covenant of Works. Which I truly said was a bold Action; and in so calling it, I gave it a softer name than the nature of it deserved.

The sum of what you reply to this, is, (1.) By denying the matter of Fact, and charging me with misrepresentation; and in the next page confessing the whole Charge, saying, Though the Promise and the Rescipulation, mentioned vers. 7, 8, 9. make but one and the same Covenant of Circumcision;

yet there are two Covenants mentioned in that Context, the first between God and Abraham himself, vers. 2, 4. the other between God and Abraham, and his natural Posterity also, vers. 7, 8, 9, 10. The former you call a Covenant of Grace, the latter a Covenant of Works. And p. 81. you affirm, That after God had entered the Covenant of Grace with Abraham, Vers. 2, 4. that Abraham himself was required to be circumcised by the Command of God, as a Token of the Covenant of Works. And then (after some unbecoming Scoffs for misplacing vers. 7, 8. where v. 9, 10. should be; as also of Gen. 12. for Gen. 17. (whether by the Scribe, my Self, or Press, I cannot say; but in each place sufficient light is given to set you right in the scope and Argument of my Discourse) you tell us, That how harsh and unlikely soever it may seem to Man's carnal reason, that the latter, to wit, the Covenant of Works made with Abraham, vers. 9, 10. must needs make void the Covenant of Grace made with him, vers. 2, 4. yet the Apostle gives a quite contrary resolution of it, Gal. 3. 17. And after all, p. 79. in return to my Argument, That the Circumcision of Abraham, and his Seed, vers. 9, 10. could not possibly be a condition of Adam's Covenant of Works

P. 81.

from the nature of the act: because Paul himself circumcised Timothy, Act. 16. 1, 2, 3. and asserts it to be a part of his Liberty, Gall. 2. 3, 4. which could never be, if in the very nature of the Act it had bound Timothy to keep the Law for justification; and had been contrary to the whole scope of the Apostle's Doctrine: but it became an obligation only from the intention of the Agent. All that you say to this, p. 95. is, "That as for Paul's compliance with the Jews, however the case stood in that respect, this is certain, That the blessed Apostle would never have expressed himself with that vehemency he doth, Gal. 5. 2, 3. if this had been only the sense of the Jewish Teachers, or that Circumcision in it's own nature did not oblige to the keeping of the whole Law; and that this is only my corrupt gloss upon the Text.

If there be but one Covenant made betwixt God and Abraham in that 17th of Genesis, and you make two, not only numerically, but specifically distinct, yea, opposite Covenants of it; then you boldly cut God's Covenant with Abraham in two, and are guilty of an insufferable abuse of the Covenant of God. But the former is true: therefore so is the latter. You say, p. 223, 224. of your Call, "That at the second and fourth Verses God made a Covenant with Abraham himself alone; but at vers. 7. he makes the Covenant of Circumcision betwixt himself and Abraham, and his natural Seed also; and faith vers. 7. And, or (according to the old Translation) Moreover; as proceeding to speak of another Covenant than what he had been before insisting on.

Reply.

Now I would soberly ask, (1.) What Vouchers you have amongst Expositors for this your rash and daring Assertion? I find not a man that hath trod this path before you, and I hope none will be hardy enough to follow. You certainly stand alone, and 'tis pity

ty but you should. (2.) Where do you find the just parts of the New Covenant in the 2d and 4th verse? Is it not altogether promissory on God's part, without any re stipulation on Abraham's? for you have excluded, v. 1, 9, 10. from that which you call God's Covenant of Grace with him. And then for your Covenant of Works, *vers.* 7, 8, 9, 10. you make this to be the Promissory part of that Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee; and again, *ver.* 8. I will be their God. Was ever such a Promise as this, found in a Covenant of Works? Tell me what ever God said more in the New Covenant, than he saith here? Oh blessed Covenant of Works, if this be such! (3.) Tell me whether you can satisfy your own Conscience with the Answers you have given to my first Argument against your paradoxical, yea, heterodoxical Exposition? I told you, That if *vers.* 7, 8, 9, 10. contain another Covenant, *viz.* of Works, entered by God with Abraham and his Seed, it must needs make void the former Covenant, *vers.* 2. 4. for where ever the Covenant of Works takes place, the Covenant of Grace gives place; they cannot consist, as I have abundantly proved before. Do you verily think those words of the Apostle, *Gal.* 3. 17. which you bring as a foundation to support your singular and sinful Exposition, *viz.* And thus I say, That the Covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty Years after, cannot disannul that it should make the Promise of none effect; do you think (I say) that in that, or any other Text, the Apostle opposes the two Covenants made (as you fancy) with Abraham, *Gen.* 17? or doth he not there speak of God's Covenant with Abraham, as distinguished from the Law made 430 Years afterward? (4.) Have you satisfied your own Judgment and Conscience in the Reply you make to that unanswerable Objection from Paul's circumcising of Timothy, *Acts.* 16. 2, 3. where you have the plain matter of fact before you, that he was circumcised by Paul; and this Fact of his justified as a part of the Liberty he had in Christ, *Gal.* 2. 3, 4. from whence it evidently appears,

Teneter non simpliciter
& absolute ex genere operis,
sed ex intentione operantis,
& supposita tali opinione, &c. Poole in loc.

That Circumcision in its own nature did not simply and absolutely oblige Men to the keeping of Moses his Law for Righteousness, but only from the Intention or Opinion of the Person. And though you call this my corrupt gloss upon the Text, therein you grossly abuse me. The gloss is neither corrupt, nor my own; but the unanimous Judgment of all sound Expositors of the Text, as you might see, were you capable of seeing it, in a Collection of their Judgments upon that Text, *Gal.* 5. 2, 3. in Mr. Poole's Synopsis. And tho' Estius thinks the Act of Circumcision might be obligatory to the Gentiles, to whom the Law was not given; yet it was not so to the Jews: that believed, and such was Timothy. But why do I refer you to the Judgment of Commentators? the very reason of it may convince you: For,

If the very Act of Circumcision did in its own nature oblige all on whom it passed, to keep the whole Law for their Righteousness, then Paul so obliged Timothy, and all others on whom he passed it, to keep the Law for their Righteousness.

But Paul did not oblige Timothy, or any other on whom he passed it, by the very Act of Circumcision so to keep the Law.

Therefore the very Act of Circumcision in its own nature did not oblige all on whom it passed, to keep the whole Law for Righteousness.

You may ponder this Argument at your leisure, and not think to refute it at so cheap a rate, as by calling it a corrupt gloss of my own. And thus I hope I have sufficiently fortified and confirmed my Third Argument, to prove Abraham's Covenant to be a Covenant of Grace. My Fourth was this.

Argument IV.

That which in its direct and primary end teacheth Man the corruption of his Nature by sin, and the mortification of Sin by the Spirit of Christ, cannot be a condition of the Covenant of Works.

But so did Circumcision in the very direct and primary end of it. Therefore, &c.

Your Reply to this is, 'That when I have substantially proved that the Sinai Covenant, as it contained the Passover, Sacrifices, Types, and Appendages, under which were veiled many spiritual Mysteries relating to Christ, and mortification of Sin by his Grace and Spirit, to be no Covenant of Works, but a Gospel covenant; you will then grant with me, that the present Argument is convincing;' p. 96, 97. of your Reply.

Sir, I take you for an honest Man: and every honest Man will be as good as his word. Either I have fully proved against you, that the Sinai Law (taken in that latitude you here express it) is not an Adam's Covenant of Works, or I have not. If I have not, doubtless you have reserved your more pertinent and strong Replies in your own Breast, and trust not to those weak and silly ones which you see here baffled, and have only served to involve you in greater Absurdities than before. But if you have brought forth all your strength (as in such a desperate strait no Man can imagine but you would) then I have fully proved the Point against you. And if I have, I expect you to be ingenuous and candid in making good your word, That you will then grant with me, that this Argument is convincing to the end for which it was designed. And so I hope we have fully issued the Controversy between us, relating to God's Covenant with Abraham. You have indeed four Arguments, p. 59, 60, 61, 62. of your Reply, to prove Abraham's Covenant a Covenant of Works, of the same nature with Adam's Covenant.

(1.) Because as Life was implicitly promised to Adam upon his Obedience, and Death explicitly threatened in case of his Disobedience, which made that properly a Covenant of Works; so it was in the Covenant of Circumcision, *Gen.* 17. 7, 8. compared with *ver.* 10, 14.

Reply.

Reply. This Argument or Reason can never conclude: because as God never required of *Abraham*, and his Children, personal, perfect, and perpetual Obedience to the whole Law for Life, as he did of *Adam*; so the Death, or cutting off, spoken of here, seems to be another thing from that threatened to *Adam*. Circumcision (as I told you before) was appointed to be the discriminating Sign betwixt *Abraham's* Seed, and the Heathen World: and the wilful neglect thereof is here threatened with cutting off by Civil or Ecclesiastical Excommunication from the Commonwealth, and Church of *Israel*, as *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Paræus*, *Musculus*, &c. expounds; not by death of Body and Soul, as was threatened to *Adam*, without place for Repentance, or hope of Mercy.

(2.) You say *Abraham's* Covenant could not be a Covenant of Faith, because Faith was not reckoned to *Abraham* for Righteousness in Circumcision, but in Uncircumcision, *Rom.* 4. 9, 10.

Reply. This is weak reasoning. Circumcision could not belong to a Gospel-Covenant, because *Abraham* was a Believer before he was Circumcised. You may as well deny the *Lord's-Supper* to be the Seal of a Gospel-Covenant, because the Partakers of it are Believers before they partake of it. Beside, you cannot deny but it sealed the Righteousness of Faith to *Abraham*: And I desired you before, to prove that a Seal of the Covenant of Works is capable of being applied to such an use and service, which you have not done, nor ever will be able to do; but politickly slid by it.

(3.) You say it cannot be a Covenant of Grace, because it is contra-distinguished to the Righteousness of Faith, *Rom.* 4. 13.

Reply. The Law in that place is put strictly for the pure Law of Nature, and Metaleptically signifies the Works of the Law, which is a far different thing from the Law taken in that latitude wherein you take it. And is not this a pretty Argument, that because the Promise to *Abraham*, and his Seed, was not through the Law, but through the Righteousness of Faith; therefore the Covenant of God made with *Abraham*, and his Seed, *Gen.* 17. cannot be a gracious, but a legal Covenant? This Promise mentioned *Rom.* 4. 13. was made to *Abraham* long before the Law was given by *Moses*: and Free-grace, not *Abraham's* legal Righteousness, was the impulsive cause moving God to make that Promise to *Abraham*, and to his Seed: and their enjoyment of the Mercies promised, was not to be through the Law, but through the Righteousness of Faith. By what Rule of Art this Scripture is alleged to prove God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. to be a Covenant of Works, I am utterly to seek. If it be only because Circumcision was added to it, that's answered over and over before; and you neither have nor can reply to it.

(4.) Lastly, It cannot (say you) be a Covenant of Grace, because it's represented to us in Scripture as a Bondage-Covenant, *Acts* 15. 10, &c. *Gal.* 5. 1.

Reply. 'Tis time, I see, to make an end. Your

Discourse runs low and dreggy. Do you think it is one and the same thing to say, That the Ceremonial Law was a yoke of Bondage to them that were under it, and to say it was an *Adam's* Covenant? Are these two parallel distinctions in your *Logic*? Alas! Sir, there is a wide difference. The difficulty, variety, and chargeableness of those Ceremonies, made them indeed burthensome and tiresome to that People; but they did not make the Covenant, to which they were annexed, to become an *Adam's* Covenant of Works: for in the very next breath, *vers.* 11. the Apostle will tell you, *they were saved*; yea, and tells us, that *we shall be saved even as they*. So that either they that were under this Yoke, were saved by Faith in the way of Free-grace, as we now are; or we must be saved in the way of legal Obedience, as they were. Take which you please, for one of them you must take. *We shall be saved, even as they*, *Acts* 15. 10, 11.

If you can make no stronger opposition to my Arguments, than such as you have here made, your Cause is lost; though your confidence and obstinacy remain. It were easy for me to fill more Paper than I have written on this Subject, with Names of principal Note in the Church of God, who with one Voice decry your groundless Position, and constantly affirm, That the Law in the complex sense you take it, as it comprehends the Ceremonial Rites and Ordinances whereunto Circumcision pertains, is, and can be no other than the Covenant of Grace, though more obscurely administered. But because *Latin* Authors are of little use to you, and among *English* ones, the Judgment of Dr. *Crisp*, I suppose, will be *inftar omnium* with you: I will recite it faithfully out of his Sermon upon the two Covenants, where he makes the Old and New Covenant to be indeed two distinct Covenants of Grace, (for which I see no reason at all) but proves the former to be so in these words.

'It is granted of all Men, That in the Covenant of Works there is no remission of Sin, there is no notice of Christ; but the whole business or employment of the Priests of the old Law, was altogether about remission of Sins, and the exhibiting and holding forth of Christ in their fashion unto the People. In the 15th of *Numbers*, *vers.* 28. (I will give you but one Instance) there you shall plainly see, That the administration of that Priestly Office had remission of Sins as the main end of that administration. If a Soul sin through Ignorance, he shall bring a *Sbe-goat* unto the Priest, and he shall make an atonement for the Soul that sinneth ignorantly, and it shall be forgiven him: Soe, the main end is administering forgiveness of Sins.

'And that Christ was the main Subject of that their Ministry, is plain, because the Apostle saith in the Verse before my Text, That all that Administration was but a Shadow of Christ, and a Figure for the present to represent him, as he doth express in the 9th Chapter of this Epistle. And the truth is, the usual general Gospel that all the

Vol. 2.
Serm. 2.
pag. 247,
248, 250.

'*Fears* had, was in their Sacrifices and Priestly Observations.—

'So that it's plain, the administration of their Covenant, was an administration of Grace, and absolutely distinct from the administration of the Covenant of Works. And what can be said more absolutely and directly contradictory to your *Position*, than this is? And yet again, p. 250. speaking to that Scripture, *Heb. 8. 8.* 'where the Apostle distinguishes of a *better* and a *faulty*, of *First* and *Second*; he saith, (*finding fault with them*) 'The days come, when I will make a new Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah, not according to the Covenant I made with their Fathers, when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the Land of Egypt; and (as *Jeremiah* adds it, for the Apostle takes all this out of *Jer. 31. 31.*) although I was an Husband to them; and in the close of all, *Your Sins and Iniquities will I remember no more.*—Here are two Covenants, a new Covenant, and the Covenant be made with their Fathers. Some may think it was the Covenant of Works at the promulgation of the Moral Law; but mark well that Expression of *Jeremiah*, and you shall see it was the Covenant of Grace. For (saith he) not according to the Covenant I made with their Fathers, although I was an Husband unto them. How can God be considered as Husband to a People under the Covenant of Works, which was broken by Man in iniquity, and so became disannulled or impossible by the breach of it? The Covenant of Works runs thus: Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Book of the Law; and, In the day thou sinnest, thou shalt die the death. Man had sinned before God took him by the hand to lead him out of the Land of Egypt, and Sin had separated Man from God: How then can God be called an Husband in the Covenant of Works? The Covenant therefore was not a Covenant of Works, but such a Covenant as the Lord became an Husband in, and that must be a Covenant of Grace, &c.

How the Doctor makes good his two distinct Covenants of Grace, I see not, nor expect ever to see proved, and is not my present concernment to enquire; but once it is evident by what he hath here said, That the Ceremonial Law, whereof Circumcision is a branch, can be no other than the Covenant of Grace. And nothing is more common among our Divines, than to prove not only the *Sinai* Law, but God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen. 17.* to be the Covenant of Grace, by this Medium, That God having entered into a Covenant of Grace with *Abraham* before, would never bring him under a Covenant of Works afterwards, which must nullify and void the former. And beside, such a Covenant of Works as you make this, was never heard of in the World, wherein God promises to be a God to *Abraham*, and his Seed, in their Generations, upon the rigorous and impossible Terms of *Adam's* Covenant.

By this time, I presume, you must feel the force of those Arguments produced against your vain and groundless Notion; and how little you are able to do to deliver your Thesis

from them, but the more you struggle, the more still you are entangled. Go which way you will, your Absurdities follow you as your Shadow. — *heret laeti labali arundo.* Leaving therefore all your Absurdities upon you, till God shall give you more illumination and ingenuity to discern and acknowledge them; I shall pass on to the examination of your third *Position*, which led you into these other gross Mistakes; and if God shall convince you of your Error in this point, I hope it may prove a means of recovering you out of the rest: which in love to your Soul, I heartily desire.

III. Your third *Position* is, That God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen. 17.* can be no other than the Covenant of Works, because Circumcision was the Condition of it: For (say you) the new Covenant is altogether absolute and unconditional.

Of the Conditionality of the New Covenant.

This Question, Whether the Covenant of Grace be Conditionate or Absolute, was moved (as a Learned Man observes) in the former Age, by occasion of the Controversy about Justification, betwixt the Protestants and Papists. Among the Protestants, some denied, and others affirmed the Conditionality of the Gospel-Covenant. Those that denied it, did so for fear of mingling Law and Gospel, Christ's Righteousness and Man's, as the Papists had wickedly done before. Those that affirmed it, did so out of fear also; lest the necessity of Faith and Holiness being relaxed, *Libertinism* should be that way introduced. But if the Question were duly stated, and the sense of its Terms agreed upon, the Gospel-Covenant may be affirmed to be conditional, to secure the People of God from *Libertinism*, without the least diminution of the Righteousness of Christ, or clouding the Free-Grace of God.

I did in my first Answer to your Call, endeavour to prevent the needless trouble you have here given your self, by a succinct state of the Question: telling you the Controversy betwixt us, is not, (1.) Whether the Gospel-Covenant requires no Duties at all of them that are under it? nor (2.) Whether it requires any such Conditions as were in *Adam's* Covenant, namely, perfect, personal, and perpetual Obedience under the penalty of the Curse, and admitting no place of Repentance? nor (3.) Whether any Condition required by it on our part, have any thing in its own nature meritorious of the Benefits promised? nor (4.) Whether we be able in our own strength, and by the power of our Free-will, without the preventing, as well as the assisting Grace of God, to perform any such work or duty as we call a Condition? These things I told you were to be excluded out of this Controversy. But the only Question betwixt us, is, Whether in the New Covenant, some all of ours *Quest.* (though it have no merit in it, nor can be done in our own single strength) be not required to be performed by us antecedently to a blessing or privilege consequent by virtue of a Promise? And whether such an act or duty, being of a suspending nature to the Blessing promised, it have not the true and

and proper nature of a Gospel-Condition?

In your Reply (contrary to all rule and reason) you include and chiefly argue against the very Particulars by me there excluded; and scarcely (if it all) touch the true Question. as it was stated, and by you ought accordingly to have been considered. I might therefore justly think my self discharged from any further concernment with you about it: for if you will include what I plainly exclude, you argue not against mine, but another man's Position, which I am not concerned to defend. You here dispute against meritorious Conditions, which I explode and abhor as much as your self. You say, p. 34. of your Reply, that a Condition plainly implies something of merit, by way of *condignity* or *congruity*; which is false, and turns the Question from me to the Papists. And were it not more for the clearing up of so great a Point for the Instruction and Satisfaction of others, than any hope you give me of convincing you, I should not have touched this Question again, unless I had found your Replies more distinct and pertinent. But finding the Point in Controversy of great weight, I will once more tell you,

1. What the word [Condition] signifies.
2. In what sense it is by us used in this Controversy.

3. Establish my Arguments for the conditionality of the New Covenant.

(1.) And first we grant, That neither our word [Condition] nor your term [Absolute] are either of them found in Scripture, with respect to God's covenanting of Man; so that we contend not about the signification of a Scripture term. But though the word *Conditional* be not there, yet the thing being found there, That brings the word *Conditional* into use in this Controversy. For we know not how to express those sacred Particles, *ei, vbi, ubi, ubi, ubi, ubi, &c.* If, If not, Unless, But if, Except, Only, and the like, which are frequently used to limit and restrain the Grants and Privileges of the New Covenant, Rom. 10. 9. Mat. 18. 3. Mark 5. 36. Mark 11. 26. Rom. 4. 24. I say, we know not how to express the true sense and force of these Particles in this Controversy, by any other word so fit and full as the word *Conditional* is. Now this word *Condition* being a Law-term, is variously used among Jurists; and the various use of the word, occasions that confusion which is found in this Controversy. He therefore that shall clearly distinguish the various senses and uses of the word, is most likely to labour with success in this Controversy. I shall therefore briefly note the principal senses and uses of the term, and shew in what sense we here take it. Of Conditions there be two sorts.

1. Antecedent Conditions.
2. Consequent Conditions.

As to the latter, namely, *consequent Conditions*, you your self acknowledge, p. 100. 'That in the outward dispensation of the Covenant, many things are required of us in order unto the participation or enjoy-

ment of the full end of the Covenant in glory.

So then the Covenant is acknowledged to be consequently conditional, which is no more than to say with the Apostle, *Without holiness no man shall see God*; or, that *if any love, nemo man draw back, his Soul shall have no pleasure in him*, &c. Our Controversy therefore is not about *consequent Conditions*, laid by God upon Believers, after they are in Christ and the Covenant; the Covenant so considered, *posteriori*, will not be denied to be *Conditional*. The only Question is about *Antecedent Conditions*; and of these we are here to consider,

1. Such as respect the first Sanction of the Covenant in Christ.
2. Such as respect the application of the benefits of the Covenant unto Men.

** Si fides spectatur ratione sanctionis primæ in Christo, nullam habet conditionem præviam; sed solâ gratiæ Dei, & Christi merito nititur. Sed si attendatur ratione acceptationis & applicationis in fidei, conditionem habet Fidem, quæ hominem unit Christo, & sic in communionem fœderis mittit. Turret. vol. 2. p. 203.*

As to the first Sanction of the Covenant in Christ, we freely acknowledge it hath no previous Condition on Man's part; but depends purely and only upon the Grace of God, and Merit of Christ. So that our Question proceeds about such *antecedent Conditions* only as respect the Application of the Benefits of the Covenant unto Men. And of these *Antecedent Conditions* there are likewise two sorts, which must be carefully distinguished.

1. Such Antecedent Conditions which have the force of a meritorious and impulsive Cause, which being performed by the proper strength of Nature, or at most by the help of common assisting Grace, do give a Man a right to the reward or blessings of the Covenant. And in this sense we utterly disclaim antecedent Conditions, as I plainly told you, p. 61. of my *Vindicie*, &c. Or,
2. An Antecedent Condition signifying no more than an act of ours, which though it be neither perfect in every degree, nor in the least meritorious of the benefit conferred; nor performed in our own natural strength; yet according to the constitution of the Covenant, is required of us in order to the Blessings consequent thereupon by virtue of the Promise: and consequently the Benefits and Mercies granted in the Promise in this order are, and must be suspended by the Donor or Disposer of them, until it be performed. Such a Condition we affirm *Faith* to be. But here again, Faith in this sense, the Condition of the New Covenant is considered,

1. Essentially.
2. Organically and Instrumentally.

In the first consideration of *Faith*, according to its Essence, it is contained under *Obedience*, and in that respect we exclude it from justifying our Persons, or entitling us to the saving-mercies of the New Covenant, as it

it is a work of ours; and so I excluded it, p. 133. of my *Method of Grace*, which you ignorantly or wilfully mistake, when in your *Reply*, p. 88, 89. you object against me. Faith considered in this sense, is not the Condition of the Covenant, nor can pretend to be so, more than any other Grace. But

We consider it *Organically*, Relatively, and (as most speak) *Instrumentally*, as it receives Christ, *John*. 1. 12. and so gives us power to become the Sons of God; it being impossible for any Man to partake of the saving Benefits of the Covenant, but as he is united to Christ. For all the Promises of God in him are *yes*, and in him, *Amen*, 2. Cor. 1. 20. And united to Christ no Man can be, before he be a Believer; for Christ dwelleth in our Hearts by Faith, *Eph*. 3. 17. Upon which Scriptural Grounds and Reasons it is, that we affirm Faith to be an Antecedent Condition, or, *Causa sine qua non*, to the saving Benefits of the New Covenant; and that it must go before them, at least in order of Nature, which is that we mean, when we say Faith is the antecedent Condition of the New Covenant. And those that deny it to be so, as the *Antinomians* do, who talk of actual and personal Justification from Eternity, or at least from the death of Christ, must consequently assert the actual Justification of *Infidels*; and not only disturb, but destroy the whole order of the Gospel, and open the Sluces and Flood-gates to all manner of licentiousness.

Moses's Self-decl. p. 188.

And thus our Pious and Learned Divines generally affirm Faith to be the condition of the Covenant. So Mr. *Jeremiah Burroughs*. Faith (saith he) hath the great Honour of 'bove all other Graces, to be the Condition of the second Covenant; therefore certainly 'tis some great matter that Faith enables us 'to do Whatsoever keeps Covenant with God, brings strength, though it self be never so weak; as *Samson's* Hair. What is weaker than a little Hair? Yet because the keeping that, was keeping Covenant with God; therefore even a little Hair was of great strength to *Samson*. Faith then, that is the Condition of the Covenant, in which all Grace and Mercy is contained, if it be kept, it will cause strength indeed to do great things.

And as this excellent Man, Mr. *Burroughs*, is in this sense for the Conditionality of the New Covenant; so are the most Learned and Eminent of our own Divines. Dr. *Edward Reynolds's* assigning the differences betwixt the two Covenants gives this for one: 'They differ in the Condition (saith he;) there Legal Obedience, here only Faith; and the certain consequent thereof, Repentance. There is difference likewise in the manner of performing these Conditions: For now God himself begins first to work upon us, and in us, before we move or stir towards him. He doth not only command us, and leave us to our created strength to obey the Command; but he furnisheth us with his own Grace and Spirit to obey the Command.

Dr. Owen's Treatise of Redemption p. 512.

Of the same judgment is Dr. *Owen*. 'Are we able (saith he) of our selves to fulfil the Condition of the New Covenant? Is it

not as easie for a Man by his own strength to fulfil the whole Law, as to repent, and believe the Promise of the Gospel? This then is one main difference of these two Covenants, That the Lord did in the Old only require the Condition; now in the New, he also affects it in all the Federates to whom the Covenant is extended. This is the Man you pretend to be against Conditions.

Mr. *William Pemble* opening the Nature of the two Covenants, saith, 'The Law offers Life unto Man upon Condition of perfect Obedience; the Gospel offers Life unto Man upon another Condition, to wit, of Repentance, and Faith in Christ. And after his proofs for it saith, 'From whence we conclude firmly, That the difference between the Law and the Gospel, assigned by our Divines, is most certain and agreeable to the Scriptures, viz. That the Law gives Life unto the just, upon condition of perfect Obedience in all things; the Gospel gives Life unto Sinners, upon condition they repent and believe in Christ Jesus.

Learned and judicious Mr. *William Perkins*, thus; The Covenant of Grace is that whereby God freely promising Christ and his Benefits, excites again of Man, that he would by faith receive Christ. And again, in the Covenant of Grace two things must be considered, the Substance thereof, and the Condition. The Substance of the Covenant is, That Righteousness and Life Everlasting, is given to God's Church and People by Christ. The Condition is, That we for our parts are by Faith to receive the foresaid Benefits; and this Condition is by Grace, as well as the Substance.

That Learned, Humble, and Painful Minister of Christ Mr. *John Ball*, stating the difference betwixt the two Covenants, shews, that in the Covenant at Sinai, in the Covenant with *Abraham*, and that with *David*, that in all these Covenant-expressions, there are for substance the same Evangelical conditions of Faith and Sincerity.

Dr. *Davenant* thus: 'In the Covenant of the Gospel it is otherwise; for in this Covenant, to the obtaining of Reconciliation, Justification, and Life Eternal, there is no other condition required than of true and lively Faith, *John* 3. 16. Therefore Justification, and the right to Eternal Life, doth depend on the Condition of Faith alone.

Dr. *Davenant* harmonizeth with the rest of these words: 'That which is the only Condition of the Covenant of Grace, by that alone we are justified; But Faith is the Condition of the Covenant of Grace, which is therefore called *Lex Fidei*. Our Writers (saith he) distinguisheth the two Covenants of God, that is, the Law and the Gospel, whereof one is the Covenant of Works, the other the Covenant of Grace, do teach, That the Law of Works is that which to Justification requireth Works as the Condition thereof: The Law of Faith that, which to Justification requireth Faith as the Condition thereof. The former Faith, *Do this, and thou shalt live*; the latter, *Believe in Christ, and thou shalt be saved*.

L1111

But

Larger Ca-
tech. 412.
London
1648. p. 8.

But what stand I upon particular, though renowned Names? You may see a whole Constellation of our sound and famous Divines in the Assembly, thus expressing themselves about this Point. 'The Grace of God (say they) is manifested in the second Covenant, in that he freely provideth, and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and Life and Salvation by him, and requiring Faith as the Condition to interest them in him, promiseth and giveth his Holy Spirit to all his Elect, to work in them that Faith, with all other saving Graces, and to enable them to all holy Obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their Faith, &c.

I could even tire the Reader with the Testimonies of eminent foreign Divines, as *Cameron de triplici federe*, Thef. 82. *Ursinus & Param explicatio Catech. Quest. 18. de federe*. *Wendeline, Christian Theology*, Lib. 1. cap. 19. Thef. 9. *Poliander, Rivet, Walkers, and Tysius*, the four Learned Professors at *Leyden*, *Synopf. Displ.* 23. *Scit.* 27, &c. And as for those Ancient and Modern Divines, whom the *Antinomians* have corrupted and misrepresented, the Reader may see them all vindicated, and their concurrence with those I have named, evidenced by that Learned and Pious Mr. *John Gaile*, in his *Modest Vindication of the Doctrine of Conditions in the Covenant of Grace*, from p. 58. onward; a Man whose Name and Memory is precious with me, not only upon the account of that excellent Sermon he preached, and those fervent Prayers he poured out many Years since at my Ordination, but for that Learned and Judicious Treatise of his against Mr. *Eyre*, wherein he hath cast great light upon this Controversy, as excellent Mr. *Baxter*, and Mr. *Woodbridge* have also done. But alas, what evidence is sufficient to satisfy ignorant and obstinate Men!

Sir, It pities me to see the lamentable confusion you are in. You are forced, by the evidence of Truth to yield and own the substance of what I contend for. You have yielded the Covenant to be consequently Conditional in p. 84. of your Reply. You have also as plainly yielded, that the Application of Pardoning Mercy unto our Souls, is in order of nature consequent unto believing; p. 31. of your Reply. From both which concessions in your own words recited, this Conclusion is evident and unavoidable, viz.

That no adult Person, notwithstanding God's Eternal Election, and Christ's meritorious Death and Satisfaction, according to the Constitution and Order of the New Covenant, can either be justified in this World, or saved in the World to come, unless he first believe.

For if the Application of Pardoning Mercy unto our Souls, is in order of Nature consequent unto believing (as you truly affirm it to be) then according to the Constitution and Order of the New Covenant, no application of pardoning Mercy can be made to our Souls before we believe. And if it be evident (as you say it is, p. 84.) that unto a full and complete enjoyment of all the Promises of the Covenant, Faith on our part is required; then

as no Man can be actually justified in this World, so neither can he be saved before, or without Faith in the World to come. And if you did but see the true suspending nature of Faith, which you plainly yield in these two Concessions; you would quickly grant the conditional nature of it: For what is the proper nature and true notion of a Condition, but to suspend the benefits and grants of that Covenant in which it is so inserted? And thus the Controversy betwixt us is fairly issued. But I doubt you understand not what you have here written, or are troubled with a very bad Memory: Because I find you in a far different note from this in p. 103. of your Reply, where you say, 'That if Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law, and purchased Heaven and Happiness for Men (as all true Protestants hitherto have taught) then nothing can remain, but to declare this to them, to incline them to believe and accept it; and to prescribe in what way, and by what means they shall finally come to inherit Eternal Life. To affirm therefore, that Faith and Repentance are the Conditions of the New Covenant required of us in point of Duty, antecedent to the benefit of the Promise, doth necessarily suppose, that Christ hath not done all for us, nor purchased a right to Life for any; but only made way that they may have it upon certain terms, or (as some say) he hath merited that we might merit: But the Conditions of the Covenant are not to be performed by the Head and Members both, Gal. 4. 4. Christ therefore having in our stead performed the Conditions of Life, there remains nothing but a Promise, and the Obedience of Children, as the fruit and effect thereof to them that believe in him, together with means of obtaining the full possession, which here we want.

Either these Passages I have here cited and Reply compared, were fetched at a great distance of time, out of Authors differing as much in Judgment as you and I do; and so the dissimilarity of them is the meer effect of Oblivion and Incogitancy: Or else your Intels are more confused and weak than I am willing to suspect them to be. For if the application of Pardoning Mercy to our Souls, is in order of Nature consequent to Believing (as you truly say it was;) then certainly, notwithstanding Christ's fulfilling the Law, and purchasing Heaven and Happiness for Men, something else must remain to be done, besides declaring this to them, to incline them to believe and accept it, or prescribing to them in what way they shall finally come to inherit Eternal Life. For besides those declarations and prescriptions you talk of, Faith it self must be wrought in the Souls of Men, or else Pardoning Mercy is not in order of Nature consequent unto believing, as you said it was: For all the external Declarations and Prescriptions in the World, are not Faith it self, but only the means to beget it; which may, or may not become effectual to that end.

Secondly, Whereas you say, that this (senseless Notion) is consequent upon the Doctrine of all true Protestants, you therein grossly abuse them, and make all the true Protestants in the World guilty of worse than *Arminian* or *Antinomian* dotage. The *Antinomian*, indeed, makes

makes our actual Justification to be nothing else but the manifestation or declaration of our Justification from Eternity, or the time of Christ's Death. And the *Arminian* tells us, That the Declaration of the Gospel to Men, is sufficient to bring them to Faith by the assisting Grace of the Spirit. But your notion is worse than the very dregs of both, and yet you tack it as a just consequent to the Doctrine of all true *Protestants*.

Reply.
P. 104.

Thirdly, You say, That to affirm Faith and Repentance to be the Conditions of the New Covenant required of us in point of Duty, antecedent to the benefit of the Promise, doth necessarily suppose that Christ hath not done all for us, nor purchased a right to Life for any; but only made way that they may have it upon certain terms, or merited that we might merit. Here, Sir, you vilely abuse all those worthy Divines before-mentioned, who have made Faith the Condition of the New Covenant, pinning upon them both *Papery* and *Judaism*. *Papery*, yea, the dregs of *Papery*, in supposing their Doctrine necessarily implies that Christ hath merited that we might merit. And *Judaism* to the height, in saying, their Doctrine necessarily supposes that Christ hath not purchased a right of Life to any. What can a Jew say more? Ah, Mr. C. can you read the words I have recited out of blessed Burroughs, Owen, Pemble, Perkins, Davenant, Downname, yea, the whole Assembly of Reverend and Holy Divines, with multitudes more (who have all with one Mouth asserted Faith to be the Condition of the New Covenant required on Man's part, in point of Duty; and that Men must believe before they can be justified; which is the very same thing with what I say, That it is antecedent to the benefit of the Promise) and not tremble to think of the direful charges you here draw against them? The Lord forgive your rash presumption.

Salmarsh,
of Free-
grace, p.
126, 127.

Fourthly, Whereas you say, Christ hath in our stead performed the Conditions of Life, and that there remains nothing but a Promise, &c. you therein speak at the highest Dialect of *Antinomianism*; Hath not Christ by his Life and Death performed the Conditions of Life in our stead? yet you your self confess, that pardoning Mercy is in order of Nature consequent to our believing; certainly then there is something more to be done beside the mere making, or being of a Promise: there must be the effect of the Promise in our Hearts; yea, the effects of those absolute Promises of the first Grace, *Ezek. 36. Jer. 32.* Or else notwithstanding Christ's performance of Redemption on his part, we can neither be justified nor saved. For I don't think you intend to lay the Conditions of Repentance or believing upon Christ, who in the New Covenant hath laid them upon us, tho' in the same Covenant he graciously undertakes to work them in us: and yet your words found in that wild *Antinomian* Note.

Objection. But, I suppose, you take my Notion to be as self-repugnant as your own, when I say Faith is an antecedent Condition to Justification: because I also say, this Grace is also supernaturally wrought in us, and is not of our selves. This staggers you, and is the very

Stone you stumble at all along this Controversie: for in your sense, p. 24. every Condition is meritorious by congruity or congruity.

First, What do I say more in all this, than Reply. what those Worthies before-mentioned do expressly affirm? Doth not Dr. Owen (the Man whom you deservedly value) make Conditions both in *Adam's* Covenant and the New, with this difference, that *Adam's* Covenant required them, but the New Covenant effects them in all the *Federates*? Sir, We take it for no contradiction to assert, That the planting of the Principle, and the assisting and exciting of the Acts of Faith, are the proper Works of the Spirit of God, and are also contained in the absolute Promises of the New Covenant, *Ezek. 36. 26, 27. Jer. 32. 39, 40.* And yet Faith, notwithstanding this, is truly and properly our Work and Duty; and that upon our believing, or not believing, we have, or have not, an actual Interest in Christ, Righteousness, and Life. For though the Author of Faith be the Spirit of God, yet believing is properly our Act, and an Act required of us by a plain Command, *1 John 3. 23. This is the Command of God, That ye believe.* And if its being wrought in God's strength makes it cease to be our Work, I would fain know what Exposition you would give of that place, *Phil. 2. 12, 13. Work out your own Salvation, &c. for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do.* And as this Faith is truly and properly our work, though wrought in God's strength (for it is not God, but we, that do believe) so it is wrought in us by him (by your own confession) before the application of pardoning Mercy, which is consequent in order of nature thereunto: and therefore hath the true nature of an antecedent Condition, which is that I contend for; and did you but understand your own words, you would not contend against.

Oh, but say you, p. 34. every Condition object. 2. is meritorious, either by way of congruity or congruity.

This is your ignorance of the nature of a Reply. Condition, with which I find you as unacquainted as with the nature of a Covenant. A Condition, whilst unperformed, only suspends the act of the Law or Testament: it being the Will of the Testator, Legislator, or Donor, that his Law or Testament should act or effect, when the Condition is performed, and not before: but it is not essential to a Condition, to be a meritorious or impulsive cause moving him to bestow the benefit for the sake thereof. A Man freely gives another out of his love and bounty such an Estate or Sum of Money, which he shall enjoy if he live to such a Year, or Day; and not before: is this *quando dies veniet*, this appointed time the meritorious or impulsive cause of the gift? surely no Man will say it: but that it is a *causa sine qua non*, or a Condition suspending the enjoyment of the Gift, no Man will deny that knows what the nature of a Condition is. An act meritorious by way of Congruity, is that to which a Reward is not due out of strict Justice, but out of Decency, or some kind of

Meet-

Meetness. Merit of *condignity* is a voluntary Action, for which a Reward is due to a Man out of Justice, and cannot be denied him without Injustice. Our Faith is truly the Condition of the New Covenant, and yet we detest the meritoriousness of it in either sense.

Obj. & 3. But you object my words to me in my *Method of Grace*, where I assert the impossibility of believing without the efficacy of supernatural Grace, p. 102, 103.

Reply. Sir, I own the words you quote, and am bold to challenge the most envious Eye that shall read those Lines, to shew me the least repugnancy betwixt what I said there, and what I have said in my *Vindiciæ Legû*, &c. p. 9. of the *Proligomena*, and p. 61. of that Book. You shew your good-will to make an advantageous thrust; but your Weapon is too short, and can draw no Blood. But leaving these weak and impertinent cavils, let us come to your Solution of my *Arguments*, p. 98. by which I proved the Conditionality of the New Covenant. My first *Argument* was this.

Argum. 1. If we cannot be justified or saved till we believe, and are justified when we believe; Then Faith is the Condition on which those consequent Benefits are suspended, &c.

Answer. The sum of your Answer (without denying, distinguishing, or limiting one Proposition) is this, That, 'here Faith is properly put into 'the room of perfect Obedience, and is to do 'what perfect Obedience was to do under the 'Law: whereas (say you) Faith is only appointed as an Instrument to receive and apply the Righteousness of Christ, which is the 'alone matter of our Justification before God; 'and Faith it self is not our Righteousness, as 'it would be if it were a Condition, p. 105, '106.

Reply. Not to note the weakness and impertinence of this Answer, I shall only take notice of what you here allow, and grant, That *Faith is appointed as an Instrument to receive and apply the Righteousness of Christ, which is the alone matter of our Justification before God*. Whence I infer three Conclusions.

First, That we cannot be justified before God till we believe, except you can prove, that the unaccepted and unapplied Righteousness of Christ doth actually justify our Persons before God.

Secondly, That the justification of our Persons before God, is, and must be suspended (as by a non-performed Condition) until we actually believe. Which two Conclusions yield up your Cause to my Argument, which you here seem to oppose.

Thirdly, That hereby you perfectly renounce and destroy your *Aninomian* Fancy before-mentioned, That if *Christ have fulfilled the Law, and purchased Heaven for Men, nothing can remain but to declare this to them, &c.* for it seems by this, they must receive and apply Christ's Righteousness by Faith, or they cannot be justified (you say not declaratively in their own Consciences, but) before God. And thus instead of answering, you have confirmed and yielded my first *argument*, and only oppose your own Mistakes, not the sense or force of my *Arguments*, in all that you say to it, or the Scriptures produced to prove it.

To my second *Argument*, recited, p. 94. Argum. 2. where I argued from God's Covenant with *Abraham*, and proved it to be conditional; and yet by you acknowledged to be a pure Gospel-Covenant: all that you say, is, That you have dispatched that before, in your Discourse about the Covenant of *Circumcision*, and therefore will say nothing to it here.

In saying nothing to it here, you have said Reply. as much as you did before in the place you refer to: and therefore finding nothing said here or there, I conclude you can say nothing to it at all.

My third *Argument* was this. If all the Promises of the Gospel be absolute and unconditional, then they do not properly belong to the New Covenant. That cannot properly and strictly be a Covenant which is not a mutual compact, and in which there is no Restitution, nor Re-obligation: 'tis a naked Promise, not a Covenant.

To this you answer three things. In the Answer. first branch of your Answer you impudently P. 113, 114 beg the Question, by saying, That 'you have 'proved already in your Replies to my former *Arguments*, that the New Covenant is wholly free 'and absolute. Upon this absurd *Petitio Principii* you make bold to invert my *Argument* thus in your second Reply. 'if all the Promises 'of the Gospel be wholly absolute and unconditional, 'they do properly and truly belong to the New Covenant: But so they are. Therefore, &c. Oh rare Disputant! In the last place, in opposition to the Sequel of my *Major Proposition*, you tell me you will oppose the Judgment of Dr. Owen, on Heb. 8. 10. where he saith, That a Covenant properly is a Compact or Agreement on certain Terms stipulated by two or more Parties, &c. and that the word *diathesis* there used, it signifies a Covenant improperly, &c.

If you call this an opposition to the Sequel Reply. of my *Major*, either your Brains or mine do want *Hellebore*. Doth he not say the very same thing I do, that there must be a Restitution in a proper Covenant? And as for the word *diathesis*, which (he saith) signifieth a Covenant improperly, but properly is a *Testamentary Disposition*, I fully concur with him therein. But I hope a *Testamentary Disposition* may have a Condition in it; to be sure such a one as I assert Faith here to be, which is the free Gift of God; and in this sense I shewed you before where the *Dofter* yields Faith to be the Condition of the new Covenant.

My fourth *Argument* was this. If all the Promises of the New Covenant be absolute and unconditional, and have no respect nor relation to any Grace wrought in us, or Duty done by us; then the trial of our Interest in Christ by Marks and Signs of Grace is not our Duty, nor can we take comfort in Sanctification as it is an evidence of our Justification, &c. Argum. 4.

Your Answer is, That 'at this rate I may 'prove *quidlibet à quolibet*: for it doth not follow, that, because the New Covenant is absolute, therefore it hath no respect nor relation to any Grace wrought in us, nor Duty 'done

'done by us, or that we may not justly take
'comfort in Sanctification as an evidence of
'our Justification.

Reply.

If I had a mind to learn the Art of proving
quidlibet à quolibet, and make my self ridicu-
lous to others by such foolish Attempts, I know
no Book in the World fitter to instruct me
therein, than yours. Certainly you have the
knack of it, and gave us an Instance of it
but now, in confuting the Sequel of my *Ma-
jor*, by an Allegation out of Dr. Owen, which
expressly confirms and establishes it. But to
the Point, I would willingly know how it is
possible for Sanctification to be a true and cer-
tain mark and sign of Justification, when (ac-
cording to the *Antinomian* Principle, which
you here too much comprobate and espouse) a
Man may be justified before he believe, yea,
before he is a Man, even from the time of
Christ's Death, and (as others of them speak)
from Eternity. A true mark and sign must
be proper to, and inseparable from that which
it signifies. Now if that be true which you
said before, That *after Christ's fulfilling of the
Law in his own Person, &c. nothing can remain
but to declare this to Men to incline them to believe
and accept it, and to prescribe in what way they shall
come to inherit eternal life.* If this be all that can
remain to us, then nothing but the Declara-
tions and Prescriptions of the Gospel, which
are things without us, can remain to be marks
and signs of Justification to us: and conse-
quently all those to whom those Declarations
and Prescriptions are made and given, have
therein the marks and evidences of their Jus-
tification. But I am truly weary of such stuff.
I am sure the Apostle places *Vocation* before *Jus-
tification*, Rom. 8. 30. *Whom he called, them he
justified.* And without an immediate Testi-
mony from Heaven, I know not how to evi-
dence and prove my Justification, but from,
and by my Faith, and other parts of Sanctifi-
cation; whereby I apprehended and applied
the Righteousness of Christ: if you can prove
it from the Declarations and Prescriptions of
the Gospel, I cannot.

Argument 5.

My fifth and last *Argument* ran thus. If the
Covenant of Grace be altogether absolute and
unconditional, requiring nothing to be done
on our part, to entitle us to its Benefits; then
it cannot be Man's Duty in entering Covenant
with God, to deliberate the Terms, count the
Cost, or give his consent by Word or Writing,
to the Terms of this Covenant: for where
there are no Terms at all (as in absolute Pro-
mises there are none) there can be none to
deliberate. But I shewed you, this is Man's
Duty, from clear and undeniable Scriptures,
&c.

Answer
p. 122,
123.

You say by way of answer hereunto, that,
'You must tell me, that the Scriptures do
'make a plain distinction betwixt the New
'and Everlasting Covenant which God hath
'been pleased to make with Sinners in Jesus
'Christ; and the return of that sincere and
'dutiful Obedience which he requires of us,
'by way of answer thereunto. (2.) You say,
'there are many things, which tho' promised
'in the Covenant, and wrought in us by the
'Grace of God; are yet Duties indispensably

required of us in order to the participation
'of the full end of the Covenant in Glory: and
'in respect hereof, we are indeed to delibe-
'rate the Terms, count the Cost, and give up
'our selves solemnly to him with sincere Re-
'solutions, &c. But then you thought I had
'understood there had been a vast difference
'betwixt God's Covenant with us, and our
'Covenant with God, citing *Ezek. 16. 59,*
'60, 61. where God promiseth to give them
'their Sisters for Daughters, but not by their Coven-
'nant. And with this you compare *Psal. 89.*
'My Covenant will I not break; where (you
say) we find a plain distinction betwixt God's
'Covenant with them, and their Duty to
'God. And lastly, you say, p. 105. that the
want of a due observation of this plain Scrip-
ture-distinction, betwixt God's free and abso-
lute Covenant made with Sinners in Christ,
and our Covenants with God by way of re-
turn thereunto; is the true reason of all our
Mistakes about the true nature of the Gospel-
Covenant, whilst we jumble and confound
together that which the Scriptures do so
plainly distinguish.

Reply.

To your first Answer, I say: It is true, the
Scriptures do distinguish betwixt *Covenant*
and *Covenant*; that of Works, and that of
Grace. It also distinguishes the same Coven-
ant of Grace for substance, according to its
various administrations into the Old and
New Covenant. It also distinguishes betwixt
the *promissory* part of the same Covenant of
Grace, and the *rescissory* part; not as of
two opposite Covenants, (as you distinguish
them, *Gen. 17.*) but as the just and necessary
parts of one and the same Covenant. It also
distinguishes betwixt Vows made by Men to
God in some particular Cases, and the Coven-
ant of Grace betwixt God and them. But
what's all this to your purpose? Or in what
point doth it touch my *Argument*? You desire
me to cast mine Eye upon *Ezek. 16.* and
Psal. 89. I have done so, and that impar-
tially; and do assure you, I admire why you
produce them against my *Argument*. That in
Ezek. speaks of the enlargement of the Church
by the accession of the *Gentiles* to it; and the
sense of those words seems to me to be this;
That this enlargement of the Church is a gra-
cious addition, or something beyond what
God had ever done in his former dispensations
of the Covenant to that People. And for
Psal. 89. I know not what you meant to pro-
duce it for, unless it be to prove, what I ne-
ver denied, That notwithstanding our failures
in duty towards God, God will still keep his
Covenant with us; though he will visit the In-
iquities of his *Covenant-People* with a Rod.

To your second Answer, That we are to
deliberate the Terms, and count the Cost, with
respect to those Duties, which are in order to
the participation of the full end of the Coven-
ant in Glory: by which, I suppose, you mean
Self-denial, Perseverance, &c. I have no
Controversy with you about that. Our
Question is, Whether there be no delibera-
tions required of, or to be performed by Men,
who are not yet in Christ by justifying Faith,
but under some preparatory works towards
Faith?

M m m m m

Faith? And whether at the very time of their cloſing with Chriſt, there be not a conſent of the Will unto thoſe terms required of them? If you ſay there be (as by the places I alledged it evidently appears there are) then you yield the Point I contend for. If you ſay they are not before, or at the time of believing, to conſider any Terms, or give their conſent to them by Word or Writing; ſuch an Anſwer would fly in the very face of thoſe Scriptures I produced: for then a Man may be in Covenant without his own conſent: he that deliberates not, conſents not; *non conſentit, qui non ſenſit*. And therefore you durſt not ſpeak it out (for which Modeſty I commend you) and ſo leave me with half an Anſwer, not touching that part, *viz.* Antecedent deliberations which were concerned in this Argument. And now let your moſt partial Friends judge, Whether from this performance of yours, you have any juſt ground for that vain boaſt which concludes your Anſwer, *viz.* 'That the Covenants themſelves, which thoſe Privileges are beſtowed on, are now repealed, and that there is no room left for any other Argument to infer the Baptiſm of Infants: at leaſt, I ſhall willingly commit it to the judgment of all intelligent and impartial Readers, Whether Mr. Cary hath any real ground in this performance of his, for ſuch a Thraſonical Conclusion, ſuch a vain and fulſome Boaſt?

I find that with like confidence he hath alſo attempted a Reply to Mr. *Joſeph Whiſton*, a Reverend, Learned, and Aged Divine, who hath accurately and ſucceſsfully defended God's Covenant with *Abraham*, againſt Mr. *Cox*; and doubt not, if Mr. *Cary*, and his Party, have but confidence enough to expoſe it to the publick view, and to adventure the cauſe of Infant-baptiſm upon it, the World will quickly ſee an end of this long continued and unhappy Controverſy, which hath vexed the Church of God, and alienated the Affections of good Men: and that the Wiſdom of Providence hath permitted and over-ruled this laſt Attempt, to the ſingular advantage of the Truths of God, and tranquility of good Men, whoſe concernment (at this time eſpecially) is rather to ſtrengthen their Faith, and heighten their Encouragements from God's gracious Covenant, than to undermine it, when all things beſide it are ſhaking and tottering round about them.

And now, Sir, for a *Coronis* to all thoſe things that have been controverted betwixt us about the Covenants of God, and the right of Believers Infants to Baptiſm, reſulting from one of them, which I have aſſerted and argued againſt you in my firſt Anſwer, and you have ſilently and wholly paſſ'd over in your Reply, hoping to deſtroy them all at once, by proving God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen. 17.* to be a pure *Adam's* Covenant of Works; I judge it neceſſary, as matters now lie between us, to give the Reader the grounds and Reaſons of my Faith and Practice with reſpect unto the Ordinance of Infant-Baptiſm, and that as ſuccinctly and clearly as I can, in the following *Theſes*; which being laid together by an unprejudiced and

conſiderative Reader, will, I think, amount to more than a ſtrong probability, That it is the will of God, that the Infant-ſeed of Believers ought now to be baptized.

But here I muſt remind the Reader, and p. 61, 62 beg him to review what I have ſaid before in the third *Cauſe of Errors*, That to arrive to ſatisfaction in this Point, requires a due and ſerious ſearch of the whole Word of God, with a ſedate, rational and impartial Mind; comparing one thing with another, though they lie ſcattered at a diſtance in the Scriptures; ſome in the *Old Teſtament*, and ſome in the *New*. Bring but theſe things to an interview, as we do in diſcovering the change of the Sabbath, and we may arrive unto a due ſatisfaction of the Will of God herein. This, I confeſs, calls for ſtrength of Mind, great ſedulity, attention, and impartiality; and yet what Man would think all this too much, if it were but to clear his Children's Title unto a ſmall Earthly Inheritance? I intend not to give the Reader here an account of all the Arguments drawn from ſeveral Scripture Topics by the ſtrenuous Defenders of Infants Baptiſm; but to keep only to the Arguments drawn from God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen. 17.* which is the Scripture mainly controverted betwixt us: You affirming boldly and dangerously, that Covenant to be no other than an *Adam's* Covenant of Works; and I juſtly denying and abhorring your Poſition upon the Grounds and Reaſons before given, which you neither have, nor ever will be able to deſtroy. Now that the Reader, who hath neither time nor ability to read the Larger, and more elaborate Treatiſes on this Subject, may ſee it more in one ſhort view, ſee the deduction of Believers Infants right to Baptiſm from this Goſpel-Covenant of God with *Abraham*, I ſhall gather the ſubſtance of what I contend for, and lay it as clearly as I can before the Eyes of my Reader in the following *Theſes*; which being diſtinctly conſidered as to the evident truth of each, and then rationally compared one with the other, he will ſee how each ſortifies other, and how all together do ſtrongly confirm this Conclusion, That the Infants of Believers under the Goſpel, as they naturally deſcend from *Abraham's* Spiritual Seed, are therefore Partakers at leaſt of the External Privileges of the viſible Church, and therefore ought now to be Baptized.

THEſIS I.

It hath pleaſed God, in all Ages of the World, ſince Man was created, to deal with his Church and People, by way of Covenant, and in the ſame way he will ſtill deal with them unto the end of the World.

God might have dealt with us in a ſupream way of meer Sovereignty and Dominion, commanding what Duties he pleaſed, and eſtabliſhing his Commands by what Penalties he had pleaſed, and never have brought himſelf under the tie and obligation of a Covenant to his own Creatures: but he chuſes to deal familiarly with his People, the way of Covenanting being a familiar way, 2 *Sam. 7. 19.* Is this the manner of men, O Lord God! or (as

Ju-

Junius renders it) and that after the manner of men, O Lord God! 'Tis a way full of condescending Grace and Goodness: he is willing hereby his People should know what they may certainly expect from their God, as well as what their God requires of them. Hereby also he will furnish them with mighty Pleas and Arguments in Prayer, succour their Faith against Temptations; strengthen their Hands in duties of Obedience, sweeten their Obedience to them, and discriminate his own People from the World.

As soon therefore as Man was created and placed in Paradise, being made upright, and thoroughly furnished with Abilities perfectly and completely to obey all the Commands of his Maker; the Lord immediately entered into the *Covenant of Works* with him, and with all his natural Posterity in him: and in this Covenant his standing or falling was according to the perfection and constancy of his personal Obedience, *Gen. 2. 17. Gal. 3. 10.* But in this First Covenant of Works no provision at all was made for his recovery (in case of the least failure) by his Repentance or better Obedience; but the Curse immediately seized both Soul and Body: And Sin by the Fall entering into Man's Nature, totally disabled him to the perfect performance of any one Duty, as that Covenant required it to be done, *Rom. 8. 3.* nor would God accept any Repentance, or after-endeavours, in lieu of that perfect Obedience due by Law. So that from the Fall of Adam, to the end of the World, this Covenant ceaseth as a Covenant of Life, or a Covenant able to give Righteousness and Life unto all Mankind for evermore, *Rom. 3. 20. Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight. Gal. 2. 16. By the Works of the Law shall no flesh be justified. Gal. 3. 11. But that no Man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, is evident.* And it being so evident, that Righteousness and Life being for ever impossible to be obtained upon the terms of Adam's Covenant, it must therefore be a self-evident Truth, That since the Fall, God never did, and to the end of the World be never will open that way or door to Life (thus block'd up by an absolute impossibility) for the Justification and Salvation of any Man.

Thesis II.

Soon after the violation and cessation of this first Covenant, as a Covenant of Life, is pleased the Lord to open and publish the second Covenant of Grace by Jesus Christ, the first dawning whereof we find in *Gen. 3. 15. where the Seed is promised which shall bruise the Serpent's head.* And though this be but a very short, and somewhat obscure discovery of Man's Remedy and Salvation by Christ; yet was it a joyful sound to the ears of God's people, it was even life from the dead to the Believers of those Times. For we may rationally conclude, That that space of time betwixt the breaking of the first, and making of the second Covenant, was the most dismal period of time that ever the World did, or shall see. This Covenant of Grace now took place of the Covenant of Works, comprehended all Be-

lievers in the bosom of it. The Covenant of Works took place from the time it was made until the Fall of Adam, and then was abolished as a Life-giving-Covenant. The second Covenant took place from the time it was made soon after the Fall, and is to continue to the end of the World. And these only are the two Covenants God hath made with Men; the latter succeeding the former, and commencing from its expiration; but both cannot possibly be in force together at the same time, and upon the same Persons, as co-ordinate Covenants of Life and Salvation. For in co-ordination they expel and destroy each other, *Gal. 5. 4. Whosoever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace.* The first Covenant was a Covenant without a Mediator; the second is a Covenant with a Mediator. Place a Believer under both at once, or put these two Covenants in co-ordination, and that which results will be a pure contradiction, viz. That a Man is saved without a Mediator, and yet by a Mediator. Moreover, if there be a way to Life without a Mediator, there was no need to make a Covenant in and with a Mediator; or can those words of Christ be true, *Joh. 4. 6. I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me.*

The Righteousness of the first Covenant was within Man himself; the Righteousness of the second Covenant is without Man in Christ. Put these two in co-ordination, and that which results is as pure a contradiction as the former; viz. That a Man is justified by a Righteousness within him, and yet is justified by a Righteousness without him; expressly contrary to the Apostle's conclusion, *Rom. 3. 20. Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.* It is therefore an intolerable absurdity to place Believers under both these Covenants at the same time; under the Curse of the First, and Blessing of the Second. For whensoever the state of any Person is changed by Justification, his Covenant is changed with his State, *Col. 1. 13. 'Tis as unimaginable that a Believer should thus stand under both Covenants, as it is to imagine that a Man may be born of two Mothers, Gal. 4. 22, 23, 24, 25. or a Woman lawfully married to two Husbands, Rom. 7. 1, 2, 3, 4. and more absurd (if it be possible any thing can be more absurd) to attribute the most glorious privilege of the Covenant of Grace. (viz. *I will be a God to thee, and to thy Seed after thee, Gen. 17. 7.*) to the impotent and abolished Covenant of Works; both which Absurdities are asserted in defence of Antipedo-baptism.*

And though it be true, that after the First Edition of the Covenant of Grace, the matter of the first Covenant was represented to the Israelites in the Moral Law: yet that representation was intended and designed to be subservient, and added to the Promise, *Gal. 3. 19.* and so (as an Acute and Learned Divine * speaks the very Decalogue or Moral Law * Turret. it self pertained to the Covenant of Grace; *2da loc.* yea, in some sort flowed out of this Covenant, as it was promulged by the Counsel of God to be servicable to it; both antecedently to lead

lead Men by the conviction of Sin, fear of Wrath, and Self-d despair, to the Covenant of Grace; and also consequently as it is a Pattern of Obedience and Rule of Holiness. For had it been published as a Covenant designed intentionally to its primitive use and end, it had totally frustrated the Covenant of Grace.

Thesis III.

Though the primordial Light or first glimmering of this Covenant of Grace, were comparatively weak and obscure; yet from the first Publication of it to Adam, God in all Ages hath been amplifying the Privileges, and heightning the Glory of this second Covenant in all the after Expressures and Editions of it unto this day, and will more and more amplify and illustrate it to the end of the World.

That first Promise, Gen. 3. 15. is like the first small Spring or Head of a great River, which the farther it runs, the bigger it grows by the accession of more Waters to it. Or like the Sun in the Heavens, which the higher it mounts, the more bright and glorious the day still grows.

In that Period of time, betwixt Adam and Abraham, we find no token of God's Covenant ordered therein to be applied to the Infant-Seed of Believers. But in that Second Edition of the Covenant to Abraham, the privileges of the Covenant were amplified, and his Infant-Seed, not only taken into the Covenant (as they were before) but also added to the visible Church, by receiving the token of the Covenant, which then was Circumcision; and so here is a great Addition made to the visible Church, even the whole Infant Off-spring of adult Believers.

From that Period, until the coming of the Messiah in the Flesh, the Jewish Church, and their Infant-Seed, except only some few Profelytes out of the Gentile Nations, made up the visible Church of God, and the poor Gentiles were without Christ, being Aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the World, Ephes. 2. 12. but in this glorious third Period, the Covenant again enlarges it self more than before, and the Privileges of it are no longer limited and restrained to the Jewish Believers and their Infant-Seed; but the Gentiles also are taken into the Covenant, and the door of Faith was opened unto them, Acts 14. 27. the partition-wall was now broken down, which separated the Church from the Gentile World, Eph. 2. 14. This was a glorious enlargement of the Covenant, and many glorious Prophecies and Promises were fulfilled in it; such as those, Isa. 11. 10. and 42. 1, 6. 49. 22. 54. 3. 60. 3. 5. 11. 16. 62. 2. &c.

And though the Covenant, as to its external part, seems to have lost ground in the breaking off of the Jewish Nation from the Church; yet like, the Sea, what it loses in one place, it gains with advantage upon another; the addition of many Gentile-Nations to the Church, more than recompences for the present breaking off of that one Nation of the Jews. And indeed they are broken off

but for a time; for God shall graff them in again, Rom. 11. 23. This therefore being the design of God, and steady Course of his Covenant of Grace, more and more to enlarge it self in all Ages; nothing can be more opposite to the Nature of this Covenant, than to narrow and contract its privileges in its farther progress, and cut off a whole Species from it, which it formerly took in.

Thesis IV.

It is past all doubt and contradiction, that the Infant-Seed of Abraham, under the Second Edition of the Covenant of Grace, were taken with their believing Parents into God's gracious Covenant, had the Seal of that Covenant applied to them, and were thereby added to the visible Church, Gen. 17. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. which was a gracious Privilege of the Covenant superadded to all the former, and such as sweeps away all the frivolous and groundless Cavils and Exceptions of those that object the incapacity of Infants to enter into Covenant with God, or receive benefit from the external Privileges of the visible Church. Nor can the subtlest Enemy to Infants Baptism, give us a convincing Reason why the Infants of Gentile Believers are not equally capable of the same benefits that the Infants of Jewish Believers were, if they still stand under the same Covenant that the former stood under; and God hath no where repealed the gracious Grant formerly made to the Infant-Seed of his Covenant-People.

Thesis V.

It is to me clear beyond all contradiction, from Rom. 11. 17. *If some of the Branches be broken off, and thou being a wild Olive-tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the Olive-Tree: I say, I can scarcely desire a clearer Scripture-light than this Text gives, to satisfy my understanding in this case, That when God brake off the unbelieving Jews from the Church, both Parents and Children together; the Believing Gentiles, which are as truly Abraham's Seed as they were, Gal. 3. 29. yea, the more excellent Seed of Abraham, were implanted or ingrafted in their room, and do as amply enjoy the Privileges of that Covenant, both internal and external, for themselves, and for their Infant-Seed, as ever any Members of the Jewish Church did or could do.*

Our Adversaries in this Controversy do pitifully and apparently shuffle here, and invent many strange and unintelligible distinctions to be-cloud the light of this famous Text. What they are, and how they are baffled, the Reader will easily discern from what hath already pass'd betwixt my Antagonist and me, in p. 108, &c. of my *Vindicie Legis & fœderis*. It is plain, that Abraham is the Root, the Olive-Tree, the visible Church; the Sap and Fatness of the Olive, are Church Ordinances and Covenant-Privileges; the Gentile Believers, who are Abraham's Seed according to Promise, are the ingrafted Branches standing in the place of the natural Branches, and with them, or in like manner as they did, partaking of the Root and Fatness of the Olive-Tree, that is as really and amply enjoying all

all the Immunities, Benefits, and Privileges of the Church and Covenant (amongst which the initiating Sign was one, and a chief one too) as ever the natural Branches that were broken off, that is, the Jewish Parents and their Children, did or might have done. And to deny this (as before was noted) is to straiten Covenant-privileges in their farther progress.

Thesis VI.

Suitably hereunto we find, that no sooner was the Christian Church constituted, and the Believing *Gentiles* by Faith added to it; but the Children of such Believing Parents are declared to be federally Holy, 1 Cor. 7. 14. and the unbelieving *Jews*, who were superstitiously fond of *Circumcision*, and prejudiced against Baptism, as an injurious Innovation, are by the *Apostle* persuaded to submit themselves to it, *Acts* 2. 38, 39. assuring them that the same Promise, *viz.* *I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee*, is now as effectually sealed to them and their Children by Baptism, as it was in the former Age by Circumcision: And that the *Gentiles*, which are yet afar off, whenever God shall call them, shall equally enjoy the same Privilege, both for themselves and for their Children also.

We also find a Commission given by Christ to the Disciples, *Matt.* 28. 19, 20. *To disciple all Nations, baptizing them, &c.* from which Discipleship, Infants ought not to be excluded, *Acts* 15. 10. Yea, we find, that as at the institution of *Circumcision*, *Abraham*, the Father and Master of the Family, was first circumcised in his own Person, and then his whole Household, *Gen.* 17. 23, 24. Answerably, as soon as any Person by Conversion, or publick profession of Faith, became a visible Child of *Abraham*, that Person was first Baptized, and the whole Household with him or her, *Acts* 16. 33. 15. 'Tis unreasonable to put us upon the proof, that there were Infants in those Houses; it being more than probable, that in such frequent Baptizing of Households belonging to Believers, there were some Infants; but if there were none, 'tis enough for us to prove from their federal Holiness, 1 Cor. 7. 14. and the extent of God's Promise to them, *Acts* 2. 38. 39. If there had been never so many Infants in those Households, they might and ought to have been Baptized. How the true sense and scope of the two last mentioned Scriptures are maintained and vindicated against Mr. Cary's corrupt glosses and interpretations; see my *Vindictæ Legis & Fœderis*, pag. 90, 91. We do not lay the stress of Infants Baptism upon such *strictures* as the Baptizings of the Households of Believers, or Christ's

taking up in his Arms, and blessing the little ones that were brought to him. These and many other such things found in the History of Christ, and *Acts* of the Apostles, have their use and service to fortify that Doctrine. But if we can produce no example of any Believer's Infant Baptized, the merit of the Cause lies not in the matter of Fact, but Covenant-right. For our Adversaries themselves, if we go to matter of Fact, will be hard put to it to produce us one Instance out of the *New-Testament* of any Child of a Believing Christian whose Baptism was deferred, or by Christ or his Apostles ordered to be deferred, until he attained the Years of maturity, and made a personal profession of Faith himself.

Thesis VII.

The change of the Token, and Seal of the Covenant from Circumcision to Baptism, will by no means infer the change or diversity of the Covenants, especially when the latter comes into the place, and serves to the same use and end with the former, as it is manifest Baptism doth, from Col. 2. 11, 12. as hath been, I think, sufficiently argued against Mr. Cary's glosses and exceptions, pag. 100, 101. of my Vindictæ Legis & Fœderis. The Covenant is still the same Covenant of Grace, though the external initiating Sign be changed. For what is the substantial part of the Covenant of Grace now, but the same it was to *Abraham* and his Seed before? Is not this our Covenant of Grace, *Heb.* 8. 10. *I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a People?* And in what words was *Abraham's* Covenant exprest, *Gen.* 17. 7. *I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.* This makes *Abraham's* Covenant, sealed to him and his Seed, as truly and properly the Covenant of Grace, as that which Baptism now seals to Believers and their Seed. The rash Ignorance of those that affirm, God may become a People's God in the way of a special Interest, by virtue of the broken and abolished Covenant of Works, rather deserves sharp reprehension, and sad lamentation, than a confutation; which, nevertheless out of respect to my Friend Mr. Cary, I have given it in its proper place in this Rejoinder.

I hope by this time I have made it evident, That the defenders of Infants Baptism, as it is established upon God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. have not so mistaken their Ground, as Mr. Cary hath, by his endeavours to carry that Covenant, as an *Adam's* Covenant of Works, through such a multitude of other Errors and Absurdities, as he draws along with it in his way of reasoning.

A Postscript to Mr. Cary.

S I R,

I Resolved not to disturb my Mind with your passionate provoking Language, at least whilst I was busily employed in searching for Reason and Argument (two scarce Commodities) amongst heaps of vain and fulsome words. Nor will I now imitate you folly and rudeness, lest I become an Offender, whilst I am to act the part of a *Reprover*. When I read your Title, *A Just and Sober Reply*, and presently fell in among rude insults, silly evasions, and such inartificial discourses as follow in your Book: I began to challenge you in my Thoughts, for matching such bad stuff with so fair and lovely a Title: But a second Thought quickly corrected the former; for I considered no Man living could justly forbid the Marriage betwixt your Book and its Title, since there is not the least kindred or relation between them.

Had your Answers been *just*, you would have observed the Rules of a *Respondent*, which you have not done: And if they had been *sober*, you had never been so free in your Reproaches, and sparing in your Arguments as you have been. Is this the Man, of whom it is said in the *Epistle* to his *Solemn Call*, That his Lines are free from reflection and reproach towards those of the persuasion he contends with? Is this my old friendly Neighbour? It calls to my mind the *Italian Proverb*, *God keep us from our Friends, and we will do what we can to keep our selves from our Enemies*. And though you act the part of an Enemy, you shall be my Friend whether you will or no. If you will not be my Friend out of Love, I will make you so by a good improvement of your Hatred.

I have been musing with my self, what might be the true cause of all your rage against my Book; One while I thought it proceeded from want of *Discretion*, that you were not able to distinguish betwixt an Adversary in a *Controversie*, and an Adversary to the *Person*; but thought every Blow that was given to your Error, must needs be a mortal wound to your Reputation. But, Sir, how close and smart soever my Discourses against your Errors be, I'm sure they are more full of civility and respect to you, than such a Reply as you have made deserves: And if in exposing your Errors, your Reputation be expos'd, you must blame them for occasioning it, and not me.

Some times I thought it an effect of your Policy, that when followed close, and hard put to it, you endeavoured an escape this way. *Cicero* speaking of this kind of subtilty in his Adversaries, saith, *Facimus quod quarundam ferarum ingenium est, ut fectore & gravolentia, deserta jam viribus, ac fracta venatoreum abigunt*. Some cunning Animals, as Foxes, &c. when pursued at the heels, drive away both Dogs and Huntsmen with their intolerable stench. And *Hierom* long ago told *Heldridin*, his Adversary, *Arbitror te veritate*

convictum, ad maledicta converti; being vanquished by Truth, he betook himself to ill Language. After the same manner you act here, being no longer able to defend your self by solid and sober ratiocination, you trust to your faculty in crimination. Bad Causes only drive Men into such Refuges.

In a word, I am satisfied nothing but your extravagant zeal for your Idolized Opinion, could have thrown you into such dissingenuous Methods and Artifices as these. The *Ephysians* were quiet enough till their *Diana* began to totter. Your passionate Outcries signify to me, something is touched to the quick, which you are more fondly in love with than you ought. When one told *Luther* what hideous Out-cries his Enemies made against him, and how they reviled him in their Books: I know by their roaring (said he) that I have hit them right.

You tell me in your Reply, p. 24. That you perceive I have a mighty itch to find out your Absurdities. I wish, Sir, you were no more troubled with the itch after them, than I am after the discovery of them. Had I affected such Employments, I could easily have gathered three to one out of your Book, more than I did: And have represented those I gather'd, much more odiously (and yet justly) than I did. But Friendship constrain'd me to handle them (because yours) as gently as I could.

I might have justly charg'd you from what you say, p. 174, 175. of your *Solemn Call*: where you place all the Believers on Earth, without exception of any, under the Covenant of Works, as a ministration of Death and Condemnation; and the severest Penalties of a dreadful Curse: I might thereupon have justly charg'd you for presenting to the World such a monstrous Sight as was never seen before since the Creation, viz. A whole Church of condemned and cursed Believers. This I might as well have charged upon your Position, and done it no wrong.

I could tell you from what you say, p. 76. of your Reply, That God doth indeed in the Covenant of Works make over himself to Sinners, to be their God in a way of special Interest; but it being upon such hard terms, that it is utterly impossible that way to attain unto life, &c. I could justly have told you, That these Passages of yours, drop pure nonsense upon the Reader's Understanding: as if Salvation were impossible to be attain'd by the same Covenant wherein God becomes our God, and makes over himself by way of special interest to us.

Had I had an itch to expose the Burlesque and ridiculous Stuff, which lies obvious enough in your Book; I should then have told your Reader, That according to your Doctrine, how opposite and inconsistent soever the two Covenants of Works and Grace be, yet the same Subjects, viz. Believers, may at once,

not

not only stand under them both, but that the same common Seal, viz. Circumcision, equally ratifies and confirms them both; for you allow in your *Call*, p. 205. *That it sealed the Covenant of Grace to believing Abraham, and yet was a Seal of the Covenant of Works*, yea the very condition of that Covenant, as you frequently affirm it to be. *Vide* p. 81. of your *Reply*, and *Passim*.

I could as easily and justly have told you, That the most malicious *Papist* could scarcely have invented a more horrid Reproach against our famous Orthodox-Protestant Divines, than you (I dare not say maliciously, but) ignorantly have done, when you charge such Men as Mr. Francis Roberts, Mr. Obadiah Sedgwick; and indeed all that assert the Law, complexly taken, to be an obscure Covenant of Grace; that they comprize perfect doing with the consequent Curse for non-performance; and believing in Christ unto Life and Salvation in one and the same Covenant. This is an intolerable abuse of yours, p. 5. of your *Reply*. They generally assert the Law, in that complex sense; and latitude you take it, to be a true Covenant of Grace, though more obscurely administered; and that the distinction of the Covenants into Old and New, is no parallel distinction with that of Works and Grace, or Christ's and Adam's Covenant. Your public recantation of the Injury you have done the very Protestant Cause herein, is your unquestionable Duty, yet scarce a due reparation of the Injury.

In a word, I cannot but look upon it as a discovery of your great weakness, That when you meet with such a difficulty as poses your Understanding, and you cannot possibly reconcile with your Notion; as that of Paul's circumcising *Timothy*, and you affirming that the very act of Circumcision did in its own nature oblige all on whom it pass'd, to the perfect observation of the Law for Righte-

ousness. You will rather chuse to leave the blessed *Apostle* in a contradiction to his own Doctrine, than to your vain Notion; For what do you say, p. 95. of your *Reply*? *That however the case stood in that respect, this is certain, &c.* It also argues weakness in you to insist upon, aggravate, jeer. and reproach at that rate you do, p. 83. of your *Reply*. For the mistake, and misplacing of one Figure, viz. Gen. 12. for Gen. 17. as if the merit of the whole Cause depended on it. The like I may say of your charging me with Nonsense, for putting Gen. 17. 7, 8. for Gen. 17. 9, 10. when yet you your self, p. 205. of your *Call*, tell us, That Circumcision was appointed as a Sign or Token of the Covenant, Gen. 17. 7, 8, 9. What pitiful Trifles are these to raise such a mighty triumph upon? When *Durum* accused our famous *Whitaker* for one or two trivial verbal Mistakes, *Whitaker* return'd him the same Answer I shall give you, *Benz babes, hic in rebus non vertuntur fortune Ecclesie.* 'Tis well the Case of the Church depends not upon such Trifles.

For a Conclusion; I do seriously warn all Men to beware of receiving Doctrines so destructive to the great Truths of the Gospel as these are. And I do solemnly profess, I have not designedly strained them, to cast reproach upon him that publish'd them; But the matters are so plain, that if Mr. Cary will maintain his Positions, not only my self, but every intelligent Reader, will be easily able to fasten all those odious Consequents upon him, after all his Apologies.

Sir, in a word, I dare not say, but you are a good Man; but since I read your two Books, you have made me think more than once of what one said of *Jonah* after he had read his History, that he was a strange Man of a good Man; yet as strange a good Man as you are, I hope to meet you with a sounder Head, and better Spirit, in Heaven.

The Second

APPENDIX:

Giving a brief Account of the Rise and Growth of ANTI-NOMIANISM; the deduction of the principal Errors of that Sect: With modest and seasonable Reflections upon them.

THE Design of the following Sheets, cast in as a *Manifesto* to the foregoing Discourse of *Errors*, is principally to discharge and free the Free-grace of God from those dangerous Errors, which fight against it under its own Colours; partly to prevent the seduction of some that stagger; and lastly, (though least of all) to vindicate my own Doctrine, the scope and current whereof hath always been, and shall ever be, to exalt the Free-grace of God in Christ, to draw the vilest of Sinners to him, and relieve the distressed Consciences of Sin-burthened Christians.

But notwithstanding my utmost care and caution, some have been apt to censure it, as if in some things it had a taint of *Antinomianism*: But if my publick or private Discourses be the faithful Messengers of my Judgment and Heart, (as I hope they are) nothing can be found in any of them casting a friendly aspect upon any of their Principles, which I here justly censure as erroneous.

Three things I principally aim at in this short Appendix.

1. To give the Reader the most probable Rise of *Antinomianism*.
2. An Account of the principal Errors of that Sect.
3. To confirm and establish Christians against them, by sound Reasons back'd with Scripture-Authority. And

I. Of the Rise of *Antinomianism*.

The Scriptures foreseeing there would arise such a sort of Men in the Church as would wax wanton against Christ, and turn his Grace into lasciviousness; hath not only precautioned us in general to beware of such Opinions as corrupt the Doctrine of Free-grace, *Rom. 6. 1, 2. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid*: but hath particularly indigested and marked those very Opinions by which it would be abused, and made abundant provision against them; as namely,

1. All slighting and vilifying Opinions or Expressions of the Holy Law of God, *Rom. 7. 12.*
2. All Opinions and Principles inclining Men to a careless disregard and neglect of the Duties of Obedience, under pretence of Free grace and Liberty by Christ, *1 Jam. 2. Matth. 23.*
3. All Opinions neglecting or slighting Sanctification as the evidence of our Justification, and rendering it needless or sinful to try the state of our Souls by the Graces of the

Spirit wrought in us, which is the principal scope of the First Epistle of *John*.

Notwithstanding, such is the wickedness of some, and weakness of others, that in all Ages (especially the last past, and present) Men have audaciously broken in upon the Doctrine of Free-grace; and notoriously violated and corrupted it, to the great reproach of Christ, scandal of the World, and hardning of the Enemies of Reformation. *Rebeld (faith Contem the Jesuit, on Matth. 24.) the fruit of Protestantism, and their Gospel-preaching.*

Nothing is more opposite to looseness, than the Free-grace of God, which teacheth us, *That denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.* Nor can it, without manifest violence, be made pliable to such wicked purposes. And therefore the Apostle tells us, *1 Jhd. 4.* That this is done by turning the Grace of our Lord into lasciviousness: *usurarius*, transferring it, scil. *fadd interpretatione*, by a corrupt, abusive interpretation, to such uses and purposes as it abhors. No such wanton, licentious Conclusions can be inter'd from the Gospel-doctrines of Grace and Liberty, but by wrestling them against their true scope and intent, by the wicked Arts and Practices of Deceivers upon them.

The Gospel makes Sin more odious than ever the Law did, and discovers the punishment of it in a more severe and dreadful manner, than ever it was discovered before, *Heb. 2. 2, 3. For if the word spoken by Angels were stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?* It shews our obligations to duty, to be stronger than ever; and our encouragements to Holiness greater than ever; *2 Cor. 7. 1.* and yet corrupt Nature will be still tempting Men to corrupt and abuse it. The more luscious the Food is, the more Men are apt to surfeit upon it.

This perversion and abuse of Free-grace and Christian-liberty, is justly chargeable (though upon different accounts) both upon wicked and good Men. Wicked Men corrupt it designedly, that by entitling God to their Sins, they might sin the more quietly and securely. So the Devil instigated the *Heathens* to sin against the Light and Law of Nature, by representing their gods to them as drunken and lascivious Deities. So the *Nicetanians*, and School of *Simon*, and after them the *Gnosticks*, and other *Hereticks*, in the very dawning of Gospel

August.
de Hæres.
Tom. 6.
Hæres. 54.

Gospel Light and Liberty, began presently to loose the bond of restraint from their Lusts, under Pretence of Grace and Liberty. The *Etiani* blushed not to teach, That Sin, and perseverance in Sin, could hurt the Salvation of none, so that they would embrace their Principles.

Calv. ad-
versus Li-
bert. ch. 2.

How vile and abominable Inferences the *Manicheans*, *Valentinians*, and *Cerdonites*, drew from the Grace and Liberty of the Gospel in the following Ages, I had rather mourn over, than recite. And if we come down to the 15th Century, we shall find the *Libertines* of those days as deeply drenched in this Sin, as most that went before them. *Calvin* mournfully observes, That under pretence of Christian-liberty, they trampled all Godliness under Foot. The vile Courses their loose Opinions soon carried them into, plainly discovered for what Intents and Purposes they were projected and calculated : and he that reads the Preface to that Grave and Learned Mr. *Thomas Gataker's* Book, entitled, *God's Eye upon Israel*, will find, That some *Antinomians* of our days are not much behind the worst and vilest of them. One of them cries out, *Away with the Law, away with the Law, it cuts off a Man's Legs, and then bids him walk.* Another saith, *'Tis as possible for Christ himself to sin, as for a Child of God to sin. That if a Man by the Spirit know himself to be in the state of Grace, though he be drunk, or commit murder, God sees no sin in him : with much more of the same Bran, which I will not transcribe.*

But others there be, whose Judgments are unhappily tainted and leavened with these loose Doctrines ; yet being in the main godly Persons, they dare not take liberty to sin, or live in the neglect of known Duties, though their Principles too much incline that way. But though they dare not, others will, who imbibe corrupt Notions from them ; and the renowned Piety of the Authours will be no Antidote against the Danger, but make the Poison operate the more powerfully, by receiving it in such a Vehicle. Now it is highly probable such men as these might be charmed into such dangerous Opinions upon such accounts as these.

(1.) 'Tis like some of them might have felt in themselves the anguish of a perplexed Conscience under Sin ; and not being able to live with these terrors of the Law, and dismal fears of Conscience, might too hastily snatch at those Doctrines which promise them relief and ease, as I noted before in the 5th Cause of my *Treatise of Errors*. And that this is not a guess at random, will appear from the very Title-page of Mr. *Salmarsh's* Book of Free-grace, where (as an inducement to the Reader to swallow his *Antinomian* Doctrine) he shews him this curious Bait.

It is (saith he) an experiment of Jesus Christ upon one who hath been in the bondage of a troubled Conscience at times for the space of about twelve years, till now upon a clearer discovery of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, &c.

(2.) Others have been induced to espouse these Opinions from the excess of their Zeal against the Errors of the *Papists*, who have notoriously corrupted the Doctrine of Justifi-

Vol. I.

cation by Free-grace ; decried imputed, and exalted inherent Righteousness above it. The *Papists* have designedly and industriously sealed up the Scriptures from the People, lest they should there discover those sovereign and effectual Remedies which God hath provided for their distressed Consciences, in the Riches of his own Grace, and the meritorious Death of Christ ; and so all their *Masses*, *Pilgrimages*, *Auricular Confessions*, with all their dear *Indulgences*, should lie upon their hands as stale and cheap Commodities. Ob, (saith *Stephen Gardiner*) let not this gap of Free-grace be opened to the People.

But as soon as the Light of Reformation had discovered the Free-grace of God to Sinners, (which is indeed the only effectual Remedy of distressed Consciences) and by the same Light the horrid Cheats of the Man of Sin were discovered ; all good Men, who were enlightened by the Reformation, justly and deeply abhorred Popery, as the Enemy of the Grace of God, and true Peace of Conscience, and fixed themselves upon the sound and comfortable Doctrines of Justification by Faith through the alone Righteousness of Christ. Mean while thankfully acknowledging, that they which believe, ought also to maintain good Works. But others there were, transported by an indiscreet Zeal, who have almost bended the Grace of God as far too much the other way, and have both spoken and written many things very unbecoming the Grace of God, and tending to looseness and neglect of Duty.

(3.) 'Tis manifest that others of them have been ingulphed, and sucked into those dangerous Quick-sands of *Antinomian* Errors, by separating the Spirit from the written Word : If once a Man pretend the Spirit without the Scriptures to be his Rule, whither will not his own deluding Fancies carry him under a vain and sinful pretence of the Spirit !

In the Year 1528. when *Helfar*, *Traier* and *Seukler*, were confuted by *Hallerus* ; and their Errors about Oaths, Magistrates, and Pædo-Papism were detected by him, and by *Colerus* at Bern, that which they had to say for themselves was, That the Spirit taught them otherwise than the letter of the Scriptures speaks. So dangerous it is to separate what God hath conjoined, and father our own Fancies upon the Holy Spirit.

(4.) And it is not unlike, but a comparative weakness and injudiciousness of mind meeting with a fervent Zeal for Christ, and his Glory may induce others to espouse such taking and plausible, tho' pernicious Doctrines. They are not aware of the dangerous Consequences of the Opinions they embrace, and what looseness may be occasioned by them. I speak not of Occasions taken, but given, by such Opinions and Expressions. A good Man will draw excellent Inferences of Duty from the very same Doctrine. Instance that of the shortness of time, from whence the Apostle infers abstinence, strictness and diligence, 1 Cor. 7. 29. but the *Epicure* infers all manner of dissolute and licentious practices, *Let us eat and drink ; for to-morrow we shall die,*

O o o o o

1 Cor.

1 Cor. 15. 22. The best Doctrines are this way liable to abuse.

But let all good men beware of such Opinions and Expressions as give an handle to wicked Men to abuse the Grace of God, which haply the Author himself dare not do, and may strongly hope others may not do : but if the Principle will yield it, 'tis in vain to think corrupt Nature will not catch at it, and make a vile use and dangerous improvement of it.

For example; If such a Principle as this be asserted for a truth before the World, *That men need not fear that any, or all the Sins they commit, shall do them any hurt*; let the Author, or any Man in the World warn, and caution Readers (as the Antinomian Author of that Expression hath done) not to abuse this Doctrine, 'tis to no purpose. The Doctrine it self is full of dangerous Consequents, and wicked men have the best skill to infer and draw them forth to cherish and countenance their Lusts : That which the Author might design for the relief of the distressed, quickly turns it self into Poison in the Bowels of the wicked; nor can we excuse it by saying any Gospel-Truth may be thus abused : for this is none of that number; but a Principle that gives offence to the Godly, and encouragement to the Ungodly. And so much as to the Rise and Occasion of *Antinomian Errors*.

II. In the next place, let us view some of the chief Doctrines commonly called *Antinomian*, amongst which there will be found a *Pewter* *Set*, the radical and most prolific Error, from which most of the rest are spawned and procreated.

Error I. I shall begin with the dangerous mistake of the *Antinomians* in the Doctrine of *Justification*. The Article of Justification is deservedly stiled by our Divines, *Articulus flatus, vel cadentis Religionis*, the very Pillar of the Christian Religion.

In two things however I must do the *Antinomians* right. (1.) In acknowledging, that though their Errors about Justification be great and dangerous, yet they are not so much about the *Substance*, as about the *mode* of a Sinner's Justification : An Error far inferior to the Error of the *Papists*, who depress the Righteousness of Christ, and exalt their own inherent Righteousness in the business of Justification. (2.) I am bound in Charity to believe, that some among them do hold those Errors but speculatively, whilst the Truth lies nearer their Hearts, and will not suffer them to reduce their own Opinions into practice. Now as to their Errors about Justification, the most that I have read do make *Justification to be an immanent and eternal Act of God; and do affirm, the Elect were justified before themselves, or the World, had a being. Others come lower, and affirm, the Elect were justified at the time of Christ's death. With these Dr. Cripp harmonizes.*

Error II. That Justification by Faith is no more but a manifestation to us of what was really done before we had a being. Hence Mr. *Salmarsh* thus defines Faith, *It is (faith be) a being persuaded more or less of Christ's love*

to us; so that when we believe, that which was hid before, doth then appear. God (faith another) cannot charge one Sin upon that man, who believes this truth, That God laid his Iniquities upon Christ.

Error III. That men ought not to doubt of their Faith, or question, Whether they believe or no. Nay, That we ought no more to question our Faith, than to question Christ. *Salmarsh* Of Free-grace, p. 92, 93.

Error IV. That Believers are not bound to confess Sin, mourn for it, or pray for the forgiveness of it; because it was pardoned before it was committed; and pardoned Sin is no Sin. See *Eaton's Honeycomb*, p. 446, 447.

Error V. They say, that God sees no Sin in Believers, whatsoever Sins they commit. Some of them, as Mr. *Town*, and Mr. *Eaton*, speak out, and tell us, That God, can see no Adultery, no Lying, no Blasphemy, no Cozening in Believers : For though Believers do fall into such Enormities; yet all their Sins being pardoned from Eternity, they are no Sins in them. *Town's Assertions*, 96, 97, 98. *Eaton's Honeycomb*, chap. 7. p. 136, 137. with others of a more pious Character than they.

Error VI. That God is not angry with the Elect, nor doth he smite them for their Sins; and to say that he doth so, is an injurious Reflection upon the Justice of God. This is avouched generally in all their Writings.

Error VII. They tell us, That by God's laying our Iniquities upon Christ, he became as completely sinful as we, and we as completely righteous as Christ. *Vide Dr. Cripp*, p. 270.

Error VIII. Upon the same ground it is that they affirm, That Believers need not fear either their own Sins, or the Sins of others; for that neither their own, nor any other Mens Sins, can do them any hurt, nor must they do any Duty for their own Salvation.

Error IX. They will not allow the New Covenant to be made properly with us, but with Christ for us; and that this Covenant is all of it a Promise, having no Condition on our part. They do not absolutely deny that Faith, Repentance and Obedience, are Conditions in the New Covenant; but say, They are not Conditions on our part, but Christ's; and that he repented, believed, and obeyed, for us. *Salmarsh* of Free-grace, p. 126, 127.

Error X. They speak very slightly of trying our selves by marks and signs of Grace. *Salmarsh* often calls it a weak, low, carnal way; but the *New-England Antinomians*, or *Libertines*, call it a fundamental Error, to make Sanctification an Evidence of Justification; that it is to light a Candle to the Sun; that it darkens our Justification; and that the darker our Sanctification is, the brighter our Justification is. See their Book, entitled, *Rise, Reign*. Error 72.

In this Breviate, or summary Account of *Antinomian Doctrines*, I have only singled out, and touched some of their Principle Mistakes and Errors, into which some of them run much farther than others. But I look upon such Doctrines to be in themselves of a very dangerous nature, and the malignity and contagion would certainly spread much farther into

to the World than it doth, had not God provided two powerful Antidotes to resist the malignity, *viz.*

1. The scope and current of Scripture.
2. The experience and practice of the Saints.

(1.) These Doctrines run cross to the scope and current of the Scriptures, which constantly speak of all unregenerate Persons (without Exception of the very Elect themselves, during that state) as Children of Wrath, even as others, without Christ, and under condemnation.

They frequently discover God's Anger, and tell us his castigatory Rods of Affliction are laid upon them for their Sins.

They represent Sin as the greatest Evil; most opposite to the Glory of God, and good of the Saints; and are therefore filled with Cautions and Threatnings to prevent their sinning.

They call the Saints frequently and earnestly, not only to mourn for their Sins before the Lord; but to pray for the pardon or remission of them in the Blood of Christ.

They give us a far different account of saving Faith, and do not place it in a persuasion more or less of Christ's love to us, or a manifestation in our Consciences of the actual remission of our Sins before we had a being; but in our receiving Christ, as the Gospel offers him, for righteousness and life.

They frequently call the People of God to the examination and trial of their Interest in Christ by Marks and Signs; and accordingly furnish them with variety of such Marks from the divers parts or branches of Sanctification in themselves.

They earnestly, and every-where, press Believers to strictness and constancy in the Duties of Religion, as the way wherein God would have them to walk. They infer Duties from Privileges; and therefore the *Antinomian* Dialect is a wild note, which the generality of serious Christians do easily distinguish from the Scripture-style and Language.

(2.) The Experience and Practice of the Saints recorded in Scripture, as well as our Contemporaries, or those whose Lives are recorded for our imitation, do greatly secure us from the spreading malignity of *Antinomianism*. Converse with the living, or read the Histories of dead Saints, and you shall find, That in their Addresses to God, they still bless and praise him for that great and wonderful change of state which was made upon them when they first believed in Christ, and on their believing passed from Death to Life; freely acknowledging before God, they were before their Conversion equal in Sin and Misery with the vilest Wretches in the World: They heartily mourn for their daily Sins; fear nothing more than Sin; no Afflictions in the World go so near their Heart as Sin doth. They mourn for the hardness of their Hearts, that they can mourn no more for Sin. They acknowledge the Rods of God that are upon them, are not only the evidences of his displeasure against them for their Sins; but the fruits of their uneven walking with him. And

that the greatest of their Afflictions is less than the least of their Iniquities deserve. They fall at their Father's Feet as oft as they fall into sin, humbly and earnestly suing for Pardon through the Blood of Christ. They are not only sensible that God sees Sin in them; but that he seeth such, and so great evils in them; as makes them admire at his Patience, that they are not consumed in their Iniquities. They find cause enough to suspect their own Sincerity: doubt the truth of their Faith, and of their Graces: and are therefore frequent and serious in the trial and examination of their own States by Scripture Marks and Signs. They urge the Commands and Threatnings, as well as the Promises, upon their own Hearts, to promote Sanctification. Excite themselves to duty and watchfulness against Sin. They also encourage themselves by the rewards of Obedience, knowing their labour is not in vain in the Lord. And all this while they look not for that in themselves, which is only to be found in Christ: nor for that in the Law, which is only to be found in the Gospel: nor for that on Earth, which is only to be found in Heaven. This is the way that they take. And he that shall tell them, their Sins can do them no hurt, or their Duties do them no good, speaks to them, not only as a *Barbarian*, in a Language they understand not, but in such a Language as their Souls detest and abhor.

Moreover, The zeal and love of Christ, and his Glory, being kindled in their Souls, they have not patience to hear such Doctrines as so greatly derogate from his Glory, under a pretence of honouring and exalting him. It wounds and grieves their very Hearts to see the World hardened in their prejudices against Reformation, and a gap opened to all licentiousness.

But notwithstanding this double Antidote and Security, we find by daily experience such Doctrines too much obtaining in the professing World. For my own part, He that searches my Heart and Reins is witness, I would rather chuse to have my right Hand wither, and my Tongue rot within my Mouth, than to speak one Word, or write one Line to cloud or diminish the Free-grace of God. Let it arise and shine in its Meridian Glory. None owes more to it, or expects more from it, than I do. And what I shall write in this Controversy, is to vindicate it from those Doctrines and Opinions, which under pretence of exalting it, do really militate against it. To begin therefore with the first and leading Error.

Error I. That the *Justification of Sinners is an immanent and eternal act of God, not only preceeding all acts of sin; but the very existence of the sinner himself, and so perfectly abolishing sin in our Persons, that we are as clean from sin as Christ himself, immediately*, as some of them have spoken. To stop the progress of this Error, I shall,

1. Lay down the Sentence of the Orthodox about it.
2. Offer some Reasons for the refutation of it.

(1.)

(1.) That which I take to be the truth agreed upon, and asserted by sound reformed Divines touching Gospel-Justification, is by them made clear to the World in these following Scriptural distinctions of it.

Justification may be considered under a twofold respect or habitude

1. According to God's Eternal Decree. Or,

2. According to the execution thereof in time.

(1.) According to God's Eternal Decree and Purpose; and in this respect Grace is said to be given us in Christ before the World began, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. And we are said to be predestinated to the adoption of Children by Jesus Christ, *Eph.* 1. 5.

(2.) According to the execution thereof in time; So they again distinguish it, by considering it two ways:

1. In its Impetration by Christ.

2. In its Application to us.

That very mercy or privilege of Justification, which God from all Eternity, purely out of his benevolent Love, purposed and decreed for his Elect, was also in time purchased for them by the death of Christ, *Rom.* 5. 9, 10. where we are said to be justified by his Blood; and he is said to have made peace through the Blood of his Cross, to reconcile all things to himself, *Col.* 1. 20. to be delivered for our Offences, and raised again for our Justification, *Rom.* 4. 25. Once more, *That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. God the Father had in the Death of Christ a foundation of reconciliation, whereby he became propitious to his Elect, that he might absolve and justify them. Again,

(2.) It must be considered in its application to us, which application is made in this Life at the time of our effectual Calling. When an elect Sinner is united to Christ by Faith, and so passeth from Death to Life, from a state of Condemnation, into a state of Absolution and Favour; this is our actual Justification, *Rom.* 5. 1. *Acts* 13. 39. *John* 5. 24. which actual Justification is again considered two ways:

1. Universally, and in General, as to the State of the Person.

2. Specially, and Particularly, as to the Acts of Sin.

As soon as we are received into Communion with Christ, and his Righteousness is imputed by God, and received by Faith, immediately we pass from a state of Death and Condemnation, to a state of Life and Justification, and all Sins already committed, are remitted without Exception or Revocation; and not only so, but a Remedy is given us in the Righteousness of Christ against Sins to come; and tho' these special and particular Sins we afterward fall into, do need particular Pardons; yet, by renewed Acts of Faith and Repentance, the Believer applies to himself the Righteousness of Christ, and they are pardoned.

Again, they carefully distinguish between

1. It's Application by God to our Persons. And

2. It's Declaration or Manifestation in us, and to us.

Which Manifestation or Declaration, is either,

1. Private in the Conscience of a Believer. Or,

2. Publick, at the Bar of Judgment.

And thus Justification is many ways distinguished. And notwithstanding all this, it is still *actus indivisus*, an undivided act; nor on our part, for it is iterated in many Acts; but on God's part, who at once decreed it; and on Christ's part, who by one Offering purchased it, and at the time of our Vocation universally applied it, as to the state of the Person justified; and that so effectually, as no future Sin shall bring that Person any more under Condemnation.

In this Sentence or Judgment, the generality of Reformed Orthodox Divines are agreed; and the want of distinguishing, (as they according to Scripture have distinguished) hath led the *Antinomians* into this first Error about Justification, and that Error hath led them into most of the other Errors. That this Doctrine of theirs, (which teaches that Men are justified actually and completely, before they have a being) is an Error, and hath no solid Foundation to support it, may be evidenced by these three Reasons.

1. Because it is Irrational.

2. Because it is Inscriptural.

3. Because it is Injurious to Christ, and the Souls of Men.

It is Irrational to imagine that Men are *Reason* 1. actually justified, before they have a Being, by an immanent Act or Decree of God. Many things have been urged upon this account to confute and destroy this Fancy, and much more may be rationally urged against it. Let the following Particulars be weighed in the Balance of Reason.

1. Can we rationally suppose, that Pardon and Acceptance can be affirmed, or predicated of that which is not? Reason tells us, *Non entis nulla sunt accidentia*; That which is not, can neither be condemned nor justified: But before the Creation, or before a Man's particular Conception, he was not, and therefore could not in his own Person be the subject of Justification. Where there is no Law, there is no Sin: Where there is no Sin, there is no Punishment: Where there is neither Sin nor Punishment, there can be no Guilt (for Guilt is an Obligation to Punishment.) And where there's neither Law, nor Sin, nor Obligation to Punishment, there can be no Justification. He that is not capable of a Charge, is not capable of a Discharge. What remains then, but that either the Elect must exist from Eternity, or be justified in time? 'Tis true, future Beings may be considered, as in the purpose and decree of God from Eternity; or as in the Intention of Christ, who died intentionally for the Sins of the Elect, and rose again for their Justification. But neither the Decree of God, nor the Death of Christ, takes place upon any Man for his actual Justification, until

till he personally exist. For the Object of Justification is a Sinner actually ungodly, *Rom. 4. 5.* but so no Man is, or can be from Eternity. In Election, Men are considered without respect to Good or Evil done by them, *Rom. 9. 11.* not so in actual Justification.

2. In Justification there is a Change made upon the state of the Person, *Rom. 5. 8, 9. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11.* By Justification Men pass from a state of Death to a state of Life, *John 5. 24.* But the Decree or Purpose of God in it self makes no such actual change upon the state of any Person. It hath indeed the nature of an universal Cause; but an universal Cause produceth nothing without Particulars. If our state be changed, it is not by an immanent act of God: Hence no such thing doth *transire*. A mere *vult non punire*, or intention to justify us in due time and order, makes no change on our state, till that time come, and the particular Causes have wrought. A Prince may have a purpose or intention to pardon a Law-condemned Traitor, and free him from that Condemnation in due time; but whilst the Law that condemned him stands in its full force and power against him, he is not justified or acquitted, notwithstanding that gracious intention, but stands still condemned. So is it with us, till by Faith we are implanted into Christ. 'Tis true, Christ is a surety for all his, and hath satisfied the Debt. He is a common Head to all his, as Adam was to all his Children, *Rom. 5. 19.* But as the Sin of Adam condemns none, but those that are in him; so the Righteousness of Christ actually justifies none but those that are in him; and none are actually in him, but Believers. Therefore till we believe, no actual change passeth, or can pass upon our state. So that this Hypothesis is contrary to Reason.

Reason 2. As this Opinion is Irrational, so it is Unscriptural. For (1.) The Scripture frequently speaks of Remission or Justification as a future act, and therefore not from Eternity, *Rom. 4. 23, 24.* Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him, &c. And *Gal. 3. 8.* The Scriptures foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham. The Gospel was preached many Years before the Gentiles were justified: but if they were justified from Eternity, how was the Gospel preached before their Justification?

(2.) The Scripture leaves all Unbelievers, without distinction, under condemnation and wrath. The Curse of the Law lies upon them till they believe, *John 3. 18.* He that believeth on him, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already. And *Eph. 2. 3, 12, 13.* The very Elect themselves were by nature the Children of Wrath, even as others. They were at that time, or during that state of Nature (which takes in all that whole space betwixt their conception and conversion) without Christ, without hope, without God in the World. But if this Opinion be true, that the Elect were justified from Eternity, or from the time of Christ's Death; then it can-

Vol. I.

not be true, that the Elect by nature are Children of Wrath, without Christ, without Hope, without God in the World; except these two may consist together (which is absolutely impossible) that Children of Wrath, without God, Christ, or Hope, are actually discharged from their Sins and Dangers, by a free and gracious act of Justification.

But doth not the Scripture say, *Rom. 8. 33. Object.* Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? If none can charge the Elect, then God hath discharged them.

God hath not actually discharged them as *Sol.* they are Elect, but as they are justified Elect: for so runs that Text, and clears it self in the very next words, *It is God that justifieth.* When God hath actually justified an Elect Person, none can charge him.

(3.) 'Tis cross to the Scripture-order of Justification; which places it not only after Christ's Death in the place last cited, *Rom. 8. 33.* but also after our actual vocation, as is plain, *verf. 30.* Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. Is it absurd to place Vocation before Predestination, or Glorification before Justification? sure then it must be absurd also to place Justification before Vocation: the one as well as the other confounds and breaks the Scripture-order. You may as well say, Men shall be glorified, that were never justified; as say they may be justified before they believed or existed. So that you see the notion of Justification from Eternity, or before our actual Existence, and effectual Vocation, is a notion as repugnant to Sacred Scripture, as it is to sound Reason.

And as it is found repugnant to Reason *Reason 3.* and Scripture, so it is highly injurious to Jesus Christ, and the Souls of Men.

(1.) It greatly injures the Lord Jesus Christ, and robs him of the glory of being our Saviour. For if the Elect be justified from Eternity, Christ cannot be the Saviour of the Elect, as most assuredly he is: for if Christ save them, he must save them as Persons subject to perishing, either *de facto* or *de jure*. But if the Elect were justified from Eternity, they could in neither respect be subject to perishing: for he that was eternally justified, was never condemned, nor capable of Condemnation; and he that never was, or could be condemned, could never be subject to perishing; and he that never was, nor could be subject to perishing, can never truly and properly be said to be saved.

If it be said, the Elect were not justified till the Death of Christ: I demand then what became of all them that died before the Death of Christ? If they were not justified, they could not be glorified: for this is sure from *Rom. 8. 30.* That the whole number of the glorified in Heaven is made up of such as were justified on Earth: Let Men take heed therefore, lest under pretence of exalting Christ, they bereave him of the glory of being the Saviour of his Elect.

(2.) It bereaves him of another glorious Royalty. The Scripture every where makes

P P P P P

our

our Justification the result and fruit of the meritorious death of Christ, *Rom. 3. 24, 25. Rom. 8. 3, 4. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. Gal. 3. 13, 14. Eph. 1. 17.* But if Men were justified from Eternity, how is their Justification the fruit and result of the blood of the Cross? as it plainly appears from these Scriptures to be. Nay,

(3.) This Opinion leaves no place for the satisfaction of Justice by the Blood of Christ for our Sins. He did not die, according to this Opinion, to pay our Debts. And here *Antinomianism* and *Socinianism* meet, and congratulate each other. For if there were no Debts owing to the Justice of God from Eternity, Christ could not die to pay them : and 'tis manifest there were no Debts due to God's Justice from Eternity on the account of his Elect, if the Elect were from Eternity justified ; unless you will say, a Person may be justified, and yet his Debts not paid : for all Justification dissolves the Obligation to punishment.

If there were any Debts for Christ to pay by his Blood, they must either be his own Debts, or Elect's. To say they were his own, is a blasphemous Reproach to him : and according to this Opinion we cannot say they were the Elect's ; for if they were justified from Eternity, their Debts were discharged, and their Bonds cancell'd from Eternity. So that this Opinion leaves nothing to the Blood of Christ to discharge or make Satisfaction for.

(2.) And as it hath been proved to be highly injurious to the Lord Jesus, so it is greatly injurious to the Souls of Men, as it naturally leads them into all those wild and licentious Opinions which naturally flow from it, as from the radical profligate Error, whence most of the rest derive themselves, as will immediately appear in the

II. Error. *That Justification by Faith is no more but the manifestation to us of what was really and actually done before. Or a being persuaded more or less of Christ's love to us. And that when persons do believe, that which was hid before, doth then only appear to them.*

Refutation. As the former Error dangerously corrupts the Doctrine of Justification, so this corrupts the Doctrine of Faith ; and therefore deserves to be exploded by all Christians.

That there is a manifestation and discovery of the special love of God, and our own saving concernment in the death of Christ to some Christians at some Times, cannot be denied. *St. Paul* could say, *Gal. 2. 20, 21.* Christ loved him, and gave himself for him : but to say that this is the justifying Act of Faith, whereby a Sinner passes from Condemnation and Death, into the state of Righteousness and Life ; this I must look upon as a great Error, and that for these following Reasons.

Reason I. Because there be Multitudes of Believing and justified Persons in the World, who have no such Manifestation, Evidence, or Assurance, that God laid their Iniquities upon Christ, and that he died to put away their

Sins ; but daily conflict with strong Fears and Doubts, whether it be so or no. There are but few among Believers that attain such a Persuasion and Manifestation, as *Antinomians* make to be all that is meant in Scripture by Justification through Faith. Many thousand new-born Christians live as the new-born Babe, which neither knows its own Estate, or Inheritance, to which it is born,

Vivit, & est vita nescius ipse suae.

A Soul may be in Christ, and a justified state, without any such Persuasion or Manifestation, as they here speak of, *Isa. 50. 10.* And if any shall assert the contrary, he will condemn the greatest part of the Generation of God's Children. Now that cannot be the saving and justifying Act of Faith, which is not to be found in multitudes of believing and justified Persons.

But Manifestation, or a personal Persuasion of the love of God to a Man's Soul, or that Christ died for him, and all his Iniquities are thereby forgiven him, is not to be found in multitudes of believing and justified Souls.

Therefore such a Persuasion or Manifestation is not that saving, justifying Faith, which the Scripture speaks of.

That Faith which only justifies the person of a Sinner before God, must necessarily be found in all justified Believers, or else a man may be justified without the least degree of justifying Faith, and consequently it is not Faith alone, by which a man is justified before God.

Reason II. That cannot be the justifying Act of Faith, which is not constant and abiding with the justified Person, but comes and goes, is frequently lost and recovered, the state of the Person still remaining the same. And such contingent things are these Persuasions and Manifestations ; they come and go, are won and lost, the state of the Person still remaining the same. *Job* was as much a justified Believer when he complained that God was his Enemy, as when he could say, *I know that my Redeemer liveth.* The same may be said of *David, Heman, Asaph,* and the greatest number of justified Believers recorded in the Scripture. There be two things belonging to a justified State. (1.) That which is essential and inseparable, to wit, Faith uniting the Soul to Christ. (2.) That which is contingent and separable, to wit, Evidence and Persuasion of our Interest in him. Those Believers that walk in darkness, and have no light, have yet a real special Interest in God as their God, *Isa. 50. 10.* Here then you find Believers without Persuasion or Manifestation of God's love to them ; which could never be, if justifying Faith consisted in a personal Persuasion, Manifestation or Evidence of the love of God, and pardon of Sin to a Man's Soul. That cannot be the justifying Faith spoken of in Scripture, which a justified Person may live in Christ without, and be as much in a state of Pardon and Acceptation with God, when he wants it, as when he hath it. But such is Persuasion, Evidence, or Manifestation of a Man's particular Interest in the love of God, or the pardon of

of his Sins. Therefore this is not the justifying Faith the Scripture speaks of.

Reason III. That only is justifying, Saving Faith, which gives the Soul Right and Title to Christ, and the saving benefits which come by Christ upon all the Children of God. Now it is not persuasion that Christ is ours, but acceptance of him, that gives us interest in Christ, and the saving benefits and privileges of the Children of God, *John* 1. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God; even to them that believe on his name.* So that unless the Antinomians can prove, that receiving of Christ, and personal Persuasion of Pardon, be one and the same thing; and consequently, that all Believers in the World are persuaded or assured that their Sins are pardoned; and reject from the number of Believers all tempted, deserted, dark, and doubting Christians; this Persuasion they speak of, is not, nor can it be the Act of Faith, which justifies the person of a Sinner before God. That which I think led our Antinomians into this Error, was an unsound and unwary definition of Faith, which in their youth they had imbibed from their *Catechisms*, and other *Systems*, passing without Contradiction or Scruple in those days, which though it were a mistake, and hath abundantly been proved so in latter days; yet our Antinomians will not part with a Notion so serviceable to the support of the darling Opinion of Eternal Justification.

Reason IV. A Man may be strongly persuaded of the Love of God to his Soul, and of the pardon of his Sin, and yet have no interest in Christ, nor be in a pardoned State. This was the Case of the *Pharisees* and others, *Luke* 18. 9. *Rev.* 3. 17. Therefore this Persuasion cannot be justifying Faith. If a Persuasion be that that justifies the persuaded Person, then the *Pharisees* and *Laodiceans* were justified. Oh! How common and easie is it for the worst of Men to be strongly persuaded of their good Condition; whilst humble serious Christians doubt and stagger? I know not what such Doctrine as this is useful for, but to beget and strengthen that Sin of Presumption, which sends down Multitudes to Hell, out of the professing World: For what is more common amongst the most carnal and unsanctified part of the World, nor only such as are merely Moral, but even the most flagitious and prophane, than to support themselves by false Persuasions of their good Estate? When they are asked, in order to their Conviction, what hopes of Salvation they have, and how they are founded? Their common answer is, Christ died for Sinners, and that they are persuaded, that whatever he hath done for any other, he hath done it for them, as well as others: But such a Persuasion cometh not of him that called them, and is of dangerous Consequence.

Reason V. This Doctrine is certainly unsound, because it confounds the distinction betwixt Dogmatical, and Saving Faith; and makes it all one, to believe an Axiom or Proposition, and to believe savingly in Christ to Eternal Life. What is it to believe, that God laid our

Iniquities upon Christ, more than the mere assent of the understanding to a Scripture Axiom or Proposition, without any consent of the Will to receive Jesus Christ as the Gospel offers him? And this is no more than what any unregenerated Person may do; yea, the very Devils themselves assent to the truth of Scripture Axioms and Propositions, as well as Men, *Jam.* 2. 19. *Thou believest there is one God, thou doest well: the Devils also believe and tremble.* What is more than a Scripture-Axiom or Proposition, God lay'd the iniquity of us all upon Christ, *Isa.* 53. 6? And yet (saith Dr. Crisp, p. 296.) God cannot charge one Sin upon that Man that believes this Truth, *That God lay'd his iniquities upon Christ.* The assent of the understanding may be, and often is given to a Scripture Proposition, whilst the Heart and Will remain carnal, and utterly averse to Jesus Christ. I may believe Dogmatically, that the Iniquities of Men were lay'd upon Christ, and persuade my self presumptively, that mine, as well as other Mens, were lay'd upon him, and yet remain a perfect Stranger to all saving Union and Communion with him.

Reason VI. This Opinion cannot be true, because it takes away the only support that bears up the Soul of a Believer in times of temptation and desertion.

For how will you comfort such a distressed Soul that saith, and saith truly, I have no persuasion that Christ is mine, or that my Sins are pardoned; but I am heartily willing to cast my poor sin-burthened Soul upon him, that he may be mine; I do not certainly know that he died intentionally for me, but I lie at his feet, cleave to him, wait at the door of hope; I stay and trust upon him, though I walk in darkness, and have no light. Now let such Doctrine as this be preached to a Soul in this condition, (and we may be sure 'tis the Condition of many thousands belonging to Christ) I say, bring this Doctrine to them, and tell them, That unless they be persuaded of the Love of God, and that God lay'd their Iniquities on Christ, except they have some Manifestation that their Persons were justified from Eternity, their accepting of Christ, consent of their Wills, waiting at his Feet, &c. signifies nothing; if we believe not that their particular Sins were lay'd upon Christ, and are pardoned to them by him, they are still unbelievers, and have no part or portion in him. Whatever Pretences of Spiritual Comfort and Relief the Antinomian Doctrine makes, you see by this it really deprives a very great, if not the greatest number of God's People of their best and sweetest Relief in days of darkness and spiritual distress. So that this Doctrine, which makes Manifestation and Assurance the very essence of justifying Faith, appears hereby to be both a false and very dangerous Doctrine. And yet there is as much or more danger to the Souls of Men in their

III. Error. *That Men ought not to doubt of their Faith, or question whether they believe or no. Nay, That they ought no more to question their Faith, than to question Christ.*

Refu-

Refutation. What an easie way to Heaven is the *Antinomian* way ? Were it but as true and safe to the Soul, as it is easie and pleasing to the Flesh, who would not embrace it ? What a charm of the Devil is prepared in these two Propositions ? Be but persuaded more or less of Christ's Love to thy Soul (saith Mr. Saltmarsh) and that's justifying Faith. Here's a snare of the Devil lay'd for the Souls of Men. And then (2.) to make it fast and sure upon the Soul, and effectually to prevent the discovery of their Error, tell them they need no more to doubt or question their Faith, than to question Christ, and the work is done to all intents.

Now that this is an Error, and a very dangerous one, will appear by the following Reasons

Reason I. The questioning and examining of our Faith, is a commanded Scripture-duty, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine your selves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves, &c.* And 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall,* 1 Cor. 10. 12. *The second Epistle of John, verse 8. Look to your selves, that we lose not the things which we have wrought :* With multitude of other Scriptures, recommending holy Jealousy, serious Self-trial and Examination of our Faith, as the unquestionable Duties of the People of God. But if we ought to question our Faith no more than we ought to question Christ, away then with all Self-examination, and diligence to make our Calling and Election sure; for where there is no doubt nor danger, there's no place nor room for Examination, or further endeavours to make it surer than it is. How do you like this Doctrine Christians ? How many be there among you, that find no more cause to question your own faith or interest in Christ, than you do to question whether there be a Christ, or whether he shed his Blood for the remission of any Man's sins ?

Reason II. This is a very dangerous Error, and it is the more dangerous, because it leaves no way to recover a presumptuous Sinner out of his dangerous Mistakes; but confirms and fixes him in them, to the great hazard of his eternal ruin. It cuts off all means of conviction or better information, and Nails them fast to the carnal state in which they are. According to this Doctrine 'tis impossible for a Man to think himself something, when he is nothing; or to be guilty of such a Paralogism and Cheat, put by himself upon his own Soul, Jam. 1. 22. this in effect bids a Man keep on right or wrong; he is sure enough of Heaven, if he be but strongly persuaded that Christ died for him, and he shall come thither at last. Certainly this was not the Counsel Christ gave to the self-deceived *Laodiceans*. Rev. 3. 17, 18. but instead of dissuading them from self-jealousy and suspicion of their Condition, whether their Faith and State were safe or not, he rather counsels them to buy Eye-salve, that is, to labour after better information of the true state and condition they were in, and not cast away their Souls by false persuasions and vain confidences.

Reason III. This Doctrine cannot be true, because it supposes every Persuasion, or strong conceit of a Man's own Heart, to be as infallibly sure and certain, as the very fundamental Doctrine of Christianity. No truth in the World can be surer than this, That Jesus Christ died for Sinners. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance,* 1 Tim. 1. 15. This is a foundation Stone, a tried, precious Corner Stone, a sure Foundation laid by God himself, Isa. 28. 16. and shall the strong conceits and confidences of Mens Hearts vye and compare in point of certainty with it ? As well may probable and merely conjectural Propositions compare with Axioms that are self-evident, or demonstrative Arguments, that leave no Doubts behind them. Know we not, that the Heart is deceitful above all things, the most notorious Cheat and Impostor in the World, Jer. 17. 9 ? Does it not deceive all the formal Hypocrites in the World in this very point ? And shall every strong conceit and presumptuous confidence, begotten by Satan upon a deceitful Heart, and nursed up by Self-love, pass without any examination or suspicion for as infallible and assured a truth, as that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners ? The Lord sweep that Doctrine out of the World by Reformation, which is like to sweep so many Thousand Souls into Hell by a remediless Self-deception.

Error IV. The fourth *Antinomian* Error before-mentioned, was this, *That Believers are not bound to confess their Sins, or pray for the pardon of them; because their sins were pardoned before they were committed; and pardoned sin is no sin.*

Refutation. If this be true Doctrine, then it will justify and make good such Conclusions and Inferences as these which necessarily flow from it : *viz.*

1. That there is no Sin in Believers.
2. Or if there be, the evil is very inconsiderable. 'Or,
3. Whatever evil is in it, it is not the Will of God that they should either confess it, mourn over it, or pray for the remission of it; Whatever he requires of others, yet they need take no notice of it, so as to afflict their Hearts for it; God hath exempted them from such concerns: There's nothing but joy to a Believer, saith Mr. Eaton. But neither of these Conclusions are either true or tolerable; therefore neither is the Principle so which yields them.

(1.) It is not true or tolerable to affirm, that there is no Sin in a Believer, 1 Job. 1. 8. *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us. There's not a just Man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not,* Eccles. 7. 20. *In many things we offend all,* James 3. 2. The Scriptures plainly affirm it, and the universal experience of all the Saints sadly confirms it. 'Tis true, the Blood of Christ hath taken away the guilt of Sin, so that it shall not condemn Believers; and the Spirit of Sanctification hath taken away the do-

dominion of Sin, so that it doth not reign over Believers; but nothing, except Glorification, utterly destroys the existence of Sin in Believers. The acts of Sin are our acts, and not Christ's; and the stain and pollution of those sinful acts, are the Burthens and Infirmities of Believers, even in their justified State. Dr. *Criſp* indeed, p. 270, 271. calls that objection (I suppose he means distinction between the guilt of Sin and Sin it self) a simple Objection, and tells us, the very Sin it self, as well as the guilt of it, passed off from us, and was lay'd upon Christ: So that speaking of the Sins of Blaphemy, Murther, Theft, Adultery, Lying, &c. From that time (saith he) that they were lay'd upon Christ, thou ceaseſt to be a Transgressor. If thou haſt part in the Lord Christ, all these Transgressions of thine become actually the Transgressions of Christ. So that how thou art not an Idolater, or Persecutor, a Thief, a Murtherer, and an Adulterer, thou art not a sinful Person; Christ is made that very sinful before God, &c. Such Expressions justly offend and grieve the Hearts of Christians, and expose Christianity to scorn and contempt. Was it not enough that the guilt of our Sin was lay'd on him, but we must imagine also, that the thing it self, Sin, with all the deformity and pollution should be essentially transferred from us to Christ? No, no. After we are justified, Sin dwelleth in us, *Rom. 7. 17.* warreth in us, and brings us into captivity, *ver. 23.* Burthens and oppresseth our very Souls, *ver. 24.* Methinks I need not stand to prove what I should think no sound experienced Christian dares to deny, that there is much Sin still remaining in the Persons of the justified. He that dares to deny it, hath little acquaintance with the nature of Sin, and of his own Heart.

(2.) It is neither true nor tolerable to say, there is no considerable evil in the sins of Believers, deserving a mournful confession or petition for Pardon. The desert of Sin is Hell; 'tis an artifice of Satan to draw Men to Sin by persuading them there is no great evil in it; but none except Fools will believe it. Fools, indeed, make a mock of Sin; but all that understand either the intrinsic evil of it, or the sad and dismal effects produced by it, are far from thinking it a light or inconsiderable evil. The Sins, even of Believers, greatly wrong and offend their God, *Pſal. 51. 4.* and is that a light thing with us? They interrupt and clog our Communion with God, *Rom. 7. 21.* They grieve the good Spirit of God, *Ephes. 4. 30.* Certainly these are no inconsiderable Mischiefs.

(3.) Now if there be Sin in Believers, and so much evil in their Sins (neither of which any sober Christian will deny) then undoubtedly it is their duty to confess it freely, mourn for it bitterly, and pray for the pardon of it earnestly, unless God have any where discharged them from those Duties, and told them these are none of their Concernments, and that he expects not these things from justified Persons; but that these are Duties properly and only belonging to other Men. But on the contrary, you find the whole current

Vol. I.

of Scripture running strongly and constantly in direct opposition to such idle and sinful Notions. For first,

(1.) He hath plainly declared it to be his Will, that his People should confess their Sins before him, and strongly connected their Confessions with their Pardons, 1 *John 5. 9.* and frequently suspends from them the comfortable sense of forgiveness, till their Hearts be brought to this Duty, *Pſal. 32. 5.* compared with *verſ. 3. 4.* the more to engage them to this Duty, by the sensible ease and comfort attending and following it.

(2.) He also enjoins it upon them, That they mourn for their Sins, *Iſa. 22. 12.* expresses his great delight in Contrition and brokenness of Spirit for Sin, *Iſa. 66. 2.* *To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit.* Christ himself pronounces a Blessing upon them that mourn, *Matt. 5. 4.* Justified Paul mournfully confesses his former Blaphemies, Persecutions, and Injuries done against Christ, 1 *Tim. 1. 13.* So did Ezra, Daniel, and other eximious Saints.

Yes, say some, they did indeed confess *Obj. 1.* their sins committed before their justification, but not their after-sins.

According to Antinomian Principles, I would Reply. demand, If all the Elect were justified from Eternity, what sins any of them could confess which they had committed before their justification? Or if they were justified from the time of Christ's Death, what were the sins any of us have to confess who had not a Being, and therefore had not actually sinned long after the Death of Christ? But I hope none will deny, that the mournful Complaints the Apostle makes for Sin, *Rom. 7. 21, 24.* were after he was a sanctified and justified Person.

(3.) It is not the Will of Christ to exempt any justified Person upon Earth, from the Duty of Praying frequently and fervently for the remission of his Sins. This the most eminent Saints upon Earth have done. The greatest favourites of Heaven have freely confessed and heartily prayed for the remission of sin, *Dan. 9. 4, 19.* And that the Gospel gives us no exemption from this Duty, appears by Christ's injunction of it upon all his People, *Matt. 6. 12.*

Error V. To give countenance to the former Error, they say, *That God sees no sin in Believers, whatsoever Sins they commit;* and seek a covert for this Error from *Numb. 23. 21.* and *Jer. 50. 20.* In the former place it is said by Balaam, *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor seen perverseness in Israel.* And in the other place it is said, *In these days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them, whom I revere.*

Refutation. Now that this Opinion of our Antinomians is Erroneous, will appear four ways.

1. By its repugnancy to God's Omniscience.
2. By its inconsistency with his Dispensations.
3. By its want of a Scripture-foundation.
4. By its contradictoriness to their other Principles.

Q q q q q

'Tis

'Tis true, and we thankfully acknowledge it, that God sees no Sin in Believers, as a Judge sees Guilt in a Malefactor, to condemn him for it; that's a sure and comfortable truth for us: but to say he sees no Sin in his Children, as a displeased Father to correct and chasten them for it, is an Assertion repugnant to Scripture, and very injurious to God. For,

(1.) 'Tis injurious to God's Omniscience, Psal. 139. 2. *Thou (saith holy David) knowest my down-sitting, and my up-rising, and understandest my thoughts afar off, and art acquainted with all my ways.* Job 28. 24. *He looketh to the ends of the Earth, and seeth under the whole Heavens.* Prov. 15. 3. *The Eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.* Psal. 33. 14, 15. *From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the Inhabitants of the Earth; he fashioneth their hearts alike, he considereth all their works.* He that denies that God seeth his most secret Sins, therein consequentially denies him to be God.

(2.) This Assertion is inconsistent with God's Providential Dispensations to his People. When David, a justified Believer, had sinned against him in the matter of Uriah, it is said, 2 Sam. 11. 27. *The thing that David had done, displeased the Lord:* and as the effect of that displeasure, it's said, Chap. 12. 15. *The Lord struck the Child that Uriah's Wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.* Among the *Corinthians* some that should not be condemned with the World, were judged and chastened of the Lord for their undue approaches to his Table, 1 Cor. 11. 32. Now I would ask the *Antinomian* these two Questions. (1. *Quest.*) Whether it can be denied, that David under the Old Testament, and these *Corinthians* under the New, were justified Persons; and yet the former stricken by God in his Child, with its Sickness and Death; and the latter in like manner smitten by God in their own Persons; and both for their respective Sins committed against God; and yet God saw no sin in them? Did God smite them for sin, and yet beheld no sin in them? Beware lest in ascribing such strokes to God, you strike at once both at his Omniscience and Justice. (2. *Quest.*) How God upon Confession and Repentance can be said to put away his People's Sins (as Nathan there assures David he had done) when in the mean time he saw no sin in him, either to chastise him for, or to pardon in him? Do you think that God's Afflictions or Pardons are blind-fold Acts, done at random? how inconsistent is this with Divine Dispensations?

(3.) This Opinion is altogether destitute of a Scripture-foundation: 'tis evident it hath none in the only places alledged for it. It hath no footing at all in *Numb.* 23. 21. *Grave and Learned Gataker* hath learnedly and industriously vindicated that Scripture from this abuse of it by *Antinomians*, in his Treatise upon that Text, entitled, *God's Eye upon his Israel*; where, after a learned and critical search of the Text, he telleth us, it soundeth word for word thus from the Original: *He hath not beheld wrong against Jacob, nor hath he seen grievance against Israel:* So that the meaning is not, That God did not see sin in Israel, but

that he beheld not with approbation the Wrongs and Injuries done by others against his Israel; and shews at large by divers solid Reasons, why the *Antinomian* sense cannot be the proper sense of that place, it being cross to the main tenour of the Story, and truth of God's Word, which shews, that God often complained of their Sins, often threatened to avenge them; yea, did actually avenge them by destroying them in the Wilderness; nay, Balaam himself, who uttered these words unto Balak, did not so understand them, as appears by the advice he gave to Balak, to draw them into sin, that thereby God might be provoked to withdraw his Protection from them.

And for Jer. 50. 20. it makes nothing to their purpose. Many expound the Sin there sought after, and not found, to be the Sin of Idolatry, which Israel should be purged from by their Captivity, according to Isa. 27. 9. But the generality of sound Expositors are agreed, That by the not finding of Israel's and Judah's Sin, is meant no more, but his not finding those Bonds or Obligations against them to eternal Punishment, which their Sins had put them under.

(4.) In a word, This Opinion clashes with their other Principles. For they say, That though there was pardon and remission under the Old Covenant (which they allowed to be a Covenant of Grace) yet it was but *gradatim* and successively, as they offered Sacrifices. If a Man had sinned ignorantly, until he brought a Sacrifice, his sin lay upon him, it may be a Week, a Months distance between, before they could have their Pardon. Vide Dr. Crisp of the two Covenants, p. 256, 257. Now I demand, If this were the state and case of all God's Israel under the Old Testament, Why do these Men affirm, that God can see no sin in a Believer? and why do they expound the words of Balaam so contradictorily to this their other Opinion? For they will not deny but God sees unpardoned Sins in all; and here is a Week, or Month, or more time, allowed between the commission and remission of their Sin. And so much of the fifth *Antinomian* Error.

Error VI. *That God is not angry with the Elect, nor doth he smite them for their Sins; and to say that he doth so, is an injurious reflection upon the Justice of God, who hath received full satisfaction for all their Sins from the hand of Christ.*

There are several Mistakes and Errors in these Assertions; and I suppose our *Antinomians* were led into them, (1.) By their abhorrence of the Popish Doctrine, which errs more dangerously in the other extrem: for they wickedly assert our Sufferings to be satisfactory for our Sins, which is the ground of Popish Penances, and voluntary Self-castigations. (2.) From a groundless apprehension, That God's Corrections of us for our Sins, are inconsistent with the fulness of Christ's satisfaction for them. Christ having paid all our Debts, and dissolved our Obligations to all Punishment, it cannot consist with the Justice of God to lay any Rod upon us for our Sins, after Christ hath born all that our Sins deserved.

This

This mistake of the end of Christ's death, occasions them to stumble into the other Mistakes : they imagine that Christ's Satisfaction abolished God's hatred of Sin in Believers. But this cannot be ; God's Antipathy to Sin, can never be taken away by the Satisfaction of Christ, though his hatred to the Persons of the redeemed be : for the hatred of Sin is founded in the unchangeable Nature of God ; and he can as soon cease to be holy, as cease to hate Sin, *Hab. 1. 13.* Nor was Christ's death ever designed to this end : though Christ hath satisfied for the Sins of Believers, God still hates Sin in Believers. His hatred to their Sins, and love to their Persons, are not inconsistent. As a man may love his Leg or Arm, as they are Members of his own Body, and notwithstanding that Love, hate the Gangrene which hath taken them ; and lance or use painful Corroives for the cure of them.

Neither do our Antinomians distinguish as they ought, betwixt vindictive Punishments from God, the pure issues and effects of his Justice and Wrath against the Wicked ; and his Paternal Castigations, the pure issues of the Care and Love of a displeased Father. Great and manifold are the differences betwixt his vindictive Wrath upon his Enemies, and the rebukes of the Rod upon his Children. Those are Legal, these Evangelical. Those out of wrath and hatred, these out of love. Those unsanctified, but these blessed and sanctified to happy ends and purposes to his People. Those for Destruction, these for Salvation.

To narrow the matter in Controversy as much as we can, I shall lay down three Concessions about God's Corrections of his People.

Concession I. We cheerfully and thankfully acknowledge the perfection and fulness of the satisfaction of Christ for all the Sins of Believers : and with thankfulness do own, that if God should cast all, or any of them, into an Ocean of temporal Troubles and Distresses ; in all that Sea of Sorrow, there would not be found one drop of vindictive Wrath. Christ hath drunk the last drop of that Cup, and left nothing for Believers to suffer by way of Satisfaction.

Concession II. We grant also, That all the Sufferings of Believers in this World, are not for their Sins ; but some of them are for the prevention of Sin, *2 Cor. 12. 7.* some for the tryal of their Graces, *Jam. 1. 2, 3.* some for a confirming Testimony to his Truths, *Ath. 5. 41.* Such Sufferings as these have much heavenly comfort concomitant with them.

Concession III. We do not say, That God's displeasure with his People for Sin, evidenced against them in the smartest Rebukes of the Rod, is any Argument that God's Love is turned into hatred against their Persons : No, no, his Love to his People is unchangeable. Having loved his own, he loved them to the end, *John 13. 1.* yet notwithstanding all this, three things are undeniably clear, and being thoroughly apprehended, will end this Controversy.

1. That God lays his correcting Rod in this World on the Persons of Believers.
2. That this Rod of God is sometimes laid on them for their Sins.
3. That these Fatherly Corrections of them for their Sins, are reconcilable to, and fully consistent with his Justice, completely satisfied by the Blood of Christ for all their Sins.

1. That God lays his correcting Rod in this World upon the Persons of Believers. This no Man can have the face to deny that believes the Scriptures to be the Word of God, or that the Troubles of good Men in this Life fall not out by Casualty, but by the Counsel and Direction of Divine Providence. He that denies the hand of God to be upon the Persons of Believers in this Life in the way of painful Chastisements and Sufferings, must either ignorantly, or wilfully, overlook that Scripture, *Heb. 7. 8. What Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not ? but if ye be without Chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye Bastards and not Sons.* Nor will any sober Christian deny these Troubles of Believers to be the effects of God's Governing Providence in the World, or once imagine or affirm them to be mere Casualties and Contingences : for *affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground,* *Job 5. 6.* In what *Eutopia* doth that good Man live upon Earth, that feels not the painful Rod of God upon himself, nor hears the sad lamentations and moans of other Christians under it ! This sure is undeniable, that the Rod of God is everywhere upon the Persons and Tabernacles of the Righteous ; and if any doubt it, his own sense and feeling may in a little time give him a painful demonstration of it.

2. And for the second, That this Rod of God is sometimes laid upon Believers for their Sins ; methinks no sober modest Christian in the World should doubt or deny it, when he considers, That

1. God himself hath so declared it.
2. The Saints in all Ages have freely confessed it to be so.

1. God himself hath fully and plainly declared it to be so, *2 Sam. 12. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Wherefore hast thou despised the Commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight ? now therefore the Sword shall never depart from thy House,* &c. Here's the Sword, a terrible and painful Evil, upon *David's* House, a man after God's own heart, and that expressly for his Sin in the matter of *Uriah*. So *Moses*, one of the greatest Favourites of Heaven, for his sinful shifting of the Lord's Work, *Exod. 4. 13, 14. The anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses : For the multitude of thine Iniquities, because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee,* saith God to his own *Israel*, *Jer. 30. 15.* To instance in all the Declarations made by God himself in this case ; were to transcribe a great part of both Testaments.

2. And as God hath declared the Sins of his People to be the provoking causes of his Rods upon them ; so they have freely and ingenuously confessed and acknowledged the same,

same, Lam. 3. 39, 40. *Wherefore doth the living man complain? a man for the punishment of his Sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.* This was spoken by *Jeremy* in the name of the whole captive Church. So *Psal.* 38. 3, 5. *There is no soundness in my Flesh (saith David) because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my Sin. My wounds stink, and are corrupt, because of my foolishness.* And were it not an hideous and unaccountable thing to hear any Child of God, under his Rod, to stand upon his own Justification, and say, Lord, my Sins have not deserved this at thy Hand, nor is it justice in thee thus to chastise me after thou hast received satisfaction for all my Sins from the Hand of Christ. Would it not look like an horrid Blasphemy, to hear the best Man in the World disputing and denying the Justice of God in the Troubles he lays him under? For my own part, let the Lord lay on as smartly as he will upon me, I desire to follow the holy Patterns and Presidents recorded in Scripture for my imitation, and to say with the People of God, *Ezr.* 9. 13. *Thou hast punished me less than mine iniquities deserve.* And *Mica* 7. 9. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against him.* And he that refuses so to do, gives little evidence of the Spirit of Adoption in him, but a very clear evidence of the Pride and Ignorance of his own Heart. *Job* indeed stilly stood upon his own Vindication; but that was when he had to do with Men, who falsely charged him, laying those Sins as the Causes of his Trouble, which he was innocent of, *Job* 22. 5, 6. But when he had to do with God, he disputes no more, but saith, *Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* *q. d.* I have done, Father, I have done; Whether these Chastisements be for my Sins or no, sure I am, my Sin not only deserves all this, but Hell it self: Thou art holy, but I am vile.

3. Nor can it at all be doubted, but that these Fatherly Corrections of the Saints for their Sins, are reconcilable to, and fully consistent with his Justice, satisfied by the Blood of Christ for all their Sins. For (1.) If it were not so, the just and righteous God would never have inserted such a clause of reservation in his gracious Covenant with his People, to chasten them as he saw need, after he had taken them into the Covenant, *Psal.* 89. 30, 31, 32, 33. *If they transgress, he will visit their Transgressions with a Rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless (saith he) my loving-kindness will I not take away.* That [*Nevertheless*] clearly proves the consistency of his Stripes for Sin, with his loving-kindness to his People, and with Christ's satisfaction for their Sins. (2.) If this were not consistent with the Justice of God, to be sure he would never single them out to spend his Rods upon, rather than others. 'Tis most certain the holiest Men have most lashes in this Life. *Asaph* said, *Psal.* 73. 12, 14. *The wickedly prosper in the World, but he was chastened every morning.* And *vers.* 5. *The Wicked are not in trouble as other men.* 1 Pet. 4. 17. *Judgment must begin*

*at the House of God; and if Piety would give men an exemption from all Troubles, Pains, and Chastisements, then men might discern Love or Hatred by the things that are before them, contrary to *Ecd.* 9. 1, 2. Neither could those that are in Christ suffer the painful Agonies of Death because of Sin, expressly contrary to *Paul*, *Rom.* 8. 10. And if Christ be in you, the Body is dead because of Sin. (3.) In a word, As Christ never shed his Blood to extinguish or abolish God's displeasure against Sin in whomsoever it be found, so he never shed it to deprive his People of the manifold Blessings and Advantages that accrue to them by the Rods of God upon them. It was never his intent to put us into a condition on Earth, that would have been so much to our loss. So then, if the Hand of God be upon his People for Sin, and consistently enough with his Justice, it must be an Error to say God smites not Believers for their Sins, and it would be injustice in him so to do: which is their 6th Error.*

Error VII. They tell us, That by God's laying our Iniquities upon Christ, he became as completely sinful as we, and we as completely righteous as Christ. That not only the guilt and punishment of Sin was laid upon Christ; but simply the very faults that men commit, the transgression it self became the transgression of Christ: Iniquity it self, not in any figure, but plainly sin it self, was laid on Christ: and that Christ himself was not more righteous, than this Person is, and this Person is not more sinful than Christ was.

Refutation. These two Propositions will never go down with sound and Orthodox Christians. The first sinks and debases Christ too low, the other exalts the sinful Creature too high. The one represents the pure and spotless Lord Jesus as sinful: the other represents the sinful Creature as pure and perfect: and both these Propositions seem evidently to be built upon these two Hypotheses. (1.) That the Righteousness of Christ is subjectively and inherently in us, in the same fulness and perfection it is in Christ: grant that, and then it will follow indeed, That Christ himself is not more righteous than the Believer is. (2.) That not only the guilt and punishment of Sin was laid on Christ by way of imputation; but Sin it self, the very transgression, or sinfulness it self, was transferred from the Elect to Christ: and that by God's laying it on him, the sinfulness or faults it self was essentially transfused into him; and so Sin it self did transfuse a subjecto in subiectum. Grant but this, and it can never be denied but Christ became as completely sinful as we.

But both these Hypotheses are not only notoriously false, but utterly impossible, as will be manifested by and by; But before I come to the Refutation of them, it will be necessary to lay down some Concessions to clear the Orthodox Doctrine in this Controversie, and narrow the matter under debate, as much as may be.

(1.) And first we thankfully acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ to be the Surety of the New Testament, *Heb.* 7. 22. and that as such, all the Guilt and Punishment of our Sins, was laid upon him, *Isa.* 53. 5, 6. That is, God

God imputed, and he bare it in our room and stead. God the Father, as Supreme Lawgiver, and Judge of all, upon the Transgression of the Law, admitted the Sponson or Suretyship of Christ, to answer for the sins of Men, *Heb.* 10. 5, 6, 7. And for this very end he was made under the Law, *Gal.* 4. 4, 5. And that Christ voluntarily took it upon him to answer as our Surety, whatsoever the Law could lay to our charge; whence it became just and righteous that he should suffer.

(2.) We say, That God by laying upon, or imputing the Guilt of our Sins to Christ, thereby our Sins became legally his; as the Debt is legally the Sureties Debt, tho' he never borrowed one Farthing of it: Thus God laid, and Christ took our Sins upon him, tho' in him was no sin, *2 Cor.* 5. 21. *He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin* (i.e.) who was clean and altogether void of sin.

(3.) We thankfully acknowledge, that Christ hath so fully satisfied the Law for the sins of all that are his, that the Debts of Believers are fully discharged, and the very last Mite paid by Christ. His Payment is full, and so therefore is our Discharge and Acquittance, *Rom.* 8. 1, 31. And that by virtue hereof the Guilt of Believers is so perfectly abolished, that it shall never more bring them under Condemnation, *John* 5. 24. And so in Christ they are without fault before God.

(4.) We likewise grant, That as the Guilt of our Sins was by God's Imputation laid upon Christ, so the Righteousness of Christ is by God imputed to Believers by virtue of their Union with Christ; and becomes thereby as truly and fully theirs, for the Justification of their particular Persons before God, as if they themselves had in their own Persons fulfilled all that the Law requires, or suffered all that it threatened: No inherent Righteousness in our own Persons, is, or can be more truly our own for this end and purpose, than Christ's imputed Righteousness is our own. He is the Lord our Righteousness, *Jer.* 23. 6. *We are made the righteousness of God in him*, *1 Cor.* 5. 21. *Yea, the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in them that believe*, *Rom.* 8. 4.

But notwithstanding all this, we cannot say, (1.) That Christ became as completely sinful as we. Or (2.) That we are as completely righteous as Christ; and that over and above the Guilt and Punishment of Sin, (which we grant was laid upon Christ) Sin it self simply considered, or the very Transgression it self, became the Sin or Transgression of Christ; and consequently that we are as completely Righteous as Christ, and Christ as completely Sinful as we are.

1. We dare not say, That Sin simply considered, as the very Transgression of the Law it self, as well as the Guilt and Punishment, became the very Sin and Transgression of Christ: For two things are distinctly to be considered and differenced, with respect to the Law, and unto Sin. As to the Law, we are to consider in it,

1. Its Preceptive part.
2. Its Sanction.

Vol. I.

(1.) The preceptive part of the Law, which gives Sin its formal Nature, *1 Job.* 3. 4. *For sin is the transgression of the law*. All Transgression arises from the Preceptive part of the Law of God: He that transgresseth the Precepts sinneth; and under this consideration sin can never be communicated from one to another: The Personal sin of one cannot be in this respect the Personal sin of another: There is no Physical Transfusion of the Transgression of the Precept from one subject into another: This is utterly impossible; even Adam's personal sins consider'd in his single private capacity, are not communicable to his Posterity.

(2.) Besides the Transgression of the Preceptive part of the Law, there is an obnoxiousness unto Punishment, arising from the Sanction of the Law, which we call the Guilt of Sin; and this (as Judicious Dr. Owen observes) is separable from Sin: And if it were not separable from the former, no sinner in the World could either be pardon'd or sav'd: Guilt may be made anothers by Imputation, and yet that other not rendered formally a sinner thereby: Upon this ground we say, the Guilt and Punishment of our Sin, was that only which was imputed unto Christ; but the very Transgression of the Law it self, or Sin formally and essentially consider'd, could never be communicated or transfused from us into him. I know but two ways in the World by which one Man's sins can be imagined to become anothers, viz. Either by Imputation, which is Legal, and what we affirm; or by Essential Transfusion from subject to subject (as our Adversaries fancy) which is utterly impossible; and we have as good ground to believe the absurd Doctrine of Transubstantiation, as this wild Notion of the Essential Transfusion of Sin. Guilt arising from the Sanction of the Law, may and did pass from us to Christ by Legal Imputation; but sin it self, the very Transgression it self, arising from the very Preceptive part of the Law, cannot so pass from us to Christ: For if we should once imagine, that the very acts and habits of Sin, with the odious deformity thereof, should pass from our Persons to Christ, and subjectively to inhere in him, as they do in us; then it would follow,

First, That our Salvation would thereby be rendered utterly impossible. For such an inhesion of Sin in the Person of Christ, is absolutely inconsistent with the Hypothetical Union, which Union is the very Foundation of his Satisfaction, and our Salvation. Tho' the Divine Nature can, and doth dwell in Union with the pure and Sinless human Nature of Christ, yet it cannot dwell in Union with Sin.

Secondly, This Supposition would render the Blood of the Cross altogether unable to satisfy for us. He could not have been the Lamb of God to take away the Sins of the World, if he had not been perfectly pure and spotless, *1 Pet.* 1. 19.

Thirdly, Had our Sins thus been essentially transfused into Christ, the Law had had a just and valid Exception against him; for it accepts of nothing but what is absolutely pure

R r r r r

and perfect. I admire, therefore, how any good Man dares to call our Doctrine, which teaches the Imputation of our Guilt and Punishment to Christ, a simple Doctrine; and assert, that the Transgression it self became Christ's; and that thereby Christ became as completely sinful as we. And,

Fourthly, If the way of making our Sins Christ's by Imputation, be thus rejected and derided; and Christ asserted by some other way to become as completely sinful as we; then I cannot see which way to avoid it, but that the very same Acts and Habits of Sin must inhere, both in Christ, and in Believers also. For, I suppose our Adversaries will not deny that, notwithstanding God's laying the Sins of Believers upon Christ, there remain in all Believers after their Justification, sinful Inclinations and Aversions; a Law of Sin in their Members, a Body of Sin and Death. Did these things pass from them to Christ, and yet do they still inhere in them? Why do they complain and groan of in-dwelling Sin? as *Rom. 7*. If Sin it self be so transferr'd from them to Christ? Sure, unless Men will dare to say, the same Acts and Habits of Sin which they feel in themselves, are as truly in Christ as in themselves; they have no ground to say, that by God's laying their Iniquities upon Christ, he became as completely sinful as they are; and if they should so affirm, that Affirmation would undermine the very Foundation of their own Salvation.

I therefore heartily subscribe to that sound and holy Sentence, of a clear and learned Divine, *Nothing is more absolutely true, nothing more sacredly and assuredly believ'd by us, than that nothing which Christ did or suffer'd, nothing that he undertook, or underwent, did, or could constitute him subjectively, inherently, and thereupon personally a Sinner, or guilty of any Sin of his own. To bear the Guilt or Blame of other Men's Faults, to be alienæ culpæ reus, makes no Man a Sinner, unless he did unwisely or irregularly undertake it. So, then this Proposition, that by God's laying our Sins upon Christ (in some other way, than by Imputation of Guilt and Punishment) he became as completely sinful as we, will not, ought not to be receiv'd as the sound Doctrine of the Gospel. Nor yet this*

Second Proposition. That we are as completely Righteous as Christ is; or, that Christ is not more Righteous than a Believer.

I cannot imagine what should induce any Man so to express himself, unless it be a groundless conceit and fancy, that there is an essential Transfusion of Christ's justifying Righteousness into Believers, whereby it becomes theirs by way of subjective inhesion, and is in them in the very same manner it is in him: And so every individual Believer becomes as completely Righteous as Christ. And this conceit they would fain establish upon that Text, *1 Joh. 3. 7. He that doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous.*

But neither this expression, nor any other like it in the Scriptures, gives the least countenance to such a general and unwary Position. It is far from the mind of this Scripture, That the righteousness of Christ is formally

and inherently ours, as it is his. Indeed it is ours *relatively*, not *formally* and *inherently*; not the same with his for *quantity*, though it be the same for *verity*. His Righteousness is not ours in its *universal value*, though it be ours, as to our *particular use and necessity*. Nor is it made ours to make us so many *causes* of Salvation to others; but it is imputed to us as to the *Subjects*, that are to be saved by it our selves.

'Tis true, we are justified, and saved by the very Righteousness of Christ, and no other; but that Righteousness is *formally inherent* in him only, and is only *materially* imputed to us. It was *actively* his, but *passively* ours. He wrought it, though we wear it. It was wrought in the Person of God-Man for the whole Church, and is imputed (not transfused) to every single Believer for his own concernment only. For,

(1.) It is most absurd to imagine, that the Righteousness of Christ should formally inhere in the Person of all, or any Believer, as it doth in the Person of the Mediator. The impossibility hereof appears plainly from the incapacity of the Subject. The Righteousness of Christ is an Infinite Righteousness, because it is the Righteousness of God-Man, and can therefore be subjected in no other Person beside him. It is capable of being imputed to a finite Creature, and therefore in the way of imputation we are said to be made the *righteousness of God in him*: but though it may be imputed to a finite Creature, it inheres only in the Person of the Son of God, as in its proper Subject. And indeed,

(2.) If it should be inherent in us, it could not be imputed to us as it is, *Rom. 4. 6, 23*. Nor need we go out of our selves for Justification, as now we must, *Phil. 3. 9*. but may justify our selves by our own inherent Righteousness. And

(3dly,) What should hinder, if this infinite Righteousness of Christ were infused into us, and should make us as completely Righteous as Christ; but that we might justify others also, as Christ doth: and so we might be the Saviours of the Elect, as Christ is? Which is most absurd to imagine. And

(4thly,) According to *Antinomian* Principles, What need was there that we should be justified at all? Or, What place is left for the justification of any Sinner in the World? For according to their Opinion, the justification of the Elect is an immanent act of God before the World was; and that Eternal Act of Justification, making the Elect as completely Righteous as Christ himself, there could not possibly be any the least guilt in the Elect to be pardoned; and consequently no place, or room could be left for any Justification in time. And then it must follow, that seeing Christ died in time for Sin, according to the Scriptures; it must be for his own Sins that he died, and not for the Sins of the Elect; Diametrically opposite to *Rom. 4. 25*, and the whole current of Scripture, and faith of Christians.

'Tis therefore very unbecoming and unworthy of a justified Person, after Christ hath taken all his Guilt upon himself, and suffer'd

all

all the Punishment due thereunto in his place and room : Instead of an humble and thankful admiration of his unparallel'd Grace therein, to throw more than the Guilt and Punishment of his Sins upon Christ, even the transgression it self : and comparing his own Righteousness with Christ's, to say he is as completely Righteous as Christ himself. This is as if a company of Bankrupt Debtors, Arrested for their own Debts, ready to be cast into Prison, and not having one Farthing to satisfy, after their Debts have been freely and fully discharg'd by another, out of his immense Treasure ; should now compare with him, yea, and think they honour'd him, by telling him, that now they are as completely rich as himself.

I am well assur'd no good Man would embrace an Opinion so derogatory to Christ's Honour as this is ; did he but see the odious consequences of it, doubtless he would abhor them as much as we. And as for those now in Heaven, who fell into such mistakes in the way thither, were they now acquainted with what is transacted here below, they would exceedingly rejoyce in the detection of those Mistakes, and bless God for the refutation of them.

Error VIII. *They affirm, That Believers need not fear their own sins, nor the sins of others ; for as much as neither their own, or others sins can do them any hurt, nor must they do any duty for their own good, or salvation, or for eternal rewards.*

That we need fear no hurt from sin, or may not aim at our own good in Duty, are two Propositions that sound harsh in the Ears of Believers : I shall consider them severally, and refute them as briefly as I can.

Proposition I. *Believers need not fear their own sins, or the sins of others ; because neither our own, or others sins can do us any hurt.*

They seem to be induced into this Error, by misunderstanding the Apostle, in *Rom. 8. 28.* as if the scope of that Text were to assert the benefits of Sin to justified Persons ; whereas he speaks there of Adversities and Afflictions befalling the Saints in this Life. *Universalis restringenda est ad materiam subjectam, loquitur enim de afflictionibus piorum.* The subject matter (saith Pareus on the place) restrains the Universal expression of the Apostle : For when he there saith, *All things shall work together for good ;* he principally intends the afflictions of the Godly, of which he treats there in that context. It may be extended also to all providential events ; *Omnia quacunque eis accedunt forissecum, tam aduersa, quam prospera :* All adverse and prosperous events of things without us, as *Effusus* upon the place notes. Nothing is spoken of sin in this Text. And the Apostle distributing this General into Particulars, *verse 28.* plainly shews, what are the things he intended by his Universal expression, *verse 28.* as also in what respect no Creature can do the Saints any hurt, namely, that they shall never be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And in this respect it is true that the Sins of the Elect shall not hurt them, by frustrating the purpose of God concerning their Eternal Salvation ; or totally and finally to separate them from his Love. This we grant,

and yet we think it a very unwary and unsound expression, *That Believers need not fear their own sins, because they can do them no hurt :* 'Tis too general and unguarded a Proposition to be received for truth. What if their Sins cannot do them that hurt, to frustrate the purpose of God, and damn them to Eternity in the World to come ? Can it therefore do them no hurt at all in their present state of conflict with it in this World ? For my part, I think the greatest fear of caution is due to Sin, the greatest evil ; and that *Crysome* spake more like a Christian, when he said, *Nisi nisi peccatum timeo,* I fear nothing but Sin. Though Sin cannot finally ruin the Believer, yet it can many ways hurt and injure the Believer ; and therefore ought not to be misrepresented as such an innocent and harmless thing to them. In vain are so many terrible threatnings in the Scriptures against it, if it can do us no hurt ; and it is certain nothing can do us good, but that which makes us better, and more Holy : But Sin can never pretend to that, of all things in the World. But to come to an issue, Sin may be consider'd three ways.

1. Formally. 2. Effectively. 3. Reductively.

First, Formally, as a transgression of the Preceptive part of the Law of God, and under that consideration it is the most formidable evil in the whole World. The evil of evils, at which every gracious Heart trembles, and ought rather to chafe Banishment, Prison, and Death it self in the most terrible form, than Sin, or that which is most tempting in Sin, the pleasures of it ; as *Moses* did, *Heb. 11. 25.*

Secondly, Sin may be consider'd *Effectively,* with respect to the manifold Mischiefes and Calamities it produceth in the World, and the Spiritual and Corporal Evils it infers upon Believers themselves : Though it cannot damn their Souls, yet it makes War against their Souls, and brings them into miserable Bondage and Captivity, *Rom. 7. 23.* It wounds their Souls, under which wounds they are feeble and sore broken ; yea, they roar by reason of the dullness of their hearts, *Pf. 38. 5, 8.* Is War, Captivity, festering painful Wounds, causing them to roar, no hurt to Believers ? It breaks their very Bones, *Pf. 51. 8.* And is that no hurt ? It draws off their Minds from God, interrupts their Prayers and Meditations, *Ro. 7. 18, 19, 20, 21.* And is there no hurt in that ? It causeth their Graces to decline, wither, and languish to that degree, that the things which are in them are ready to die, *Rev. 3. 1.* and *Rev. 2. 4.* And is the loss of Grace and Spiritual strength, no hurt to a Believer ? It hides the Face of God from them, *Isa. 59. 2.* And is there no hurt in Spiritual withdrawals of God from their Souls ? Why then do deserted Saints so bitterly lament and bemoan it ? It provokes innumerable Afflictions and Miseries, which fall upon our Bodies, Relations, Estates ; and if Sin be the cause of all these inward and outward Miseries to the People of God, sure then there is some hurt in Sin, for which the Saints ought to be afraid of it.

Thirdly, Sin may be consider'd *Reductively,* as it is over-ruled, reduced, and finally issued by the Covenant of Grace. Under this consideration of Sin, which rather respects the future, than present state, the *Antinomians* only respect the

the hurt or evil of it ; over-looking both the former considerations of Sin, which concern the present state of Believers, and so rashly pronounce, Sin can do Believers no hurt. An Affertion tending to a great deal of looseness and licentiousness. A Man drinks deadly Poison, and is after many Months recover'd by the skill of an excellent Physician ; shall we say, there was no hurt in it, because the Man died not of it : sure those fearful twinges he felt, his loss of strength and stomach, were hurtful to him, tho' he escap'd with Life, and got this advantage by it, to be more wary for ever after. *Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum.*

And then for other Mens Sins, (which they say we need not fear) 'tis an Affertion against all the Laws of Charity. For the Sins of wicked Men eternally damn them : Disturb the Peace and Order of the World : Draw down National Judgments upon the whole Community : Cause Wars, Plagues, Persecutions, &c. Which Considerations of the Sins of others, opened fountains of tears in David's Eyes, *Ps. 119. 136.* caus'd horror to take hold upon him, *v. 53.* And yet if you will believe the *Antinomian* Doctrine, Believers have no need to fear, much less be in horror (which is the extremity of fear) for other Mens Sins. How is Satan gratified, and temptations to Sin strengthened upon the Souls of Men, by such indistinct, unwary, and dangerous Expressions as these are ? A good Intention can be no sufficient salve for such Affertions as these.

Secondly, ' They tell us, That as the Saints need fear no Sin for any hurt it can do them, so they must do no duty for their own good ; or with an eye to their own Salvation, or Eternal Rewards in Heaven.

Refutation. This, as the former, is too generally and indistinctly deliver'd. He that distinguisheth well, teacheth well. The confounding of things which ought to be distinguish'd, easily runs Men into the bogs of Errors. Two things ought to have been distinguish'd here :

1. Ends
2. Self-ends } in Duties.

First, *Ends in Duty* ; There are two ends in Duties : one *supream* and *ultimate*, viz. the glorifying of God, which must, and ought to take the first place of all other ends. Another *secondary* and *subordinate*, viz. the good and benefit of our selves. To invert these, and place our own good in the room of God's Glory, is sinful and unjustifiable ; and he that aims only at himself in Religion, is justly censured as a mercenary Servant, especially if it be any external good he aims at ; but spiritual good, especially the enjoyment of God, is so involv'd in the other, viz. the glory of God, that no Man can rightly take the Lord for his God, but he must take him for his supream Good, and consequently therein may, and must have a due respect to his own happiness.

Secondly, *Self-ends* must also be distinguish'd into

1. Corrupt, or carnal Self-ends.
2. Pure and spiritual Self-ends.

As to carnal and corrupt Self-ends, inviting and moving Men to the performance of Religious Duties : when these are the only Ends Men aim at, they bewray the *Hypocrisy* of the Heart :

and accordingly God charges *Hypocrisy* upon such Persons, *Hos. 7. 14.* *They have not cried unto me with their heart, when they bow'd upon their Beds : they assemble themselves for Corn and Wine, &c.* God reckons not the most solemn Duties animated by such Ends, to be done unto him, *Zech. 7. 5.* *Did ye at all fast to me ?*

But beside these, Man hath a *best self*, a *spiritual self*, to regard in duty, viz. The conformity of his Soul to God in holiness, and the perfect fruition of God in glory. Such holy Self-ends as these, are often commended, but no-where condemned in Scripture. 'Twas the Encomium of *Moses*, That he had respect unto the recompence of reward, *Heb. 11. 26.* These ordinate respects to our spiritual best self, are so far from being our sin, that God both appoints and allows them for great uses and advantages to his People in their way to glory. They are (1.) Singular Encouragements to the Saints under Persecution, Streights and Distresses, *Heb. 10. 34.* And to that end *Christ* proposes them, *Luk. 12. 3.* And to the best of Saints have made use of them, *2 Cor. 4. 17, 18.* (2.) They are Motives and Incentives to Praise and Thankfulness, *1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.* *1 Col. 12. (3.)* They stir up the Saints to cheerful and vigorous industry for God, *Col. 3. 23, 24.* *1 Cor. 15. 58.*

Now to cut off from Religion all these spiritual and excellent Self-respects, and to make them our sins, and marks of our *Hypocrisy*, is an Error very injurious to the Gospel, and to the Souls of Men. For (1.) it crosses the strain of the Gospel, which commands us to strive for our Salvation, *Lu. 13. 24, 25.* *Phil. 2. 12.* *1 Tim. 4. 16.* (2.) It blames that in the Saints as sinful, which the Scripture notes as their excellency, and records to their praise, *Heb. 11. 26.* (3.) It makes the Laws of Christianity to thwart and cross the very fundamental Law of our Creation, which inclines and obliges all Men to intend their own Felicity. And on this account, not only our *Antinomians* are blame-worthy, but others also, who are far enough from their Opinion, who urge humiliation for sin beyond the Staple : teaching Men, they are not humbled enough till they be content to be damned. (4.) It unreasonably supposes a Christian may not do that for his own Soul, which he daily doth, and is bound to do for other Mens Souls, viz. to pray, preach, exhort, and reprove for their Salvation.

Error IX. ' They will not allow the New Covenant to be properly made with us, but with *Christ* free-grace, for us. And some of them affirm, That this Covenant is all of it a Promise, having no Condition upon our part. They acknowledge indeed Faith, Repentance and Obedience, to be Conditions, but say they are not Conditions on our part, but on *Christ's* ; and consequently affirm, That be repented, believed, and obeyed for us.

Refutation. (1.) The confounding of distinct Covenants, leads them into this Error ; we acknowledge there was a Covenant properly made with *Christ* alone, which we call the *Covenant of Redemption*. This Covenant indeed, though it were made for us, yet was it not made with us. It had its Condition, and that Condition was laid only upon *Christ* : viz. That he should assume our Nature, and pour out his Soul unto death, which Condition he was solely concern'd to perform ; but besides this, there is a *Covenant of Grace* made with him,

Vide Saltmarsh of Free-grace, pag. 126, 127.

him, and with all Believers in him : with him primarily as the Head, with them as the Members, who personally come into this Covenant, when they come into union with him by Faith. This Covenant of Grace is not made with Christ alone, personally considered, but with Christ, and all that are his, mystically considered, and is properly made with all Believers in Christ ; and therefore it is called their Covenant, *Zech. 9. 11. As for thee also, by the blood of thy Covenant I have sent forth thy Prisoners out of the Pit wherein is no water.* So when God entered into the Covenant of Grace with Abraham, *Gen. 17. 7. I will establish my Covenant (saith he) between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee.* So when he took the People of Israel into this Covenant, *Ezek. 16. 8. I swear unto thee (saith he) and entered into a Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine.*

This Covenant of Grace made with Believers in Christ, is not the same, nor must it be confounded with the Covenant of Redemption made with Christ before the World began. They are two distinct Covenants ; for in the Covenant of Grace, into which Believers are taken, there is a Mediator, and this Mediator is Christ himself ; but in the other Covenant of Redemption there neither was, nor could be any Mediator, which manifestly distinguishes them. Besides, In the Covenant of Grace Christ bequeaths manifold and rich Legacies, as he is the Testator ; but no man gives a Legacy to himself. This Covenant is really and properly made with every Believer as he is a Member of Jesus Christ the Head ; and they are truly and properly federates with God : the Covenant binds them to their Duties, and encourages them therein by promises of Strength to be deriv'd from Christ to enable them thereunto.

(2.) We thankfully acknowledge, That the glory of the New Covenant is chiefly discovered in the Promises thereof : upon the best Promises it is established. And all the Promises are reducible to the Covenant. They meet, and center in it as the Rivers in the Sea, or Beams in the Sun. But yet we cannot say, that nothing but Promises is contain'd in this Covenant : for there are Duties required by it, as well as Mercies promised in it.

Nor may we say, That those Duties required by it, are required only to be performed by Christ, and not by us ; but they are required to be performed by us in his Strength. Nor is it Christ that repents and believes for us, but we our selves are to believe and repent in the Strength of his Grace. And till we do so actually in our own Persons, we have no part or portion in the Blessings and Mercies of this Covenant. If Christ by believing for us, give us an actual Right and Title to the Promises and Blessings of the New Covenant, then it will unavoidably follow,

(1.) That men, who never repented for one Sin in all their Lives, may be, nay, certainly are pardoned as much as the greatest Penitents in the World ; because though they never repented themselves, yet Christ repented for them : expressly contrary to his own

Vol. I.

words, *Luke 13. 3. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* And contrary to his own established Order, *Luke 29. 47. Acts 3. 19.*

(2.) It will also follow, That Unbelievers, who never had union with Christ by one vital Act of Faith in all their Lives, may be, nay certainly shall be saved, as well as those that are actual Believers : because though they be Unbelievers in themselves, yet Christ believed for them : expressly contrary to *Mark 16. 16. He that believeth not, shall be damned.* *John 3. 36. He that believeth not the Son, shall not see Life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* And *Luke 12. 46. He will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with Unbelievers.*

(3.) It will also follow from hence, That men may continue in a state of disobedience all their Days, and yet may be sav'd as well as the most obedient Souls in the World : expressly contrary to *Eph. 5. 6. Let no man deceive you with vain words ; for because of these things, cometh the wrath of God upon the Children of Disobedience.* And *Rom. 2. 8. But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, Indignation, and Wrath.* And *1 Pet. 4. 17. Whom shall the end of them be that obey not the Gospel of God ?*

This Language sounds strange and harsh to the Ears of Christians ; a repenting Christ saving the impenitent Sinner : A believing Christ saving Unbelievers : An obeying Christ saving obstinate and disobedient Wretches. Whither doth such Doctrine tend, but to encourage and fix men in their Impenitence, Unbelief, and Disobedience ? But the Lord grant no poor Sinner in the World may trust to this, or build his hopes of Eternal Life upon such a loose sandy Foundation as this is. Reader, All that Christ hath done without thee, will not, cannot be effectual to thy Salvation, unless Repentance, Faith and Obedience be wrought by the Spirit in thy Soul. 'Tis Christ in thee that is the hope of Glory, *Col. 1. 27. Beware therefore in what Ground thou buildest for Eternity.*

Error X. 'They deny Sanctification to be the evidence of Justification ; and deridingly tell us, 'This is to light a Candle to the Sun ; and the darkness of our Sanctification is, the brighter our Justification is.

Refutation. I am not at all surprized at this strange and abominous Language. 'Tis a false and dangerous Conclusion, yet such as naturally results from, and by a kind of necessity follows out of their other Errors. For if the Elect be all justified from Eternity, and that neither Repentance, Faith or Obedience be required of us in the Covenant of Grace ; but were all required of, and performed by Christ, who repented, believed, and obeyed for us ; then indeed I cannot understand what relation our Sanctification hath to our Justification ; or how it should be an Evidence, Mark or Sign thereof : or what regard is due from Christians to any Grace or Work of the Spirit wrought in them, to clear up their Interest in Christ to them. For we being in Christ, and in a state of Justification, before we were naturally born, we must necessarily be so before we be regenerated, or new-born ; and consequently, no

SSSSS

work

work of Grace wrought in us, or holy Duties performed by us, can be evidential of that which from Eternity was done before them, and without them.

(1.) I grant indeed, That many vain Professors do cheat and deceive themselves by false unscriptural Signs and Evidences, as well as by true ones misapplied.

(2.) I grant also, That by reason of the deceitfulness of the Heart, instability of the Thoughts, familiar works of common Grace in Hypocrites, distractions of the World, wiles of Satan, weakness of Grace, and prevalence of Corruptions : The clearing up of our Justification by our Sanctification, is a Work that meets with great and manifold Difficulties, which are the things that most Christians complain of.

(3.) I also grant, That the evidence of our Sanctification in this, or any other Method, is not Essential, and absolutely necessary to the being of a Christian. A man may live in Christ, and yet not know his interest in him, or relation to him, *1 Jn. 50. 10.* Some Christians, like Children in the Cradle, live, but understand not that they live : are born to a great Inheritance, but have no knowledge of it, or present comfort in it.

(4.) I will further grant, That the Eye of a Christian may be too intently fixed upon his own gracious Qualification ; and being wholly taken up in the reflex Acts of Faith, may too much neglect the direct Acts of Faith upon Christ, to the great detriment of his Soul.

But all this notwithstanding, The examination of our Justification by our Sanctification, is not only a lawful, and possible, but a very excellent and necessary Work and Duty. 'Tis the course that Christians have taken in all Ages. And that which God hath abundantly blessed to the joy and encouragement of their Souls.

He hath furnished our Souls to this end with noble self-reflecting Powers and Abilities. He hath answerably furnished his Word with variety of Marks and Signs for the same end and use. Some of these Marks are *exclusive* to detect and bar bold presumptuous Pretenders, *1 Cor. 6. 9. Rev. 21. 8, 27.* Some are *inclusive Marks*, to measure the strength and growth of Grace

by, *Rom. 4. 20.* And others are *positive Signs*, flowing out of the very essence of Grace, or the New-Creature, *1 Jn. 4. 13.* *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.*

He hath expressly commanded us to examine and prove our selves : upbraided the neglectors of that Duty, and enforced their Duty upon them by a thundering Argument, *2 Cor. 13. 5.* *Examine your selves whether ye be in the Faith, prove your own selves ; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be Reprobates.* In a word, For this end and purpose, amongst others, were the Scriptures written, *1 Jn. 5. 13.* *These things have I written to you, that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.* And therefore to neglect this Duty, is exceeding dangerous ; but to deny, and deride it, intolerable. It may justly be feared, such men will be drown'd in perdition, who fall into the Waters, by making a bridge over them with their own shadows.

For my own part, I verily believe that the sweetest hours Christians enjoy in this World, is, when they retire into their Closets, and sit there concealed from all eyes, but him that made them ; looking now into the Bible, then into their own Hearts, and then up to God : closely following the grand Debate about their Interest in Christ, till they have brought it to the happy desired issue.

And now, Reader, for a close of all, I call the Searcher of Hearts to witness, That I have not intermeddled with these Controversies of *Antipædobaptism*, and *Aminomianism*, out of any delight I take in Polemical Studies, or an unpeaceable contradicting Humour, but out of pure zeal for the Glory and Truths of God, for the vindication and defence whereof, I have been necessarily engaged therein. And having discharged my duty thus far, I now resolve to return (if God will permit me) to my much sweeter and more agreeable Studies ; Still maintaining my Christian Charity for those whom I oppose ; not doubting but I shall meet those in Heaven, from whom I am forced in lesser things to dissent and differ upon Earth.

Gospel-Unity recommended to the Churches of Christ.

IN A

SERMON

Preached by J. F. Author of the foregoing Discourse.

From 1 COR. I. 10.

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, That ye all speak the same thing; and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.

WHEN I consider this Healing and U-ni-ting Text, and the scandalous Divisions of the Congregations to which I recommend it, I could chuse rather to comment thereon with Tears, than Words. 'Tis just matter of lamentation, to think what feeble influences such Divine and Pathetical Exhortations have upon the Minds and Hearts of professed Christians. But it is not Lamentations, but proper Counsels, and Convidions obey'd must do the Work.

The Primitive and Purest Churches of Christ consisted of imperfect Members, who notwithstanding they were knit together by the same internal Bond of the Spirit, and the same external Bonds of common Profession, and common Danger, and enjoyed extraordinary Helps for uniting, in the Presence and Doctrine of the Apostles among them; yet quickly discover'd a Schismatical Spirit, dividing both in Judgment and Affection, to the great Injury of Religion, and Grief of the Apostles Spirits. To check and heal this growing-Evil in the Church at Corinth, the Apostle addresses his Pathetical Exhortation to them, and to all future Churches of Christ, whom it equally concerns in the Words of my Text. *Now I beseech you, Brethren, &c.* Where note,

1. The Duty exhorted to.

2. The Arguments enforcing the Duty.

1. The Duty exhorted to; namely, Unity; the Beauty, Strength, and Glory, as well as the Duty of a Church. This Unity he describes two ways; 1. As it is exclusive of its Opposite, Schism or Division. All Rents, and rash Separations, are contrary to it, and destructive of it: *I beseech you, brethren, that there be no Divisions [or Schisms] among you.* 2. As it is inclusive of all that belongs to it; namely, the Harmony and Agreement of their Judgments, Hearts, and Language. (1.) That ye all speak the same thing. (2.) That ye be perfectly joined together in one Mind. And (3.) In the same Judgment. This threefold Union in Judgment, Affection, and Language, includes all that belongs to Christian Concord, makes the Saints *Συν-ύψατοι*, Men of one Heart and Soul, the loveliest Sight this World affords, *Act. 2. 46, 47.*

(2.) The Arguments enforcing this Duty upon them, comes next under consideration. And

these are three. (1.) *I beseech you.* (2.) *I beseech you, Brethren.* (3.) *I beseech you, Brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* These Arguments are not of equal force and efficacy: The first is great: The second greater: The last the most efficacious and irresistible of all the rest: But all together should come with such Power, and irresistible Efficacy upon the Judgments, Consciences, and Hearts of Christians, as should perfectly knit them together, and defeat all the Designs of Satan and his Agents without them, or of their own Corruptions within them, to rend asunder their Affections or Communion.

And first, he enforces the Duty of Unity by *Arg. 1.* a solemn Apostolical Obsecration and Adjuration; *I beseech you*, saith he; he had Power to command them to this Duty, and threaten them for the neglect of it: He had in readiness to revenge all Disobedience, and might have shaken that Rod over them; but he chuseth rather to entreat and beseech them: Now *I beseech you, Brethren:* Here you have, as it were, the great Apostle upon his Knees before them, meekly and Pathetically entreating them to be at perfect Unity among themselves. 'Tis the Entreaty of their Spiritual Father, that had begotten them to Christ. Now *[I] beseech you, Brethren:* I, who was the Instrument in Christ's Hand of your Conversion to him: I, that have planted you a Gospel Church, and assiduously watered you: I beseech you by all the Spiritual Ties and Endearments betwixt me and you, that there be no Divisions among you. This is the first Argument, wrapt up in a solemn Obsecration.

Next, he enforces the Duty of Unity, by the nearness of their Relation; *I beseech you, Brethren:* Brotherhood is an endearing thing, and naturally draws Affection and Unity with it, *1 Pet. 3. 8. Be ye all of one mind; having compassion one of another; love as brethren; be pitiful, be courteous; ye are the children of one Father, joint-heirs of one and the same Inheritance.* To see an Egyptian smiting an Israelite, is no strange sight; but to see one Israelite quarrelling another, is most unnatural and uncomely: The nearer the Relation, the stronger the Affection: *How good and how pleasant is it, (saith the Psalmist) for Brethren to dwell together in Unity!* *Psal. 133. 1.*

But

But the greatest Argument of all is the last, viz. *In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ*. In this Name he beseeches and entreats them to be at perfect Unity among themselves. In the former he sweetly insinuated the Duty by a loving compellation, but here he sets it home by a solemn Adjuration; I beseech you, Brethren, *by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*: That is to say, (1.) For Christ's Sake, or for the Love of Christ; by all that Christ hath done, suffered, or purchased for you; and as Christ is dear and precious to you, let there be no Divisions. If you have any Love for Christ, don't grieve him, and obstruct his great Design in the World, by your scandalous Schisms. Mr. *John Fox* never denied a Beggar that asked an Alms of him, for Christ Jesus Sake.

2. *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*; that is in the Authority of Christ; for so his Name also signifies, 1 Cor. 5. 4. and it is as if he had said, If you reverence the Supreme Authority and Sovereignty of Christ, which is the Fountain out of which so many solemn Commands of Unity do flow; then see, as you will answer it to him at the Great Day, that ye be perfectly joined together in one Mind, and in one Judgment. The Point will be this:

Doct. *Unity amongst Believers, especially in particular Church-Relation, is as desirable a Mercy, as it is a necessary and indispensable Duty.*

How desirable a Mercy it is, and how necessary a Duty, let the same Apostle, who presseth it upon the *Corinthians* in my Text, be heard again, enforcing the same Duty with the same warmth, upon the Church at *Philippi*, chap. 2. v. 1, 2. *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels of mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.* In handling this Point, I will shew,

1. What Unity among Believers is.

2. How the necessity and desirableness of it may be evinced.

3. And then lay down the Motives and Directions about it.

(1.) What Unity amongst Believers is, and more particularly such Believers as stand in particular Church-Relation to each other.

There is a twofold Union, one *Mystical*, betwixt Christ and Believers; another *Moral*, betwixt Believers themselves: Faith knits them all to Christ, and then Love knits them one to another. Their common relation to Christ their Head, endears them to each other as Fellow-Members in the same Body. Hence they become *Sanguine Christi conglutinati*; Glued together by the Blood of Christ. Union with Christ is fundamental to all Union among the Saints. Perfect Union would flow from this their common Union with Christ their Head, were they not here in an imperfect state, where their Corruptions disturb and hinder it; and as soon as they shall attain unto compleat Sanctification, they shall also attain unto perfect Unity. How their Unity with one another comes by way of necessary Resultancy from their Union with Christ; and how this Unity among themselves shall at last arise to its just Perfection, that one Text plainly discovers,

John 17. 23. I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one, &c.

Unity amongst those that hold not the Head, is rather a Conspiracy than a Gospel-unity. Believers and Unbelievers may have a Political or Civil Union; but there's no Spiritual-unity, but what flows from joint-membership in Christ. I will not deny, but in particular Churches there may be, and still are some Hypocrites, who hold Communion with the Saints, and pretend to belong unto Christ, the same Head with them; but as they have no real Union with Christ, so neither have they any sincere Affection to the Saints; and these, for the most part, are they that raise Tumults and Divisions in the Church, as disloyal Subjects do in the Commonwealth. Of these the *Apostle* speaks, 1 *Job. 2. 19. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would not doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that it might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*

Sincere Christianity holds fast the Soul by a firm bond of Life to the truly Christian Community, wherein they reap those spiritual pleasures and advantages which assure their continuance therein to a great degree: But those that joyn with the Church upon carnal and external inducements, make little conscience of rending from it; and God permits their Schismatical Spirits thusto act, for the discovering of their Hypocrisy, or (as the Text speaks) that it might be made manifest they were not of us; as also that they which are approved, may by their constancy be also made manifest, 1 Cor. 11. 19.

It hath indeed been said, That it's never better with the Church, than when there are most Hypocrites in it; but then you must understand it only with respect to the external tranquility and prosperity of the Church; for as to its real, spiritual advantage, they add nothing: And therefore it behoves Church-Officers and Members to be exceeding careful (especially in times of Liberty and Prosperity) how they admit Members, as the *Jews* in *Solomon's* time were of admitting Proselytes. 'Tis said, *Amos 3. 3. How can two walk together except they be agreed?* I deny not but Persons that differ in some lesser Points, as to their Judgment, may, and ought to be one in Affection: But of this I am sure, that when Sanctified Persons, agreed in Judgments and Principles, do walk together under pious and judicious Church-officers, in tender Affection, and the exercise of all Duties tending to mutual Edification, glorifying God with one Mouth, *Rom. 15. 6.* and cleaving together with oneness of Heart, *Act 2. 42.* This is such a Church-unity as answers Christ's end in the Institution of particular Churches, and greatly tends to their own comfort, and the propagation of Christianity in the World. Tongue-unity flows from Heart-unity; Heart-unity, in a great measure from Head-unity; and all three from Union with the Lord Jesus Christ. The Divisions of our Tongues come mostly from the Divisions of our Hearts: Were Hearts agreed, Tongues would quickly be agreed; and then what blessed times might be expected? And so much briefly for the nature of Unity. Next.

(2.) Let

(2.) Let us evince both the necessity and desirableness of this Unity among Believers; and this will appear in a threefold respect: *viz.*

1. With respect to the Glory of God.

2. The Comfort and Benefit of our own Souls.

3. The Conversion and Salvation of the World.

(1.) With respect to the Glory of God. The manifestive Glory of God (which is all the Glory we are capable of giving him, is the very end of our Being, and should be dearer to us than our Lives) is exceedingly advanced by the Unity of his People. Hence is the Apostle's Prayer, *Rom. 15. 5, 6. Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God.*

'Tis highly remarkable, That the Apostle in this Petition for the Unity of the Saints, doth not only describe that Unity he prays for, one Mouth and one Mind, and shews how much God would be glorified by such an Union; but he also addresses himself to God for it, under these two remarkable Titles, the *God of patience and consolation*; thereby intimating two things; (1.) How great need and exercise there is of Patience in maintaining Unity among the Saints: They must bear one another's Burthens; they must give allowance for mutual Infirmities: for the Church here is not an Assembly of Spirits of just Men made perfect. The Unity of the Saints therefore greatly depends upon the exercise of *Patience* one towards another; and this he begs the *God of Patience* to give them. And to endear this Grace of Patience to them, He (2.) joyns with it another Title of God, *viz. the God of Consolation*, wherein he points them to that abundant comfort which would result unto themselves from such a blessed Unity continued and maintained by the mutual Exercises of Patience and Forbearance one towards another. And to set home all, he lays before them the Pattern and Example of Christ: *The God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded according to Christ.* How many thousand Infirmities and Failures in Duty, doth Christ find in all his people? Notwithstanding which, he maintaineth Union and Communion with them; and if they, after his Example, shall do so likewise with one another, God will be eminently glorified therein. This will evidence both the Truth and Excellency of the Christian Religion, which so firmly knits the Hearts of its Professors together.

(2.) Secondly, The necessity and desirableness of this Unity farther appears, by the deep Interest that the comfort and benefit of our Souls have in it. A great Example hereof we have in *Acts 2. 46, 47.* Oh! what Cheeriness, Strength, and Pleasure, did the Primitive Christians reap from the Unity of their Hearts in the Ways and Worship of God? Next unto the Pleasure and Delight of immediate Communion with God himself, and the shedding abroad of his Love into our Hearts by the Holy Ghost; none like that which ariseth from the harmonious Exercises of the Graces of the Saints in their mutual Duties and Communion one with another. How are their Spirits dilated and refreshed by it? What a lively Emblem is here

Vol. I.

of Heaven! the Courts of Princes afford no such Delights. Whereas on the other side, when Schisms have rent Churches a-funder, they go away from each other exasperated, grieved and wounded, crying out, Oh, that I had a Cottage in the Wilderness! or, Oh! that I had the Wings of a Dove, that I might flee away, and be at rest.

3. Lastly, The necessity and desirableness of this Union further appears with respect unto the World, who are allured to Christ by it, and scared off from Religion by the feuds and divisions of Professors. To this the Prayer of Christ hath respect, *John 17. 23. That they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me. &c.* This, O Father, will be a convincing evidence to the World, of the Divinity both of my Person and Doctrine, and a great ordinance for their conversion to me, when they shall see my People cleaving inseparably unto me by Faith, and to one another by Love. And on the other side, it will be a fatal stumbling-block in the way of their Conversion, to observe my followers biting and devouring, rending and tearing one another.

A Learned and Judicious Divine Commenting upon those words, *Cant. 2. 7. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the Roes, and by the Hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love till he please*; gives the sense thus; By Roes and Hinds of the Field (saith he) understand weak comers on towards Christ, Persons under some preparatory works towards Conversion, who are as shy and as timorous as Roes and Hinds of the Field; and as they will be scared by the yelp of a Dog, or sound of a Gun; so will these at any offensive miscarriages in the Churches of Christ.

Alexander Severus, finding two Christians contending with one another, commanded them that they should not presume to take the name of Christ upon them any longer; for (saith he) you greatly dishonour your Master, whose Disciples you profess your selves to be. And thus briefly of the nature of Church-unity, and the necessity and desirableness thereof among all that stand in that Relation.

Use. The only improvement I shall make of this Point, shall be for,

1. Exhortation to Unity.

2. Directions for the maintaining of it.

The first Use for Exhortation.

And first, having briefly discoursed the nature, necessity, and desirableness of Unity among all Christians, and especially of those in particular Church-relation, I do in the Bowels of Christ, and in the words of his Apostle, *Phil. 2. 1, 2.* earnestly and humbly intreat all my Brethren, *That if there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels of mercies, fulfil ye my joy; that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.* He speaketh not as one doubting; but as one disputing, when he saith, *If there be any consolation in Christ*: And 'tis as if he had said, I passionately and earnestly intreat you by all that comfort and joy you have found in your mutual Communion from Christ, and his Ordinances, wherein you have comfortly walked together, by all that comfort resulting from

T t t t t

the

Mr. John Cotton.

the mutual exercises, and fruits of Christian Love; by the unspeakable joys and delights the Spirit of God hath shed down upon you, whilst you walked in Unity, in the ways of your Duty; by all the bowels of compassion and mercy you have for your selves, for your Brethren, or for the poor carnal World, who are in hazard of being destroyed by your divisions: Or for me, your Minister, whose joy and comfort is bound up in your unity and stability; *That ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.* What Heart that hath one spark of the Love of Christ in it, yields not to such an Exhortation as this, enforced by the consolation of Christ, comfort of Love, fellowship of the Spirit, and Bowels of Mercy? More particularly, suffer ye this word of Exhortation from the consideration of the following Arguments or Motives, what distances soever you are at from one another.

Motive I. Reflect upon the late long and continued troubles you have been under, as the just rebukes of God for your former Contentions and Follies.

I need not tell you, you are but lately pluck'd as brands out of the burning, and that the smell of Fire is yet upon you. The time lately was, when you gat your Bread with the peril of your lives; when God handed it to you behind your Enemies backs; when your Eyes did not, could not behold your former Teachers, except in Corners or Prisons, when your Souls were sorrowful for the solemn Assemblies; when you mournfully confessed before the Lord, that these were the just and deserved Punishments for your wantonness, barrenness, and provoking Animolities. These things were not only the matter of your humble Confessions; but the reformation of those evils was what you solemnly promised the Lord, when he should again restore you to your liberty. What! And is the Rod no sooner off your backs, but you will to the old work again? read *Ezra* 9. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. and view the face of this Sin in that Glass. Have we been so many Years in the Furnace, and our dross not purged? Such sharp and long-continued Afflictions produce no better effects? It may be said of our Troubles, as of the Siege of *Tyrus*, *Ezek.* 29. 18. *Every head was made bald, and every shoulder peeled.* Some of us went young Men into Persecution and Trouble, and are come forth old; and which is worst of all, we bring our old corruptions forth with us. Either we did confess and bewail these Sins in the days of our Affliction, or we did not. If we did not, we were incorrigible, and defeated the design of the Rod. If we did, our Confessions and Sorrow were either sincere or hypocritical: If sincere, certainly they would effectually caution us, that we return not again to folly, *Ezra* 9. 13, 14. *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou, our God, hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve; and hast given us such a deliverance as this; Should we again break thy Commandment?*

Motive II. Consider the common imminent danger that now threatens us, both from Enemies upon our Borders, and within our

own Bowels. The *Canaanites* are in the Land, let there be no strife therefore betwixt Brethren; our natural, civil, and spiritual Comforts are all shaking and trembling about us: If wanton Children fall out and quarrel at a full Table, our Enemies stand ready to take away the Cloth. They are not so far from us, and out of sight, but God can call them in a few Hours to end the strife amongst us. We act not only beneath the Rules of Religion, but of Reason also. Brute Creatures will depose their very Antipathies in a common danger. Mr. *Tho. Fuller* in his *History of the Worships of England*, tells us, That when the *Severn-Sea* overflowed the lower Grounds of *Somersetshire*, it was observed that Dogs and Hares, and Cats and Rats, swimming to the Burroughs and Hills to preserve their Lives, stood quiet during the Flood; not offering the least injury one to another. 'Tis pity that Sense should do more with Beasts, than Reason and Religion with Men.

Motive III. Reflect upon the scandal your Divisions give to the World; how it hardens and prejudices them against Religion and Reformation. And thus the Souls of Men are eternally hazarded by the follies of Professors: They are ready enough to take occasions against Religion, where none are given, and much more to improve them where occasions are given. *Wo unto the world* (saith Christ) *because of offences: for it must needs be that offences come; but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh,* *Matt.* 18. 7. The wo is not only denounced against the taker, but the giver of the offence. It fixes such prejudices in the Hearts of carnal Men, that some of them will never have good thoughts of Religion any more; but utterly distast and nauseate those Assemblies and Ordinances from which their Conversion may with greatest probability be expected.

How long and how anxiously have we prayed, and waited for such a Day of Gospel-liberty as we now enjoy? It hath been one of the sorest Afflictions we have grappled with in the Days of our restraint, that we could not speak unto the carnal World. If we had opportunity to speak at all, it was for the most part to such as stood in need of Edification more than of Conversion. God hath now, beyond thoughts of most Hearts, opened to us a door of liberty to Preach, and for all that will, to hear. Some fruits we have already seen, and more we expect. The Children are as it were coming to the birth, and will you obstruct it? Will you give the Gospel a miscarriage-womb? Be instruments at once, by your Contentions, to destroy the Souls of Men, and break the very Hearts of your Ministers, whose greatest comfort is bound up in the success of their Labours? Brethren, I beseech you read these words as if they were delivered to you upon my bended Knees; I beseech you for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the hopes sake of saving the precious immortal Souls of Men; and for your poor Ministers sake, who have scarce any thing besides the fruits of their Labours, to recompence their long-continued and grievous Sufferings, depose your Animolities, maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond

bond of Peace; help us, but don't hinder us in our hard Labours. What good will our Lives do us, if we must labour in vain, and spend our strength for nought? We find it difficult enough to persuade Sinners to come unto Christ, when no such Stumbling-blocks are laid in the way; the counter-pleas of Satan, the unbelief and sensualities of un sanctified Nature, are difficulties too great for us to grapple with; but if to these must be added prejudices against Religion, from your dividing Lufts, and scandalous Breaches, what hope then remains? If you have no pity for your selves, pity perishing Souls, and pity your poor discouraged Ministers; have a care you make us not to groan to God against you; or if that be a small thing in your Eyes, have a care lest the Blood of Souls be charged to your account in the great day. Are there none in the Towns or Neighbourhoods where your live? Are you sure there are none that have hopeful Inclinations towards Religion? desires and purposes to attend on the same means of Grace you sit under, who will charge the occasion of their Damnation upon you at the Bar of Christ, and say, Lord, we had some weak convictions upon our Consciences, that we needed a rousing and searching Ministry; we were convinced that the profane and carnal World, among whom we had our Conversation, were not in the right path that leadeth to Salvation. We felt in our selves Inclinations to cast off our old Companions, and associate with those that professed more strictness and holiness, and place our selves under the most fruitful and advantageous Ministry, and accordingly improved opportunities to get acquaintance with them; but when we came nearer to them, we found such Wrath and Envy, such Wranglings and Divisions, such undermining and supplanting each others Reputation; such Whisperings and Tale-bearings, such malicious Aggravations and Improvements of common Failings and Infirmities, such Covetousness and Worldliness, such Pride and Vanity, as gave us such a disgust and offence at the ways of Reformation, that we could never more be reconciled to them. Beware, I say, how you incur the guilt of such a dreadful Charge as this, by giving liberty to such Lufts and Passions under a profession of Religion, and pretence to Reformation.

Motive IV. Consider the contrariety of such Practices to that solemn and fervent Prayer of Jesus Christ, recorded in *John 17*. 'Tis highly remarkable, how in that Prayer, which he poured out a little before his Death with such a mighty *Pain*, and fervency of Spirit, he insists upon nothing more than Unity among his People. He returns upon his Father again and again, for the obtaining of this one thing: Four times doth he beg for Unity among them, and every time he seems to rise higher and higher, beseeching his Father, (1.) That they may be one. (2.) That they may be one in us. (3.) That they may be one as thou and I are one. And Lastly, That they may be made perfect in one: By all this shewing how intent his Spirit was upon this one thing.

Brethren, If you would study how to frustrate the design, and grieve the Heart of your Lord Jesus Christ (to whom you profess love and obedience) you cannot take a readier way to do it, than by breaking the bonds of Unity among your selves. I beseech you therefore in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath so earnestly prayed for the unity of his People, *That ye be perfectly joined together in one Heart, and in one Mind*, as the Text speaks.

Motive V. Consider how directly your Divisions cross and frustrate the Design and End of Church-fellowship which is instituted for the improvement of each others Graces, and helping on the mortification of each others Corruptions.

God hath distributed variety of Gifts and Graces in different degrees amongst his People; the improvement of these Gifts and Graces to the glory of God, and our mutual edification, is the very scope and end of particular Church-fellowship and Communion: every Man hath his proper Gift of God, and (as a late Worthy notes) the Gifts and Graces of all, are this way made useful and beneficial. *Job* was exemplary for Plainness and Patience; *Moses* for Faithfulness and Meekness; *Josiah* for Tenderness and a melting Spirit: *Abraham* was Prudent and Active; *Basil* Heavenly and of a sweet Spirit; *Chrysostom* Laborious, and without Affectation; *Ambrose* Resolved and Grave. One hath quickness of Parts; but not so solid a Judgment: Another is Solid, but not Ready and Presential. One hath a good Wit, another a better Memory, a third excels them both in Utterance. One is Zealous, but Ungrounded: another Well-principled, but Timorous. One is Wary and Prudent; another Open and Plain hearted. One is Trembling and Melting; another Cheerful, and full of Comfort. Now the end and use of Church-fellowship is to make a rich improvement unto all by a regular use and exercise of the Gifts and Graces found in every one. One must impart his Light, and another his Warmth. The Eye (*viz.* the knowing Man) cannot say to the Hand (*viz.* the active Man) I have no need of thee. Unspeakable are the Benefits resulting from spiritual and orderly Communion; but whatever the Benefits be, they are all cut off by Schisms and Dissentions; for as Faith is the Grace by which we receive all from God; so Love is the Grace by which we share and divide the Comfort of all among our selves. The excellent things of the Spirit are lodg'd in earthen Vessels, which Death will shortly break, and then we can have no more benefit by them; but these Jars and Divisions render Saints, as it were, dead one to another, whilst they are alive. Ah how lovely, how sweet and desirable it is to live in the communion of such Saints as are described! *Mat. 3. 16.* To hear them freely, and humbly to open their Hearts and Experiences to one another! After this manner, some say, the Art of Medicine was found out: As any one met with an Herb, and discovered the virtue of it by any Accident, he was to post it up, and so the Physician's Skill was perfected by a collection of those posted Experiments. But wo to us! we are ready to post up each others Failings and Infirmities to the shame and reproach

proach of Religion, and to furnish our common Enemies with matter of contempt and scorn against us all.

Motive VI. In a word, These Schisms and Diffentions in the Churches of Christ are ominous Prefages, and foreboding Signs of some sweeping Judgment, and common Calamity near approaching us. 'Tis a common observation with Shepherds, That when the Sheep push one another, a Storm speedily ensues. I am sure 'tis so here, if God turn not our Hearts one towards another, he will come and smite the Earth with a Curse, *Mal.* 4. 6. I believe it, Sirs, you will have other work to do shortly. There be those coming, (if God prevent not) that will part the fray.

USE II. for Direction.

Use 2. In the last place therefore give me leave to lay before you some necessary and proper Directions and Counsels for the prevention and healing of Schisms and Divisions amongst the Churches of Christ: for it is not Complaints and Lamentations, but proper Counsels and Directions, and those not only prescribed, but obeyed, that must do the work. When *Jehua* lay upon his Face before the Lord, *Jehua* 7. 8, 9, 10. bewailing the Sins and Miseries of *Israel*; Up (saith God) *sanctify the People; wherefore liest thou upon thy face?* As if he should say, Thy Moans and Lamentations are good and necessary in their place; but speedy Action and vigorous endeavours must be also used, or *Israel* will perish. So say I, up, up, fall speedily to your Duties as Men in earnest; and for your guidance in the paths of Duty, I will lay before you the following plain and necessary Directions.

Direction I. The orderly gathering, and filling of particular Churches, is of great influence unto the peace and tranquility of those Churches: and therefore it greatly concerns all that are interested therein, especially such as are vested with Office-power to beware whom they receive into their Communion.

The Scriptures do plainly discover to us, that Church-Members ought to be visible Saints, *1 Cor.* 1. 2. *2 Cor.* 1. 1, 2. *Acts* 2. 41, to the end. *Ephes.* 2. 7. *1 Thess.* 1. 2, 3. *Rom.* 1. 7. *Col.* 1. 2. Hence particular Churches are called the Churches of the Saints, *1 Cor.* 14. 33. If admissions be lax and negligent, so much heterogeneous Matter fills the Church, that it can never be quiet. Christians and Christians may live together harmoniously and coalesce in one orderly and comfortable Society, as having one and the same Head, one Spirit, the same general Design and End: but godly and ungodly, spiritual and carnal are acted by contrary Principles, pursue opposite Designs, and can never heartily coalesce. There is a Spirit of Discerning, a Judgment of Discretion in the Saints, and it is especially desirable in a more eminent degree in those that have Office-power in the Church, to judge of Mens fit Qualifications for Church-communication. We all allow, that gross Ignorance and Prophaneness are just bars to Mens admission: and to deny this, were to take all Power from the Church, to preserve the purity of God's Ordinances, or to cast out notorious Offenders.

None ought to be admitted into Church-communication, but such as do appear to the judgment of Charity (comparing their Professions and Conversations) to be Christians indeed, that is, Men fearing God, and working Righteousness.

And I make no doubt, but some Opinions as well as Practices, render Men unfit for Church-communication, *Tit.* 3. 10. *2 John* 10. All Opinions which overthrow Doctrines necessary to be believed, which the Apostle comprehends under the name of Faith; and all such Opinions as are inconsistent with an holy Life, and overthrow the power of Godliness, which the Apostle comprehends under the name of a good Conscience, *1 Tim.* 1. 19, 20. whosoever shall hold or maintain any such Opinions as these, he is either to be kept out, if not admitted; or cast out, if he be in Church-fellowship. In receiving such, you receive but Spies and Incendiaries among you. What a Fire-brand did *Arrius* prove, not only in the Church of *Constantinople*, but even to the whole World? Men of graceless Hearts and erroneous Heads, will give a continual exercise to the patience of Sober Christians. I deny not but out of the purest Churches Men may arise speaking perverse things; and yet the Officers and Members of those Churches be blameless in their admission: But if they can be discerned before they be admitted, a little preventive care would be of singular and seasonable use to the tranquillity of Church-Societies.

Direction II. Let all Officers and Members of Church study their Duties, and keep themselves within the bounds of their proper places. Ordinate Motions are quiet Motions, *1 Thess.* 4. 11. Study to be quiet, and do your own business, and work with your own hands, as we commanded you. In which words he condemns two Vices, which disturb and distract the Churches of Christ, viz. Curiosity in matters which pertain not to us, and Idleness in the Duties of our particular Callings. Two things I will drop by way of Caution:

(1.) Let it be for caution to Ministers, that they mind their proper work, study the peace of the Church, impartially dispense their respects to the Saints committed to their charge, so as not siding with a Party. There be few Schisms in Churches, in which Ministers have not some hand. *Jerome* upon those words, *Ecclesiast.* 9. 8. hath this memorable Note; *Veteres Doctores scrutans historias, invenire non possunt scisside Ecclesiam, præter eos qui Sacerdotes à Deo positi fuerunt.* Searching the Ancient Histories (saith he) I can find none that hath more rent the Church of God, than those that sustain the Office of Ministers. This is a sad charge, and 'tis too justly laid upon many of that Order: Oh what a Blessing is a Prudent, Patient, Peaceable Minister, to the Flock over which he watches!

(2.) Let the People keep their places, and study their proper Duties. There be in most Congregations, some idle People, who having little to do at home, are employed upon Satan's Errands to run from House to House, carrying Tales to exasperate one Christian against

gainst another. These the Apostle particularly marks, and warns the Churches of, 1 Tim. 5. 13 *And whilst they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not.* If that one Rule of Christ, *Matth. 18. 15, 16.* were conscientiously and strictly attended to, to tell a trespassing Brother his fault privately, then with one or two more, if obstinacy make it necessary, and not to expose him to the whole Church, and much less to the whole World, without a plain necessity, How many thousand Ruptures would be prevented in Christian Societies? But instead of regularly admonishing and reproving those irregular and idle Tattlers (as the Apostle calls them) who make it their business to sow Jealousies, to make and widen Breaches amongst Brethren.

Direction III. Let all Christians govern their Tongues, and keep them under the command of the law of kindness in their mutual converse with one another. *A soft answer* (saith Solomon) *Prov. 15. 1.* *turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger:* Hard to hard will never do well: How easily did *Abigail* disarm angry *David* by a gentle Apology? What more boisterous than the Wind? Yet a gentle Rain will allay it. It may be strongly presumed that a meek and gentle answer will more easily allay the Passions of a Godly Man, than of one that is both ungodly and full of Enmity towards us; and yet sometimes it hath done the latter. A company of vain wicked Men having inflamed their Blood in a Tavern at *Boston in New-England*, and seeing that Reverend, Meek, and Holy Minister of Christ, Mr. Cotton coming along the Street, one of them tells his Companions, *I'll go* (saith he) *and put a Trick upon the old Cotton;* down he goes, and crossing his way, whispers these words into his Ear, *Cotton* (saith he) *thou art an old Fool:* Mr. Cotton replied, *I confess I am so; the Lord make both me and thee wiser than we are, even wise to salvation:* He relates this Passage to his wicked Companions, which cast a great damp upon their Spirits in the midst of a Frolick: What peaceful Societies should we have, if our Lips transgressed not the Laws of Love and Kindness.

Direction IV. Respectful Deportments to those that are beneath us in Gifts or Estates, is an excellent conservative of Church-Peace. Lofly and contemptuous Carriages towards those that are beneath us in either respect, is a frequent occasion of bitter Jars and Animosities. The Apostle chargeth it upon the *Corinthians*, *That no one be puffed up for one against another; for who maketh thee to differ from another?* 1 Cor. 4. 6. 7. What respectful Language did Holy Mr. Brown give to his own godly Servants? Remember, Christians, that there is neither Rich nor Poor, Bond nor Free, but all are one in Christ Jesus. This indeed destroys not the civil differences God hath made between one and another. Grace will teach the godly Servant to give double Honour to a Religious Master or Mistress, the private Christian to a godly Magistrate or Minister. It will teach the

Vol. I.

People to know them which labour among them, and are over them in the Lord, and admonish them, and to esteem them very highly in love for their Works sake, and to be at peace among themselves, 1 Thess. 5. 12, 13. and it will also teach Superiors to condescend to Men of low degree, and not to think of themselves above what they ought, but with all lowliness, meekness, and long-suffering to forbear one another in love, keeping (this way) the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, Eph. 4. 2, 3.

Direction V. This gentle Language and respectful Deportment, would naturally and constantly flow from the uniting Grace of Wisdom, Humility, and Love, were they more exalted in the Hearts of Christians.

Wisdom would allay those unchristian Heats, *Prov. 17. 27.* a Man of Understanding is of an excellent Spirit, so we render it, but the Hebrew signifies a cool Spirit; the wisdom that is from above is gentle and easy to be intreated, James 3. 17.

Humility takes away the fewel from the fire of Contention; only from Pride cometh Contention, *Prov. 13. 10.* How dearly hath Pride, especially Spiritual Pride, cost the Churches of Christ?

Love is the very Cement of Societies, the Fountain of Peace and Unity; it thinketh no evil, 1 Cor. 13. puts the fairest sense upon doubtful Words and Actions, it beareth all things. *Love me* (saith *Austin*) *and reprove me as thou pleatest:* 'Tis a radical Grace, bearing the fruits of Peace and Unity upon it.

Direction VI. Be of a Christ-like forgiving Spirit one towards another, Eph. 4. 31, 32. *Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* Hath thy Brother offended thee? how apt art thou also to offend thy Brother? and which is infinitely more, how often dost thou every day grieve and offend Jesus Christ, who yet freely forgives all thy Offences? Remember Friend, that an unforgiving is a sad sign of an unforgiven Person. They that have found Mercy, Pity and Forgiveness, should of all Men in the World be most ready to shew it.

Direction VII. Be deeply affected with the mischievous effects and consequents of Schisms and Divisions in the Societies of the Saints, and let nothing beneath a plain necessity divide you from Communion one with another; hold it fast till you can hold it no longer without Sin. At the fire of your Contentions your Enemies warm their hands, and say, aha, so would we have it: Your Prayers are obstructed, *Mat. 5. 24.* *First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* Edification is hindered: Feverish bodies thrive not, Eph. 4. 15. *God is provoked to remove his gracious Presence from among you.* Be of one Mind (saith the Apostle) *live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you,* 1 Cor. 13. 11. implying that their Contentions would deprive them of his blessed company with them. The glory of your Society is clouded; if ye

Uuuuu

baue

have bitter envyings and strife in your hearts, glory not, *James* 3. 14. Glory not in your Church Privileges, personal Gifts and Attainments; whatever you think of your selves you are not such Christians as you vogue your selves for, living in a Sin so directly contrary to Christianity. The name of Christ is dishonoured. You are taken out of the World, to be a People for his Name, that is, for his Honour; but there's little credit to the Name of Christ from a dividing, wrangling People. The alluring beauty of Christianity, by which the Church gains upon the World, *Acts* 2. 46, 47. is sullied and defaced, and thereby (as I noted before) Conversion hindered, and a new Stone, as it were, rolled over the Graves of poor Sinners, to keep them down in their impenitency: Tremble therefore at the thoughts of Divisions and Separations. *St. Augustine* notes three Sins severely punished in Scripture. The Golden Calf, with the Sword; *Jehoiakim's* cutting the Sacred Roll, with a dreadful Captivity; but the Schism of *Korah*, and his Accomplices, with the Earth's opening her Mouth and swallowing them up quick.

Direction VIII. Let all Church-Members see that they have Union with Christ, evidencing it self in daily sweet Communion

with him. Lines drawn from a Circumference come nearest to one another in the Center. When God intends to make the Hearts of Men one, he first makes them new, *Exek.* 11. 19. *I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you.* And the more any renewed Heart tastes the sweetness of Communion with God, by so much it is disposed for Unity and Peace with his People. Our frowardness and peevishness plainly discovers all is not well betwixt God and us. Nothing so opposite to, or abhorred by a Soul that enjoys sweet Peace and Communion with Christ, than to live in sinful Jars and Contentions with his People. Return therefore to the Primitive Spirit of Love and Unity; forbear one another; forgive one another; mortify your dividing Lusts; cherish your uniting Graces; mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine ye have learned, and avoid them, *Rom.* 16. 17. In a Word, and that the Word of the Apostle in the Text, *I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.*

A

TABLE of SCRIPTURES

Opened or Vindicated in the First VOLUME.

Gen.	Genesi.	Page.	Pfal.	Pfal.	Page.	Page.	Page.	Page.	Page.	
G	En. 18. 19.	215	18. 6. 7.	284	12. 1.	270	Nahum.	Nahum.	16. 8.	284
	44. 10.	329	19. 7.	40	12. 4.	266	Nahum. 1. 5. 6.	601	16. 24.	175
	48. 15.	92	19. 17.	409	12. 14.	428	Habakkuk.	Habakkuk.	22. 22.	178
	2. 7.	498	22. 1.	168	41. 17.	172	Hab. 3. 16.	682	22. 41.	161
	46. 26.	491	22. 2.	170	43. 1. 6. 7.	11	1. 17.	698	22. 63.	117
	1. 24. 27.	491	27. 4.	139	43. 25.	378	Zephaniah.	Zephaniah.	22. 23.	112
	18. 2.	500	27. 7.	375	45. 11.	181	Zeph. 2. 1.	678	22. 27.	121
	2. 2.	503	11. 5.	184	49. 2. 3. 4. 5.	10	2. 1. 2.	680	22. 34.	148
	3. 6.	615	34. 1.	55	50. 5.	11, 178	Haggai.	Haggai.	22. 38.	132
	17. 7.	767	12. 1. 2.	180	50. 10.	171	Hag. 2. 7.	116	22. 43.	159
	Endus.		19. 11.	174	50. ult.	66	Zechariah.	Zechariah.	22. 46.	177
Exod.	23. 21.	399	40. 7. 8.	23	53. 3.	303	Zech. 2. 8.	262	24. 49.	44
	7. 1.	498	45. 2.	107	53. 5.	303	11. 15.	44	9. 24.	321
	31. 18. 19. 20.	592	45. 7.	108	53. 1.	194, 225	12. 10.	124, 56	1. 74.	655
	6. 1.	656	45. 7.	257	53. 11.	225	12. 10.	416	12. 20.	510
	12. 12.	657	45. 14. 15.	314	53. 12.	9	13. 1.	503	12. 30.	596
	Leuiticus.		45. 15.	321	55. 7.	275	4. 3. 4.	560	16. 7. 10.	611
Levit.	1. 4.	51	47. 5.	210	55. 10. 11.	199	4. 2. 14. 12.	612	12. 23.	618
	16. 13. 13. 14.	17	49. 14.	395	61. 1.	116	2. 5.	681	16. 8.	622
	16. 11.	39	51. 6.	227	62. 6.	95	Malachi.	Malachi.	16. 11. 12.	623
	Numbers.		68. 17.	211	63. 2. 3.	225	Mal. 1. 11.	282	John.	John.
Numb.	24. 2.	413	73. 4.	324	64. 6.	235	3. 13.	319	1. 12.	283
	24. 17.	594	78. 25.	92	65. 1.	278	1. 16.	671	1. 13.	284
	23. 21.	780	78. 24.	282	51. 12.	519	3. 47.	681	1. 14.	18, 84
	23. 19.	694	92. 10.	269	53. 12.	527	Matthew.	Matthew.	1. 16.	304
	Deuteronomy.		97. 11.	119	16. 19.	582	Matth. 2. 13.	87	1. 12. 13.	426
Deut.	8. 16.	182	97. 11.	376	57. 15.	613	5. 40.	125	1. 29.	31
	9. 12.	373	97. 11.	418	8. 12. 13.	644	5. 40.	11	3. 8.	281
	12. 8. 9.	324	101. 10.	179	51. 12. 11.	647	7. 7.	181	3. 8.	422
	21. 2.	128	101. 11.	55	41. 10.	658	7. 22.	305	3. 88.	417
	14. 10.	37	110. 3.	71	26. 20.	676	8. 4.	181	3. 34.	298
	18. 10. 11.	559	119. 16.	224	Jeremiah.	Jeremiah.	8. 11.	117	3. 36.	293
	28. 25.	645	119. 60.	469	Jer. 2. 12.	172	8. 11.	117	4. 14.	280
	28. 65. 66. 67.	645	119. 3. 3.	312	8. 1.	192	11. 27.	44, 3.	4. 29.	460
	32. 19.	679	139. 16.	281	18. 11.	146	11. 28.	18	5. 24.	369
	32. 4.	695	140. 4.	272	23. 6.	399	11. 29.	412	5. 26.	378
	Jehona.		140. 15. 16.	492	31. 24.	401	12. 44. 45.	471	5. 31.	26
Joh.	24. 11. 12.	649	51. 1.	492	31. 33.	401	13. 44. 45.	189	5. 40.	315
	21. 14.	691	8. 1. 6.	525	12. 40.	266	13. 45. 46.	271	5. 40.	26
1 Sam.	2. 25.	35	87. 7.	551	13. 31. 32.	198	13. 47. 48.	271	6. 27.	23
	24. 16.	152	17. 15.	591	5. 6.	618	13. 49.	469	6. 29.	180
	28. 19.	612	119. 59.	618	13. 40.	697	21. 21.	196	6. 44.	271
	4. 13.	613	Prov.	4. 18.	45	Lamentations.	Lamentations.	6. 44.	315	
	4. 14.	656	4. 16.	254	4. 21.	101	21. 11.	192	6. 44.	315
	4. 22.	619	16. 6.	418	4. 12.	654	25. 38. 40.	261	6. 37.	324
	27. 1.	621	21. 22.	157	3. 19. 40.	782	26. 40.	104	6. 43.	402
2 Sam.	4. 13.	613	28. 24.	170	Ezekiel.	Ezekiel.	27. 46.	165	6. 47.	238
	4. 19.	613	30. 8.	410	Ezek. 11. 18.	196	27. 52.	204	7. 17.	403
	4. 22.	619	4. 16.	117	33. 31. 32.	468	28. 4.	201	8. 26.	74
	15. 31.	691	17. 16.	119	16. 25.	182	28. 6.	202	8. 36.	386
3 King.	8. 18.	383	21. 16.	108	16. 27.	182	8. 11. 12.	108	8. 42.	24
	1. 6.	142	23. 14.	620	31. 11.	615	12. 16.	512	8. 58.	33
	18. 17.	191	28. 1.	669	31. 11.	615	10. 28.	522	9. 4.	24
	14. 13.	621	Ecclesiastes.	Ecclesiastes.	21. 1.	613	22. 21.	523	10. 29.	277
4 King.	1. 11.	175	Eccles. 3. 16.	120	5. 1. 2. 3.	681	26. 41.	540	10. 30.	7
	17. 25.	649	3. 21.	161	Daniel.	Daniel.	27. 54. 53.	576	11. 26.	379
	2 Chron.	26. 18.	7. 2.	145	Dan. 2. 17.	42	28. 10.	607	12. 27.	105
	20. 2. 1.	647	12. 7.	496	2. 17.	282	18. 10.	613	13. 14.	84
	Job.		3. 19. 20. 21.	106	7. 13. 14.	211	7. 13. 14.	624	14. 3.	162
	4. 21.	313	12. 6.	515	9. 24.	219	10. 13.	663	14. 19.	260
	9. 33.	33	6. 22.	541	11. 32. 34.	231	Mark.	Mark.	14. 26.	410
	14. 14.	206	12. 1. 2.	628	12. 3.	612	9. 44.	310	15. 22.	462
	21. 12.	376	8. 1.	640	Hof.	Hof.	9. 44.	440	16. 8.	43
	22. 21.	198	Cant.	2. 7.	376	2. 6.	310	16. 10.	179	
	30. 4. 5.	146	2. 2.	339	3. 3.	30	16. 11.	179	16. 13.	211
	31. 2.	118	2. 3.	339	11. 4.	24	16. 12.	211	16. 13.	389
	36. 8. 9.	404	3. 6.	60	11. 4.	271	16. 14.	211	16. 14.	389
	42. 5.	410	3. 11.	315	11. 6.	62	17. 11.	211	17. 11.	211
	19. 17.	497	4. 2.	315	Amos.	Amos.	4. 12. 14.	211	17. 12.	211
	12. 1.	514	5. 9.	406	8. 11. 12.	376	5. 31.	216	17. 19.	413
	7. 16.	547	5. 16.	332	8. 11. 12.	376	9. 62.	216	17. 23.	256
	7. 2. 10.	578	6. 5.	200	6. 3.	646	10. 17. 18.	216	17. 27.	154
	14. 14.	583	4. 11.	18	3. 3.	790	11. 24.	216	17. 30.	177
			4. 8.	590	Jonah.	Jonah.	11. 33.	217	17. 31.	177
			15. 11.	791	Jon. 1. 9. 10.	679	14. 28.	217	17. 32.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 33.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 34.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 35.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 36.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 37.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 38.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 39.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 40.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 41.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 42.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 43.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 44.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 45.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 46.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 47.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 48.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 49.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 50.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 51.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 52.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 53.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 54.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 55.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 56.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 57.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 58.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 59.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 60.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 61.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 62.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 63.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 64.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 65.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 66.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 67.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 68.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 69.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 70.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 71.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 72.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 73.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 74.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 75.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 76.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 77.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.	217	17. 78.	177
			15. 11.	791	15. 11.	679	15. 24.</			

	Page.		Page.		Page.		Page.		Page.
4. 24.	511	L. 21.	266	4. 4. 5.	392	L. 17.	313	L. 24.	315
4. 14.	524	L. 20.	259	4. 6. 7.	414	L. 18.	304	L. 11.	548
11. 15.	512	L. 2.	1	4. 29.	89	L. 19.	311	L. 21.	550
AB. 2. 21.	15. 127	L. 2.	138	5. 1.	87	L. 20.	304	L. 19, 20, 21.	550
2. 24.	128	L. 7.	140	5. 6.	299	L. 21.	304	1. 5.	559
3. 22.	37	L. 14.	44	5. 16.	73	L. 22.	329	4. 2.	559
4. 13.	35	2. 14. 15.	28	5. 17.	285	L. 23.	327	1. 15.	619
4. 13a.	100	3. 7.	277	5. 17.	228	1. 3.	422	Jam. 1.	44
4. 18.	109	3. 7.	198	5. 24.	429	1. 10.	2	L. 4.	421
9. 5.	318	3. 16. 17.	280	5. 25.	321	1. 11.	305	L. 18.	421
10. 41.	218	3. 22.	360	6. 12. 21.	424	1. 15.	74	4. 5.	451
15. 9.	399	3. 23. 21.	120	3. 13.	615	2. 6. 7.	725	4. 13.	471
16. 39.	298	4. 7.	253	4. 29.	614	1. Thefalunians.		2. 26.	487
19. 2.	44	4. 11.	89	3. 1.	713	L. Thef. 1. 5. 6.	350	2. 24.	721
3. 8.	495	4. 11.	184	2. 1. 4.	754	1. 10.	195	1. Peter.	
7. 15. 56.	446	6. 2.	213	Ephesians.		4. 16.	220	1. 2.	251
16. 18.	622	6. 11.	253	Eph. 1. 10.	260	5. 23.	281	L. 2.	414
15. 11.	245	6. 17.	257	L. 11.	27	2. 7.	239	L. 5.	415
Romans.		7. 22.	189	L. 22.	76	2. Thefalunians.		L. 19.	53
L. 4.	204	8. 5.	34	L. 23a. 23.	260	L. Thef. 1. 10.	372	2. 2.	285
L. 21.	1	9. 24.	419	L. 6.	181	3. 5.	70	2. 4.	253
2. 14.	441	9. 27.	268	L. 7.	278	L. 9.	601	2. 23. 31.	154
2. 9.	401	11. 39.	31	L. 18.	466	1. Timothy.		3. 1.	150
2. 15.	181	11. 10.	71	L. 19. 20.	372	2. 5.	33	3. 18.	390
3. 25. 16.	63	12. 11.	414	2. L.	278	3. 16.	18	4. 4.	277
3. 24.	266	12. 26. 37.	416	2. 10.	271	5. 4.	156	4. 4.	421
3. 23a.	459	12. 28.	40	2. 10.	271	5. 6.	284	5. 8.	513
4. 5.	189	12. 31.	111	2. 18.	281	6. 9.	111	3. 19.	597
5. 8.	179	15. 17.	203	2. 18.	199	6. 17.	17	2. 18. 19.	619
5. 8. 9. 10.	16	15. 20.	204	2. 18.	195	5. 8.	517	5. 8.	611
5. 12.	197	15. 11.	288	2. 1. 3. 1.	421	2. 15.	778	1. Peter.	
5. 15. 17.	67	15. 24.	264	2. 11.	183	2. Timothy.		1. 2.	280
6. 5.	208	15. 43. 44.	208	3. 8.	395	2. Tim. 1. 9.	13	1. 4.	418
6. 5.	257	15. 45. 46.	110	3. 10.	3	2. 19.	141. 327	L. 13. 14.	541
6. 4.	323	9. 27.	541	2. 17.	399	2. 19.	443	2. 4. 5. 6.	683
6. 5. 6. 7. 8.	410	12. 9. 10.	674	4. 7.	127	1. 7.	653	1. John.	
6. 2.	449	2. Corinthians.		4. 15. 16.	157	4. 6.	663	1. 7.	51
6. 13. 14.	414	1. Cor. 1. 12.	19	5. 2.	14	2. 11. 12.	707	1. 9.	65
6. 21.	427	1. 16.	407	5. 8.	226	Titus.		2. 1. 2.	60
6. ult.	404	1. 18.	408	5. 14.	453	Tit. 2. 10.	373	2. 6.	441
7. 2.	194	4. 1. 4.	45	5. 21. 32.	301	3. 8.	254	2. 27.	449
8. 3.	20	4. 6.	282	6. L.	156	Hebrews.		3. 2.	394
8. 4.	179	4. 7.	267	6. 23.	257	Heb. 1. 3.	119	3. 7.	69
8. 10. 11.	205	4. 12. 13.	196.	L. 4.	526	L. 14.	78	3. 7.	313
8. 11.	218	4. 13. 4.	465	5. 29.	514	2. 14.	187	3. 7.	391
8. 2.	218	4. 6.	410	2. 12.	628	2. 9.	21	3. 9.	281
8. 11.	219	5. 5.	185	5. 16.	637	2. 16.	18. 21	3. 24.	412
8. 5. 6.	415	5. 14.	274	6. 13. 14.	663	2. 17.	20	4. 10.	14
8. 14.	417	5. 17.	162	Philippians.		3. 14.	357	5. 2.	287
8. 11.	417	5. 17.	419	Philip. 1. 6.	180	3. 14.	291	5. 11.	281
8. 28.	79	5. 18. 19.	197	L. 29.	135	4. 2.	318	5. 24.	219
8. 12.	15. 16	5. 21.	61	L. 29.	274	5. 2.	324	5. 11.	788
8. 14.	141	6. 1.	422	L. 29.	372	5. 8.	445	Jud. ver. 6.	140
8. 35. 38. 39.	260	6. L.	100	2. 8.	63	5. 14.	285	6.	265
9. 11.	14	8. 2.	106	2. 9.	201	7. 25.	17	12a.	456
10. 1.	275	10. 4. 5.	264	2. 10.	79	7. 25.	134	21.	100
10. 2.	324	10. 5.	271	2. 15.	444	7. 26.	28	210.	710
11. 29.	274	10. 11.	21	2. 15.	275	7. 29.	28	Revelation.	
12. 1.	30	12. 4.	276	3. 9.	104	7. 27.	29	L. 11.	14
13. 11.	391	2. 11.	500	3. 3.	1	9. 14.	53	2. 7.	312
1. 9.	511	5. 2.	116	3. 11.	208	9. 24.	16	2. 10.	78
13. 11.	516	5. 8.	546	3. 12.	278	10. 11.	215	3. 2.	423
8. 10.	545	12. 2. 3.	546	3. 12.	441	10. 14.	52	3. 10a.	186
9. 22.	600	5. 8.	582	3. 21.	22	10. 14.	258	3. 20.	513
8. 11.	626	4. 1. 4.	619	4. 19.	106	10. 20.	36	5. 6.	18
8. 28.	693	Galatians.		4. 21.	668	10. 27.	310	5. 6.	215
1. Corinthians.		Gal. 2. 20.	104	Colossians.		11. 6.	314	11. 2.	314
1. Cor. 1. 30.	449	3. 13.	61	Col. 1. 2. 4.	258	11. 26.	372	22. 2.	4
L. 2.	259	3. 23.	297	L. 14.	132	12. 8.	187		
		4. 4.	64. 68	L. 17.	27	12a. 24.	58		

A N

Alphabetical T A B L E

OF THE

PRINCIPAL THINGS

CONTAINED IN

This First Volume.

A.	Page.		Page.
A Bilities of Men to use God's Means, what, and how far	46	Altogether lovely, Christ only so	232
Abortives Spiritual whence they are	401	Apostacy an inexcusable Sin	389
Aburdity of Believers Sins	261	Annihilation better than Damnation	425
Abuse, Christ abused in a Court of Judicature	117	Aptitude of the Sacrament to refresh the memory of Christ	99
Accessories to the Saints happiness, what	69	Arminians sense of Justification rejected	292
Accommodation of the Body, a Snare to the Soul	207	Arraignment of Christ at Pilate's Bar, an evidence Believers are never cast at God's Bar	120
Accounts of our time kept in Heaven	267	Articles of Peace with God what they are	158
Accusations of Conscience what they are	369	How sad not to be comprised in those Articles	Ibid.
Acceptation with God, what it is	382	Ascension of Christ to Heaven opened	210
Acceptation with God, what it includes	Ibid.	The terms of Christ's Ascension Ibid. The reason and ends of it	211, 212
Acceptance, none without Christ	385	Ascriptions of Praise to Christ for all our Mercies, how reasonable	36
Activity for the World, what it speaks	395	Assent implied in saving Faith	287
Activity of Christ our Pattern	446	Assent, three Degrees thereof	Ibid.
Adoption, Civil and Spiritual	66	Assent, how discovered to be true	295
Adoration of God's Justice and Mercy in Christ's death	99, 141	Assumption of our Nature, opened 19. Our Nature was assumed integrally 20. And with all its natural Infirmities Ibid. Reasons of Christ's assuming our Nature	21
Advancement of the Humane Nature by its Union with the second Person	20	Aversion from God how discovered	276
Adventures of Faith how great	275	Awakening out of security, how great a Mercy it is to the Souls of Men	396
Adversaries to the Union of the two Natures in Christ, who, and how	21	Apostacy of unregenerate Professors not to be wondered at	538
Advocate, none like Christ, in five respects	335	Afflictions, the wisdom of God in laying them on his People	539
Affections, how bewitcht by Sin	409	Afflictions to be born patiently	606
Affections, how moved by remembering Christ	98	Actions to be considered physically and morally	611
Afflictions, four things to be studied in them 80. How they provoke to Holiness	232	Atheism, one way to lose the Soul	628
Agency of Christ in the Garden, whether preternatural	104	Autinomialism, the rise and growth of it	770
The Effects of it	104, 105		
Ambassadors of Christ their Dignity	264	B.	
Amyntas his intercession for his Brother Æschylus	58	B acksliding an inexcusable Sin	321
Acts of the Spirit sixfold in Conversion	315	Beauty of holiness very great	406
Appetite, wanton Appetites removed	175	Believers more than know themselves so	294
Apology, none left to them that perish under Gospels-offers	17, 85	Believers why uncomfortable	Ibid.
Apostolical Dignity, what it was	108	Believers Advancement, how great	372
Application, what it imports	250	Believers their general Assembly	319
Application of Christ the end of Ordinances	251	Believers have Christ for their Altar	384
Application of Christ of equal latitude with God's election and Christ's death	251	Believers should have a free Spirit	389
Apologies cut off from Gospel Despisers	267	Believers in what manner brought to God	391
Approbation of Christ implied in Faith	287	U	
Anointing how it teacheth	294	Believers	Believers
All-sufficiency of Christ for all our wants	315		

The T A B L E.

	Page.		Page.
Believers warranted, and encouraged to commit their Souls into Christ's hands at death	183	Christ qualified as foretold	329
Believers under highest Obligations to set themselves apart for Christ	30	Christ an incomparable Friend	335
Believers immediately received into glory upon their dissolution 162. Four Arguments to evince it	Ibid.	Christ comprehensive of all that is lovely	336
Believing the immediate duty of weary Souls	318	Christ the desire of all Nations, and bow	337
Benefits of Christ how conveyed to us	253	Christ the Lord of Glory	340
Blasphemous Suggestions, how best cured	90	Christ's Glory two-fold	371
Blindness of Mind what it is	466	Christ the only Comfort of Saints	375
Blindness spiritual what it includes	Ibid.	Christ should be precious to Saints	385
Blindness of Mind evidenced six ways	467	Christ, an invitation to study him	4
Blindness of Mind what it excludes	466	Christ's delights in the Father's bosom infinite	7
Blinding artifices of Satan, what,	468	Christ had no sorrows or wants in the Father's bosom	1b.
Blood of Christ its dignity	379	Christ's Self-denial in leaving the Father's bosom for us	1b.
Blood of Christ of infinite value 130. How it cools and eases a distressed Conscience Ibid. How said to have its cry against us	60	Christ's excellency	4
Bodies of Sinners how smitten by death	456	Christ made Flesh, what it imports	18
Bodies of Saints intended to be made glorious pieces, and how that appears 205. How to be disposed, used and ordered 207. The due honour of our Bodies to be preserved, and why	207	Christ is true God	38
Boldness of Saints in Prayer	383	Christ the Original of all Light 39 The first receptacle of all Power Ibid. The manner of his providential influence	79
Bosom of God, what is, and what is not there, 6, &c.	6, &c.	Christ is most excellent Soul-food	99
Breach made between us and God by Sin, how dreadful	33	Christ and his Blood never grow stale	101
Bread the excellency of it	97	His love beyond all comparison	99
Burden of Christ's Sufferings, how great it was 172, 173	172, 173	Christ hath finished Redemption-work	179
Burdenome nature of sin opened	309	How he hath wrought it out in six Particulars 178. A Character of Christ's excellency	190
Burden of Sin why it must be felt	311	Christ's glorious Majesty	216
Burial, Christ's dead Body had a descent, tho' not a pompous Burial 189. Three Reasons why Christ must have a Burial 1b. Christ's Burial obscure as to the manner of its performance by his Friends Ibid. Christ's Funeral is adorned by several famous Miracles from Heaven 190. Decent and mournful Burials laudable among Christians	191	Christians no troublers of the World	436
Breath, what it is	514	Christians, why void of Comfort	376
Body, a great Evil to be excessively careful of it	532	Church safe, and why	216
Body, how we may offend in defect of love to it	540	Circumcision how necessary	472
Believers, their Mourning time but short	549	Circumcision a great abatement to Christ, and that two ways	86
Believers, that they are not bound to confess their sins, an Antinomian Error.	778	Civility no Evidence of Grace	427
C.		Communion with Christ twofold	303
Care of Christians over Christ's honour	373	Communion with Christ in what it consists	Ibid.
Care of Christ over his Church and Ministers 46. His Care for it manifested in Sacramental appointment many ways	99	Communion with Christ a great Mystery	305
Care of Christ for his natural Relations 154, 155	154, 155	Communion with Christ admirable	306
Carnal Relations admonished	276	Communion with Saints how pleasant	307
Charity to Saints strongly urged	261	Communion with God kills Sin	438
Causes of Spiritual Life twofold	454	Coming to Christ what it includes	314
Change made by Death very great	183	Comfortable indeed that he who assumed our Nature is God	22
Children how dear to Parents 155. Nothing of Christ in rebellious Children 157. Five Queries to convict such 157. Six Considerations to humble disobedient Children 158. And Children presented with a famous Pattern 155. Conscientious Children to be encouraged	159	Commission of Christ great security to our Faith	26
Christ transcendent in Holiness	443	Committing the Soul to Christ, implies six great things in 183. Seven excellent grounds of encouragement to this last and great Work	184
Christ outbids all other Offerers	273	Concourse, or Co-operation of both Natures in Christ's Mediatorial Works	35
Christ the Mercy of Mercies	327	Condemnation twofold	458
Christ, Eight things in him attractive	299	Condescension of God in the Gospel	265
Christ communicates all blessings to us	305	Confession, when, and why our Duty	118
Christ makes haste in extremity	311	Confidence in Men a folly	112
Christ's burden exceeding heavy	301	Confidence how over-born by Fleshly Interests Ibid. Rules to prevent is Ibid. It's inward troubles dreadful	120
Christ the only Physician	321	Consecration of Christ, what it is	28
		Consent included in Faith	288
		Consolation what it is	374
		Consolation, three kinds thereof	Ibid.
		Consolation, three ingredients thereof	Ibid.
		Congruity of Divine drawings with the Will of Man	272
		Conscience the Offices thereof	309
		Confidence without grounds, what	394
		Contempts of the World contemned	384
		Company, the very best sometimes a burden	106
		Contentation of Christ in a low Estate	448
		Constancy in Religion w ^o d	135
		Content pressed upon Converts	256
		Content with our present State how Rational	69
		Conversion introductive to all Mercies	255
		Conversion how Illustrated	273
		Conversion	

The T A B L E.

	Page.		Page.
Conversion, its stupendous effects	277	Desertion the greatest Misery	169.
Conviction predeceantous to Faith	297	Christ's desertion	Ibid.
Conviction the first Work of the Spirit	415	the Believers comfort	Ibid.
Companions in Sin to be abandoned	405	Despising Christ, how intolerable to the Father	17
Corruption of Nature Discovered	276	Difficulty of Faith discovered	294
Covenant of Redemption i.e. The Form, Federates, and performance of that Covenant opened Ibid. The New Covenant, how Christ's Death confirmed and raised it	200	Dignity of Saints whence inferred	260
Court that tried Christ had no Authority so to do	117	Directions about Faith Six	301
Cross of Christ, three sweet Considerations to bear it cheerfully	131	Directions to inflame desires	340
The Cross of Christ a dignified Cross	135	Dignity of Christ proclaimed and defended by one of his greatest Enemies	133
Cup, what it signifies in Scripture 103. What the passing of it is	Ibid.	Discourses of Heaven sweet in the way	392
Curse, That may prove the sorest Curse from which Men promise themselves much Content	111	Diseases of the Soul, what they are	332
Christ, the death of Christ is the death of Death	596	Discouragements in godliness unreasonable	406
Conscience the Whip that Lashes the Soul in Hell	601	Divine authority of Scriptures	399
Conscience, what Shift Men make to keep them quiet under guilt	604	Doctrine of Christ the most excellent Doctrine 2, Its knowledge sufficient to our Salvation	3
Cares of the World the Cause of the Loss of Souls	626	Doctrines, what their proper rest	41
Christ an unvaluable Mercy to the World	635	Dominion of Sin cured by Christ	323
Carnal Reasonings to be subjected to Faith	671	Dominion of Sin destroyed in Saints	387
Covenants, the conditionality of the New Covenant	757	Dominion of Sin, wherein it consists	431
D		Drawings of God, what they are	272
D Amned, their dreadful State opened	309	Drawings of God, opened five ways	Ibid.
Damnation how aggravated	396	Duties no evidence of Grace	427
Danger of Refusing Christ	300	Duties, even the best, need Christ's Sacrifice to procure their acceptance	51
Danger of False confidence	396	Duties of Children to their Parents, in six particulars opened	155
Death and deadness how differenced	418	Dying Parents presented with a Pattern	96
Death on what account dreadful	310	Divine Love, the strength of it	537
Death how made sweet	262	Dye, how we may come to be willing to Dye	547
Death of Christ, its design and end	390	Death destroys not the relation to the Body	581
Death Spiritual what it is	454	Dying Men, how prejudicial to them to be distracted with earthly things	584
Death fairly overcome, and that in its own Territories, by the Resurrection of Christ	207	Death better than Life to Believers	587
Death of the Cross, what it was, opened in Six Properties 127. The manner of Crucifying 129. Why Christ was Crucified	Ibid.	Death, what Saints are freed from by it, in 7 particulars	591
Death, Christ chose to meet it in a praying posture	102.	Damned, their torment in Hell without mitigation or cessation	602
Christ's Death the worst death for kind	127	Divisions give scandal to the World	792
Death, not to be feared by Believers 207. Their Duty so long for it 70. Souls not ordinarily wrought on at Death 163. Choice encouragements to Believers against the Fear of Death	192	Divisions the way to heal them	794
Defect, The finishing of Christ's Work, how great a Relief against the Defects that attend our Works	179	E	
Dejections of Saints groundless	393	E fficacy of the Gospel, how great	397
Delight of Christ in the Father's bosom, how great, pure, and constant 6. How transcendent to all other delights in the World	7	Efficacy of Preaching, whence it is	266
Deliverance from wrath obtained by Christ, is free, full, peculiar, wonderful 195. Three Signs of a Soul delivered from wrath to come	196	Embryos Spiritual, what they are	401
Decrees of God how executed	414	Empty, They that are full of Grace, may be empty of the Creature	89
Degrees of Faith, the least precious	295	End of the new Creature twofold	422
Deliverance from Sin what a Mercy	404	Ends of Christ's death principally four, what they are, opened at large	195
Delight in God eminent in Christ	447	Enemies to Souls, who are so	396
Despair in our selves necessary	297	Enemies of Christ, Objects of Pity 150. They that continue so, perish inexorably	152
Despair not of carnal Relations	277	Enemy, how dreadful an Enemy God is	198
Desires after Christ examined	339	Enemies of Saints not to be feared	217
Desires after Christ include Blessings	Ibid.	Engagements to Obedience, what	464
Desertion, Christ deserted by his Father in time of greatest need	166	Engage not sin in our own Strength	439
Desertions either absolute, or respecting 166. Respective	Ibid.	Engage, When Men first engage in a way of Sin, they know not where they shall stop 110. How dangerous to engage against Persons or Ways; till satisfied they are wicked. 150	463
Desertions of four sorts Ibid. How Christ was not de-	Ibid.	English preaching its Eusemism	390
		Entertainment of God Man's chief good	211
		Entertainment of Christ in Heaven most magnificent and glorious	Errors

The T A B L E.

	Page.
Errors about the Messiah, which blinded the Jews in his days	21
149. Six Errors about the Hypothetical Union	335
Esteem nothing lovely but Christ	13
Esteem of Christ for Believers great	164
Evening, to find Mercy in the evening of our Life, how great a Mercy	208
Evidences, five Evidences of our Resurrection to eternal Life	179
Evidences that Christ hath completed and finished Redemption-work	454
Evidences of Spiritual Death	394
Evidences of Carnal security	268
Evidences of Persons unreconciled	397
Evidences of the power of the word	415
Evidences of the Spirit in us	434, 441
Evidences of Mortification	316
Examples Motives of Faith	440
Examples used in Mortification	472
Examples of the World not to be imitated	
Exaltation of Christ, how he is to be considered therein	201. What were the grounds of it Ibid. What the Comforts resulting from it
	202
Extent of Christs Kingdom large	337
Expectations of wrath terrible	310
Expectation implicated in Faith	315
Eyes opened two ways	471
Enemies to Souls, Five sorts of Men are so	605
Earthly treasure, how poor a comfort for a Man to leave much behind him, and carry his sins with him	Ibid.
Experiences of Gods care to be recorded.	669
Errors, their Causes, and Remedies.	721

F

F Aith, its subject, all, and enemies	274
Faith considered two ways	291
Faith, whether in two Faculties	288
Faith, its Encomium above other Graces	291
Faith justifies not as a work	292
Faith justifies as an applying instrument	293
Faith precious in the least degree	296
Faith of Papists an absurd Faith	Ibid.
Faith its Antecedents, Concomitants, and Consequents	297
Faith is not the Souls rest	319
Faith, how great a Mercy to Men	459
Faith its instrumentality in Mortification	438
Faith, the Necessity of it to pardon and peace §1. Its power to thaw, and melt the heart 124. Heart-melting acts of Faith 124. How it appears that Faith is a rarity in the World	125
Faith the proper instrument to raise afflictions	124
Fall of Adam how aggravated	265
False joy the only joy of carnal Men	394
False joy twofold	395
Father, how afflicting his love in giving Christ for us 15. How strangely he willed our Salvation	16
Fears of Death how cured	319
Fear of Creatures how expelled	80
Fellowship with Christ our dignity	302
Fellowship with Christ not natural	305
Fellowship of Saints advantageous	436
Filth of Sin what, and how removed	319
Folly of Self-righteousness	325
Following of Christ the Saints duty	327
Forerunner, in what sense Christ is so	210
Forgetfulness of Christ foreseen by him 100. What an evil to forget Christ	Ibid.
Forgiveness with God for the work of Sinners demonstrated 129. To forgive Enemies, and be forgiven for	

them, is Christ-like	152.	What fraternal Forgiveness	Page.
is not lb.	What it is	153.	The excellencies of it
Forgiveness is with God for such as persecute Christ and his ways ignorantly	151.	What divine Forgiveness is	151.
Four Arguments to prove the possibility of Forgiveness to the Penitent Sinner	Ibid.	The certainty of Pardon for humbled Sinners	152
Forake, God may for a time forsake his dearest Children	170.	Atwo'old Admonition for such a time	170, 171
Foundation, What cause all Professors have to examine is			123
Freedom from the rigor of the Law			387
Freedom from guilt, what a privilege			Ibid.
Freedom from the first Covenant			413
Free-grace, and full Satisfaction consistent			266
Friend, Christ betrayed by a pretended Friend			107
Frustration of the Gospel how			396
Fulness of Christ's saving Power			405
Future state of happiness, or misery after this life, evidenced by five Arguments			160, &c.
Food, earthly Food not suitable for Souls			617
Fear, the kinds and nature of is opened			645
Fear, sinful fear wherein it lies			646
Fear, natural, sinful, religious, the various uses of is in governing the World			648
Fear, the Causes of sinful fear			650
Fear, The Effects of slavish fear			655
Fear, rules to cure our sinful fears			659
Faithfulness of God opened			691
Faithfulness of God in his Providences considered			693

G.

G enerality of Men in the way to Hell	396
Gethsemane, what it signifies, and where that Garden is situate	102
Gift, Christ the best gift that ever God gave	14
Gifts of the Spirit twofold	413
Gifts no evidences of Grace	427
Given, how Christ was given by the Father 14. How the giving of Christ was the highest manifestation of the Father's Love.	5
Glory of the Saints will be very great	372
God, what hand he has about Sin	127
Gospels strange success, whence it is	409
Gospel an invaluable Mercy	399
Gospel, why so unsuccessful	396
Gospel Embassy, what it implies	264
Gospel, why ineffectual to Men	277
Gospels scope to bring Men to believe.	292
Gospel, its power to awaken Men	397
Gospel, its enlightning efficacy	398
Gospel, its wounding power	Ibid.
Gospel, how it turns the heart	Ibid.
Gospel, its power not in it self	Ibid.
Gospel efficacy not in the Instrument	Ibid.
Gospel in every Part presses mortification	432
Gospel Boundaries must be preserved	433
Gospel falsely charged as the cause of Discord	150
Government of Christ, how sad and dangerous to refuse it 75. Our great concernment to understand and whose Government we are under	Ibid.
Grace, the riches of it in remission	379
Grace, the vile abuse of it taxed	380
Grace, one drop of it better than a sea of Gifts	111
Grave, A Believer carries six incomparable Privileges with him to the Grave, and what they are	193
Great and Learned Men greatest Enemies to Christ	118
Grieving the Spirit the Sin of Believers	414

The T A B L E.

Guilt incurred in times of temptation	Page. 464	Illumination antecedent to Faith	Page. 297
Guilt only relieved by the Blood of Christ	319	Immortality the privilege of Grace	260
Grace cannot be acted here without some corruption	564	Imitation of Christ pressed	50
Guilt accompanies impenitent Men to judgment	599	Improve Christ to your own rest	322
		Impossibility of coming without drawing	271
H.		Impossibility of Salvation to some	409
Habits of Grace inspired, not acquired	280	Implantation into Christ necessary	431
Habits of Grace how assisted	433	Implacable Spirits opposite to Christ	152
Habitude of Faith to Gospel-terms	288	Importunity in Prayer warrantable	95
Hand of God, what it is	183	Impossibility of Salvation to them that know not Christ	70
Happy Estate of pardoned Souls	380	Impotency of man to reconcile himself	Ibid.
Happiness of Saints, objective, subjective, and formal, what, and how they differ	68, 69	Imputed righteousness vindicated	291
Happiness of Saints above all Men	391	Inability to return to God discovered	391
Heart of Christ heavy at his death, should make ours the lighter when we die 106. Hardness of Heart how dangerous a Symptom 125. Brokenness of Heart how great a Mercy	126	Inexcusableness of Christ despisers	254
Heart, its deceitfulness opened	401	Inability of nature to produce Grace	283
Harmony of the Spirit's motions	415	Ineffectualness of the Word a fore Judgement	399
Heaven will be surprisingly glorious to Believers	163	Incongruity of carnal ways to Saints	427
Heaven no Heaven to the Unregenerate	424	Indisposedness of Man to come to Christ	409
Heavenly mindedness what it infers	417	Influence of Christ's death into our glory	392
Heavenly mindedness commotes Grace	428	Infusion of Spiritual Life instantaneous	281
Hell, the terror of it	175	Infidelity how unreasonable	26
Hell torments how aggravated	310	Infirmities of our Nature tenderly sensed by Christ	22
Holiness of God the rule and pattern of our Holiness in four Particulars	31	Ingratitude of the World to Christ how vile	88
Holiness the Image and Glory of God 199. The best evidence for Heaven 31, 199. A spring of comfort in the way thither. Ibid. Awful Majesty in it, 235. The discriminating Mark 224. Urged upon the Redeemed by many great Arguments	223	Inheritance purchased by Christ, what, and how great	68
Holiness of Christ our Pattern	444	How needful to clear our title to this Inheritance	70
Holiness of Christ sixfold	Ibid.	Inheritance of Saints how secured	307
Honour, how Saints are engaged to honour Christ 85. Four special ways of honouring Christ.	85, 86	Inherence of sin, when, and how cured	323
Honour of Religion, on what it depends	438	Inferior things should not satisfy Saints	330
Hour of Death, by what sweetened	Ibid.	Innocency of Saints will be vindicated	136
Hour, the ninth Hour what it was, and how the day was divided by the Jews	167	Inoffensive life of Christ	447
Humility of Christ exemplary	448	Instrumentality for Service, whence	437
Humiliation of Christ, when it began and ended	168	Institution of Ordinances Christ's Prerogative	96
Husband, none like Christ	334	Instruments used by Christ in governing the World	78
Hypocritie, wherein it lies	440	Insupportableness of Affliction to some	438
Hypocrites are twice dead	456	Interest in Christ how evinced	308
Hippocrates his opinion of the Soul	524	Interest in Christ the ground of Peace	318
Heaven, earnest of it vouchsafed on earth	546	Intercession of Christ most valid	58
Holy Men ought not to entertain dismal thoughts of their dissolution	583	What it is, and by what acts he performs it 57, &c.	58
Hypocritie the cause of the ruin of many Souls	633	Whether it be Vocal, or only Efficacious	58
		Interposition of our selves betwixt Christ and his dishonour, how reasonable	36
I.		Interest in Christ our great concernment	208
Ar, A dreadful Jar betwixt God and us, evinc'd by Christ's Mediation	33	Invitations of Christ to weary Souls	316
Jealous, what Cause Professors have to be so	140	Inward troubles infect the best hearts	387
Ignorance the cause of security	395	Judas, who and what he was 107. What the true Motives that instigated him to that sin were 109. His fearful End	Ibid.
Ignorance of Christ, matter of Humiliation 3. Natural Ignorance of Men implied in Christ's Prophetical Office 38	38	Judgment committed to Christ	219
Ignorance, the cause of enmity to Christ, 149. Two sorts of Ignorance	Ibid.	Evidences of a Judgment to come Ibid. What a great Day it will be, and why 220. The Properties of it Ibid.	221
Ignorant encouraged to wait on Christ on three grounds	46	Justice it self discharges the Believer	65, 221
Reasons why the Jews were ignorant who Christ was, tho' they heard his Miracles	149	Joy of Saints a rational joy	389
Imitation of Christ, how necessary	442	Justice unsatisfied bars Heaven	391
Imitation of Christ, what it compriseth	Ibid.	Justification evidenced by Sanctification	443
Illustrations of the mystical Union	20	Immortality of the Soul owned by Heathens	523
		Judgment day, the certainty of it	607
		Interest in Christ cures fear	667
		Justification makes a change in the state of a Person	775
		Indignation, that there are Seasons appointed by God to pour out his indignation on the World.	678
		Judgments, National Judgments beneficial to God's People	679
		Judgments, God usually premiseth the World of them before they come	682

The T A B L E.

K.

	Page.
K eepest the evil of Sin in your eye.	439
Keep the Sufferings of Christ before you	440
Keep the sufferings of the damned before you	Ibid.
King, what manner of King Christ is to the Saints	76
Kingly Power of Christ exercised over Believers	71
Kingdom of Christ in the Soul how obtained 72. How Christ administers his spiritual Kingdom, opened in five Acts thereof 73. Spiritual Privileges of Christ's Kingdom 74. Five discoveries of our subjection to Christ's Kingdom	75
Know, Some know Christ, yet as to themselves better they did not	3
Knowledge of Christ the very Kernel of Scripture 2. Fundamental to all Graces, Duties and Comforts Ibid. Very profound, noble and sweet Ibid. Prefer'd to all other Knowledge 3. Not to be concealed by the Dispensers of it 4. To whom we must go for Knowledge 46. Eminent Knowledge, how it aggravates Sin	110
Knowledge of spiritual things twofold	294
Knowledge of interest a ground of peace	375
Knowledge spiritual excellent	410
Knowledge of the Creatures vanity	439
Knowledge aggravates sin three ways	462
Knowledge secures none from Hell	463
Knowledge improved against Knowledge	469
Knox, his Prediction of the death of the Lord of Grange.	571

L.

L amentations for the Unregenerate	456
Law, its efficacy on the Conscience	318
Law, what need to pray for good Laws, and good Executioners of them	120
Laziness in Prayer condemned	106
Leadings of the Spirit, what	407
Learned Men why Christless	409
Leaving, our fears of God's final leaving us, how cured	169
Lessons, Twelve taught by God	404
Liberty purchased by Christ	386
Liberty of two sorts	388
Liberty of Believers wonderful	Ibid.
Liberty of Believers, its Properties	Ibid.
Liberty must be maintained	389
Liberty, a Motive to come to Christ	390
Life Spiritual, what it is	279
Life Spiritual, its excellency	280
Life Spiritual still growing	281
Life Spiritual in all the faculties	Ibid.
Life Natural, Political, Theological	284
Life of Believers how comfortable	377
Life, how Christ was humbled in his Life, opened in divers particulars	86
Light, Divine Light infused by Christ 39. Three excellent Properties of it 45. Three great differences between common, and saving Light 46. A caution against unthankfulness for, and abuse of Light	47
Little words, yea Syllables and Letters, how great a weight may hang on them	18
Lives, their preservation the effect of Christ's care, and watchful Providence	79
Longing to be with Christ, its ground	373
Love of Christ wonderful	372
Love, how worthy Christ is of our Love 8. Wherein God's Love was chiefly manifested 33, 176. The Love of the Father and Son, not to be compared, but admired 27. Christ's Love to the Saints the fairest pat-	

tern 31. The ardency of Christ's Love to Sinners 34	34
Saints obliged to Love Christ 85. The great evidence of the strength of Christ's Love	81
Loveliness of Christ in all respects	336
Loveliness of Creatures derivative	Ibid.
Lovely, nothing is so in opposition to Christ	Ibid.
Loss of the Soul irreparable	618
Love of God, a man may be strongly persuaded of it, and yet not be pardoned	777

M.

M anner of the Spirits work various	415
Marks of right inward troubles	311
Marks of saving Faith	298
Marks of the New Creature	427
Marks of Persons given by the Father to Christ	13
Five Marks to discover the Subjects of Christ's Kingdom 75. No Marks of Grace more dangerous, than those that come nearest true ones	123
Matter of duty no evidence of Grace	414
Means of Mortification	431
Mediator, Christ is so according to both his Natures 34. What the import of the Word is 33. Five things implied in Christ's being a Mediator 33. Christ the true and only Mediator, evinced by three Arguments 34. How dangerous to join any other Mediators with Christ	35
Mediums of communion with Christ	305
Mediocrity in outward eligible	436
Meekness under abuses Christ-like 152. How dangerous to abuse meek Spirits 154. A pattern of Meekness proposed	Ibid.
Meeting of Saints in Heaven joyful	391
Meltings in duty twofold	417
Memory of Sins past how revived	310
Mercies of Believers brought forth with great difficulty	132
Mercy to be under Christ's cure	325
Mercies of two sorts	307
Mercy, Christ is the Mercy of Mercy, evidenced in twelve respects	Ibid.
Mercy not to be expected out of Christ	330
Method of cure a restraint from sin	325
Mind influenced by God	408
Ministers, the best rule to measure them and their Doctrine by 41. Their essential Qualifications Ibid. A serious Caution to Ministers 4. How dangerous to despise Christ's Ministers 26. How daring a Sin to invade the Office of the Ministry, and why God permits it Ibid. Necessity of a standing Ministry urged	40
Ministry removed, a sore judgment	265
Ministers obliged to faithfulness	264
Ministers unduly treated	268
Ministers must mind their own estates	Ibid.
Mirth of unregenerate groundless	460
Misery of the ignorant opened in divers particulars	45
Mortification painful work	432
Mortification proves interest in Christ	430
Mortification what it imports	Ibid.
Mortification why called crucifying	431
Mortification the method of Salvation	433
Mortification requires affliction	435
Moses and Christ compared	37
Motions of Sin in the best Saints	387
Motives to Faith	299
Motives tend to enflame Desires	339
Motives six to come to Christ	381
Motives to imitate Christ	451
Mysterious way of Regeneration	281
Man not to be feared	519
Man	Man

The T A B L E.

	Page.		Page.
Man the peculiar care of God	615	Overplus of merit in Christ's satisfaction, whence it is	66
Means of Salvation precious	617	Outward troubles how cured	324
		Observations about the rise and increase of Errors	713
N.		P.	
National rejection of Christ dangerous	338	Pain, there may be much Pain, but no curse in a Believer's death	130
Nature, our nature not united to Christ consubstantially, physically, or mystically	19	Pains of Christ how great on the Cross 172. In three respects greater than what the Damned feel in Hell	173
Natures pride in what discovered	275	Pardon, God no loser in pardoning the greatest Sinners	65
Natures current cross to Christ	Ibid.	Parents Prayers for their Children, how beneficial	96
Natural and spiritual affections how they may be distinguished	417	Patience of Christ, almighty patience 144. Excellent Properties of Patience Ibid. The grounds and reasons of Christ's Patience 145. Eight excellent helps to Patience	146
Necessity of a Priest evinced	49	Pattern, Christ's desertion the Pattern of ours, in six respects	169
Necessity of divine teachings	407	Patterns of holiness, who are so	232
Necessity of Mortification	433	Pauses made in Conversion	274
Necessity of the new Creature	424	Penance no act of Mortification	431
New creature consists in two things	412	Perfection twofold, Subjective, and Effective, both found in Christ	177
New creature proves interest in Christ	420	Perfection followed Christ from the Cradle to the Cross 86. The greatest Piety exempts not from it	89
New creature, why Grace is so called	Ibid.	Perfectors warned of danger	262
New creature exceeding beautiful	422	Person of Christ extraordinary	29
New creature, its designation	Ibid.	Physician, none like Christ	324
New creature immortal, and how so	423	Pilate, who and what he was	118
New creature, its heavenly tendency	Ibid.	Pleas for converting Souls	255
New creature, its activity	Ibid.	Pleasures of the spiritual life	280
New creature, in whom undiscernable	426	Pleasures of Sin cost dear	309
New creature, in what it resembles the old, open'd in many respects	420	Pleasure, none in carnal men	455
New Christians are so in three respects	421	Pledge of glory, what is so	414
Night, Christ's last night on earth how employed	97, 102	Policy of Satan in choosing Instruments	111
Number of real Christians small	436	Policy of Satan in what discovered	373
O.		Poverty of Christ how great	87
Obedience to Christ must be universal 38. Evidential of our interest in him	75	Powers of the Soul twofold	412
Obedience the end of spiritual life	282	Power of Sin gradually weakened	431
Obedience, whence its excellency	Ibid.	Prayer, a proper means to increase knowledge	41
Obedience of Christ our pattern	445	Prayers of Saints presented by Christ 58. Christ's last Prayer what it was for the matter of it 103. What for quality 104. A singular relief against troubles to pray	105
Obedience to the Law as our rule	386	Prayer how prevalent	383
Object formal of Faith, what it is	287	Prayers of Saints desirable	384
Oblation of Christ the fountain of our best mercies 56. The matter of Christ's Oblation, his own Soul and Body 53. The preciousness of that Oblation	Ibid.	Prayer evidential of the Spirit	416
Obligations to holiness from God the Father 224. From Christ 226. From the Spirit Ibid. From our selves 227. From our Enemies	229	Prayerless persons unregenerate	428
Obstacles to glory how removed	392	Predication of the Properties of each nature in concreto, proper	20
Occasions not to be given to corruption	435	Preferment spiritual by union with Christ	8
Occasions of Sin must be cut off	439	Prejudices against Religion for its Professor's sake, how unjust	111
Offers of Christ, what they include	300	Pretumption falsely pretended	316
Offer of Christ intire and compleat	289	Pretumption a general Sin	395
Offer of Christ, in what manner	Ibid.	Practical nature of God's teaching	411
Offices of Christ how suitable	333	Priesthood of Christ implies six things 48. The necessity of it evinced upon a double ground 49. He appears before God for us	62
Offices, what Offices Christ was sealed to	24	Price, what Christ's death being so called implies	Ibid.
Oil of gladness, what it notes	302	Principles of Mortification what	433
Old men in an unconverted State, objects of great Pity	164	Probabilities of mercy encourag'd	407
Opinions about Faith divers	292	Properties of each Nature distinct, notwithstanding the mystical union in Christ	20
Opinions justly rejected	436	Proper Sins to be especially eyed	404
Operations of the Gospel various	397	Promises of Temporals how secured	331
Opposition to Christ knowingly, how dreadful	150	Prophet, Christ is so 37. The internal and principal part of his Prophetical Office opened	43
Opposition of Satan to the Gospel	385	Propositions about applying Christ	250
Opposition of Flesh and Spirit, what	418		Prosperity,
Opposition to Sin twofold	433		
Ordinances of Christ, their great Efficacy, and whence it arises 27. No power to operate on the heart in themselves 44. Not to be despised	213		
Ordinances, why to be attended	278		
Ornaments of nature what, and how to be denied for Christ	275		

The T A B L E.

Prosperity, the ready way to attain it	80.	Five things to be studied in it	81
Proverb of Sparta	155.	Jewish one	87.
Galens time			135
Providence, its general influx on all Creatures, and their motion	77.	Christ rules the Providential Kingdom by seven acts, 77.	Its over-ruling wicked Counsel 77, 78,
			134
Purchase, Christ's blood purchased a rich inheritance for the Saints			68
Purity of Conscience, how needful			438
Purposes accepted by God			384
Parents ought to Pray for their Children			509
Prison, why Hell is so called			598
Pleasures of sin dear bought			602
Pardon of sin, what an invaluable Mercy			603
Presumption the way to Destruction			627
Pleas for slavish fear answered			672

Q

Qualifications of Ministers			264
Qualities of the New Creature			422
Quickning two sorts			279
Quickning the Spirits Work in order to Union with Christ			279
Quickning a supernatural work			282
Quietness of Men, what it argues			395

R

Readiness in God to grant Prayer			383
Receiving Christ the vital act			286
Receiving Christ, what it imports			Ibid.
Reconciliation with God what			265
Reconciliation wonderful			Ibid.
Reconciliation with God, its nature, medium, continuation, properties and terms, opened	197.	Why effected by Death	198
Reconciled Persons their duties			270
Redemption of Souls costly	65.	The finishing of it by Christ necessary on a three fold account	178
Regenerate, their duties			425
Rejecting knowledge dangerous			5
Rejecting Christ most fatal			35
Religion precise and strict			443
Religion falsely charged			450
Religion Christian incomparably sweet and satisfying to the Conscience	50.	What cause Men have to bless God for it	51
Reluctance of Nature how owned			273
Remembrance of Christ what it is, opened at large			98
What it includes Ibid. Its usefulness			99
Remission the Saints privilege			378
Remission, What it is			Ibid.
Remission, none without Christ			380
Renovation of Nature			420
Represent Christ as he is			436
Respect due to Ministers, and why			264
Rest coming by Faith sweet			318
Rest of Believers present, and how			319
Rest, no expectation of rest, till we have done working and sinning	218.	Four things break a Saints Rest on Earth	Ibid.
Resurrection of Christ, the certainty of it	203.	The absurdities following the denial of it	Ibid.
The manner of it opened in many particulars	Ibid. &c.	It was the Resurrection of the Saints Head and Representative	204

Resurrection of Saints the effect of Christs Resurrection			Page
three ways	205.	The agreement of our Resurrection with Christs opened in five particulars	205,
			206
Retracting what we have professed or done for Christ, condemned by Pilates example			135
Revelations of Gods Will by Jesus Christ various	39.	Gradual, Ibid. Plain, Ibid. Powerful, Ibid. Affectionate, 40. Pure, Ibid. Perfect Ibid.	
Riches of Christ, how great,			307
Righteousness connected with Holiness			253
Righteousness, how dangerous to join any thing of our own with Christs in point of justification			66
Right to glory Christs purchase			322
Rome shall feel the force of Prayer			380
Rods of affliction the Saints lot			387
Rules of two sorts			443
Rules to discern the Spirit in us			414
Rule, No Man a Rule to others			443
Resurrection how comfortable to Believers			540
Redeemer precious to Believers			616
Redeeming the time, what it means			637

S

Sacrament a special Pledge of Christs care and love			99
Sacrament-seasons, heart-melting seasons			100
Sacramental Bread and Wine, whence their Excellency			97
Saints, their security for Salvation, from whence it is			95
Saints have real communion with Christ			303
Saints honourable on what accounts			306
Sanctification of Christ respects us	29.	Our Sanctification the best evidence of our interest in a Sanctified Jesus	31
Satans great design opened			320
Satans power destroyed			387
Satans policy wherein seen			400
Satisfaction, none short of Glory			392
Satisfaction to God necessary to our reconciliation			49
God stood upon full Satisfaction Ibid. No mere Man can satisfy God. Ibid. Christs Death made full Satisfaction for sin	62.	What divine Satisfaction is Ibid. Five things imported in the Satisfaction of Christ. Ibid. Errors about the satisfaction of Christ refuted	64.
Divers Objections answered about it	64, 65.	All thoughts of Satisfying God by our selves to be abandoned	66
Sealing of Christ, what it imports	24.	How God the Father sealed him	25.
Why Christ must be Sealed before he would act as Mediator	Ibid.	How many ways the Spirit seals us	27.
His Sealing us an evidence of Christs being sealed for us			Ibid.
Secrets of God opened to Saints			383
Security of Believers argued from Christs Mediation			36
Selfishness an odious Sin			306
Self-denial of Christ for us	8.	For Christ how reasonable	Ibid.
Sentence given against Christ what it was, opened in six particulars.	119.	In what manner Christ received his Sentence	120
Services accidentally done for Christ unacceptable			134
Signs of divine teaching			410
Signs in the Sacrament of the Supper are of three sorts			99
Sins evil not seen at first			404
Sin is long a dying in the best			434
Sin yields neither profit nor pleasure			440
Sin against the Spirit mistaken			317
Sins of Believers most piercing			385
Sin, an infinite evil in it, and how that appears	65.	The horrid nature of Sin opened	174
			Sit-

The T A B L E.

	Page.
Sitting at God's right hand, what it imports, opened in seven particulars 215. <i>The Saints sitting with Christ, what an Advancement to them</i> 216. <i>Christ to be eyed in Prayer, as sitting at God's right hand</i> 217. <i>Christ did not sit till he had finished his work, nor must we</i>	218
Skill bred by experience what	312
Small things accepted by God	383
Small remnant in Christ	426
Society we may have with such here, whom we shall have no Society with in Heaven	111
Sorrow, what it is, 122. Distinguished into habitual, actual, natural, supernatural	Ibid.
Sorrows of the Soul not quickly over	319
Souls, how glorious they will be 163. <i>Their sympathy with their Bodies, and their Bodies with them</i>	162
Souls of great value	392
Sound of the Gospel sweet	317
Spirit, weighty consideration to keep Saints from grieving the Spirit	213
Spirit taken two ways	413
Spirit the bond of Union	Ibid.
Spirit works Arbitrarily in us	414
Spirit works variously in Men	Ibid.
Spirits threefold power in conversion	399
Spiritual Sickness a Mercy	317
Stability the result of Mortification	437
Sting of Death plucks out by Christ	388
Striving ineffectual, when so	404
Substance of Christ's Mediatorial Kingdom, and the manner of administration distinguished	54
Substitution of Christ in our room as our Sacrifice necessary 49, 54. <i>The excellency and eternal efficacy of this Sacrifice opened</i>	52
Success of Christ's interest in the World unquestionable	136
Success of the word to be waited for	284
Sufferings for Christ honourable	372
Sufferings of Christ how great 172. <i>Their Relation to us</i> 62. <i>They may affect natural hearts, for, three Reasons</i> 122	Ibid.
Sufferings for Christ how glorious, 196, 217. <i>Differ from those for sin in the World to come</i>	196
Stoop, how low a stoop Christ made to recover us	82
Surety, Christ is so, and what his being so imports	33
Supports under defects of obedience	452
Supports under Spiritual troubles what, and whence they are	314
Sweetness of Religion in application	252
Sympathy a Mark of the Spirit	415
Sympathy of Christ with all that were burdened with sin, or sorrow	88
Symptoms of a desperate State	325
Soul of Divine original	493
Soul a vital Spiritual substance	495
Soul immortal	496
Soul Separated immediately capable of blessedness	507
Souls, how all are equal	508
Sin an unnatural evil	509
Satan's malice against the Souls of Men	512
Soul and Body how united	514
Soul, its immortality proved by several arguments	522
Satan's enmity to the Soul, the reason of it	530
Soul renderly affected to the Body	534
Souls, whether any have forewarning of their separation	570
Souls, when separate, whether they have any intercourse with Men	573
Soul, the invaluable worth of it	608

T.

	Page.
Teachings of God twofold	403
Teachings of God necessary	402
Teachings of God not opposed to Man's	403
Teachings of God infallible	407
Teachings of God clear	Ibid.
Teachings of God permanent	408
Teachings of God harmonical	410
Tears, what they are 122. <i>A double fountain of tears opened</i>	122
Temptations not removed here	386
Temptations of Christ; fierce, various and tedious 88. <i>The great relief in temptation</i> 90. <i>Suitable temptations greatly hazard our ruin</i>	110
Tenderness of Conscience	441
Terms on which Christ is offered	288
Thief on the Cross, his wonderful conversion 163. <i>His example encourages none to delay conversion</i>	164
Things past, present and to come, ours	320
Thirst, proper and figurative 171. <i>A great affliction</i> 172. <i>Christ attributed to a double cause</i>	Ibid.
Thirst in Hell, what it is 175. <i>Saints shall never thirst in Heaven</i>	Ibid.
Thoughts of Death how sweetened	392
Throne, how the Saints are Confessors with Christ upon his Throne	232
Time of conversion in the hand of the Spirit	399
Time of Christ's Incarnation exactly agreeable to the Promises	329
Time, the preciousness of it, and whence it results	161
Title affixed to the Cross of Christ, what it was, opened in six properties of it 133. <i>The Providence of God in the draught of Christ's Title remarkable in five things</i>	134
Trial of Christ for his Life, how managed 112, &c. <i>No man knows his own spiritual strength, till it be put to the trial</i>	353
Trials of our union with Christ	262
Trials of Spiritual Life	285
Troubles of Conscience great	310
Troubles for Sin wean the heart	311
Troubles for Sin prevent falls	312
Troubles for Sin make Christ sweet	311
Troubles for Sin tried	Ibid.
Trust. <i>The Father and Son mutually trust each other</i> 13. <i>All our concerns are to be trusted in the hands of Christ</i>	80
Trust in Man, how vain and foolish	112

V.

Vexing the Spirit	440
Vicegerency of Christ's Sufferings	62
Visions not to be expected	403
Unbelief unreasonable	254
Unbelief the damning Sin	293
Unbelievers their sad estate	377
Unbelievers under Condemnation	457
Unbelief, the evil thereof	439
Unbelievers, where death will lend them	163
Understanding, what it is, and how opened 44. <i>The proper Office of Christ</i> 43. <i>Four things implied in opening the Understanding</i> Ibid. &c. <i>Opening the Understanding effected instrumentally by the Word and Spirit</i>	44
Union supposed to Union	279
Union with Christ how illustrated	257
Union with Christ no fancy	Ibid.
Union with Christ, what it is not	259
Union	Ibid.

The T A B L E.

	Page.		Page.
Union mystical, what it is	259	Willingness to die, what it signifies in carnal Men	395
Union inages to godliness	263	Wisdom of God, what a Monument is hath raised to it	22
Union the ground of acceptance	379	Self in our Redemption	22
Union fundamental to benefits	403	Witnesses suborned against Christ, and that by a Court of Judicature	117
Union personal is extraordinary 19. How conserved when Christ was in the Grave 20. How needful it is that Christ have Union with our Persons, as well as Natures	22	Wonderfull preservation of Grace	423
Unprincipled Professors will become Apostates	110	Work of Grace supernatural	426
Unreconciled exhorted	270	Work of new Creatures what	428
Unregenerate in a sad state	284, 285	Work, The work Christ finished a most difficult work 178. A precious work 178. How Christ finished this work, opened in four Particulars 178, 179. Christ's work in us will be finished, and how that can be evidenced 180. How necessary is a working life for God Ibid. Christians must finish their work, as Christ did his 181. Three rousing Considerations to such whose work is not finished, when they die, as Christ's was 181, 182	490, 491
Voice of God never heard by some	411	World, its damping efficacy	401
Voluntary motions of Souls to Christ	313	World, what a Potent Conqueror	111
Upbraid, how those that perish under the Gospel will be upbraided by Jews, Pagans and Devils	85	Wrath due to Sin, how great	404
Uses that God will make of the Saints example in the day of Judgment Ibid. Four Uses he makes of it in this World.	Ibid.	Wrath of God, how dreadful	123
Upbraidings of Conscience, what	310	Christ's Soul felt the wrath of God, the aggravated wrath of God 173. How Christ delivered the Elect from it 195	491
Usefulness of the Law is great	318	World, its Origin	491
Vision of God, what it is	493	Will hath freedom and liberty	498
Unbelief, they that dye in unbelief, immediately sent to Hell	598	Wrath of God the principal part of the Misery of Hell	602
Unity amongst Believers a desirable Mercy	790	Way to Hell discovered	610
Unity, what it is	Ibid.	Wisdom of God must be improved in difficult Cases	691
Unchangeableness of God a refuge in time of trouble	695		
W.		Y.	
W ants relieved by union with Christ	262	Y oung ones exhorted to begin with God herein's 65. Six Arguments to persuade to Religion in Youth Ibid.	
Wants of Saints provided for	306	Z.	
Want of outwards quietly born	330	Z aleucus, his famous example of Justice meet with Mercy	65
Wants not to be feared	385	Zeal improved against zeal	469
Weak ones encouraged from Christ's Propheticall Office	40		
Weak Christians assisted, may out-act the strongest	191		
Weaned from the World, how effected	70		
Will and Testament of Christ what 200. What it contains for Believers	Ibid.		
Will, how allured by God	498		

The End of the T A B L E.

FEB 9 1918



D 407422

